



# Creating Perspective

A Blueprint for Crime Prevention and Community Safety *by the  
Community for the Community*

*An ACRO Report of Experiences and Attitudes Toward Crime and Crime  
Prevention by Young People in Mackay*

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## Executive Summary

Discussions of young people and crime traditionally occur on three levels. Firstly the concern expressed about young people as offenders; the perpetrators of crime. Secondly, concern expressed about young people's use of public space. The final level of discussion is the crime victimisation experienced by young people. Discussions in the community often tend to cover at great length concerns about juvenile offending and young people's use of public space, however, it is unlikely that any significant discussion would centre on the issue of the victimisation of young people. The Report is underpinned by a belief that effective crime prevention interventions (that target young people) must include programs that will address the victimisation of young people alongside the more common interventions that target youth offending and public space issues.

The Research was undertaken on the premise that effective crime prevention requires the development of community based partnerships to locally respond to crime on a variety of levels. Localised community based responses to crime often include situational interventions (responses to address a particular problem § graffiti in a particular location § a local park ), however, the current research is premised on the belief that community based partnerships can also effectively deal with the social causes of crime (responses that tackle family violence and family dysfunction, drug and alcohol abuse, failure to participate in schooling, etc).

The Research was further premised on the recognition that young people have a significant stakehold in crime in the community (as victims, as offenders, and as future taxpayers facing the costly burden that incarceration offers as a response to crime) and must directly participate in the identification of problematic issues and the development of strategies for implementation in their community.

The Report follows earlier research conducted by the Australian Community Safety & Research Organisation in Mackay. The earlier research involved the completion of surveys by 1492 residents, providing information about residents concerns regarding their personal safety in specific situations, individual experiences with property and/or personal/violent crime victimisation, and crime prevention initiatives they would like to see introduced in their suburb. The current research involved the completion of surveys by 1014 young people aged between 12 and 24 years. The greatest majority of survey respondents completed the survey while attending secondary school in the Mackay Local Government Area.

The same survey instrument was utilised in both research projects and a comparison of responses made by youth (survey respondents aged between 12 and 24 years) and adults (survey respondents aged 25 years and over) is provided in Section 3 of the Analysis in the current report. In most cases the percentage and actual number of survey participants who responded in a particular way is reported. When differences between groups of respondents (male and female, youth and adult) have been detected, the statistical significance of expressed differences was tested using Chi-square. When discussing differences between groups of respondents (male and female, youth and adult) particular terminology should alert the reader that those differences were significant in the current research. When the terminology of one group was "slightly more likely", "more likely", or "far more likely" to make a particular response the reader should be alerted that the differences between the two discussed groups was statistically significant. Readers who are interested in more information regarding the significance testing used in the current research and the reporting of statistical significance are referred to the section Research Notes.

Youth felt safer than adults in all of the situations asked about in the survey and males typically felt safer than females did. Youth and adults reported feeling most vulnerable when using parking lots at night. More than a third of youth respondents and half of all adult respondents reported that there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe at night. The most common areas nominated by youth and adults as generating diminished safety feelings were local parks. In response to these findings Recommendations are made regarding the targeting of well-utilised parking lots for crime prevention interventions and the implementation of crime prevention interventions in parks in local neighbourhoods particularly those areas nominated in earlier research.

Adults generally reported more positive perceptions of young people than did young people themselves. Recommendations are made regarding the active acknowledgement of young people's contributions and personal achievements to the community, not only focusing on traditional 'achievements' in areas of sports and education.

Youth generally reported higher levels of personal/violent victimisation than did adults. Youth also more frequently reported that violence was a problem in their home. Young people were also more likely than adults to believe that personal/violent crime had increased in their suburb in the last three (3) years. Despite reporting more frequent experience of personal/violent victimisation young people were less likely than adults to agree that young people were more commonly the victims of crime. Recommendations are made that programs be implemented that enable young people to address the personal/violent victimisation experienced by many young people and that the programs enable the wide range of victimisation experiences to be addressed.

A little more than one-quarter of the young people surveyed had experienced bullying at school. About half of bullied young people had reported the bullying to the school and were satisfied with the outcome of action taken by the school. Of concern were the findings that a common reason for non-reporting was fear of the perpetrator and a common reason for not being satisfied with the outcome of action taken (by the school) was that the bullying had continued. Recommendations are made regarding the ability of existing programs to respond to these problems reported by survey respondents; the failure to report bullying because of fear and the continuation of bullying despite intervention by the school.

Youth respondents were more than three times as likely as adults to have reported personal awareness of drugs in their community (through reported witnessing of drug dealing). Drug dealing was the most common offence reportedly witnessed by youth respondents (4<sup>th</sup> for adults). Recommendations are made regarding the provision of drug abuse prevention programs specifically available to young people in the community.

The majority of all respondents agreed that older community members were more likely to be the victims of crime (than other age groups). Young people were also very supportive of Safety checks for older neighbours, as a crime prevention initiative they indicated was desirable for introduction in their suburb. Recommendations are made regarding the implementation of programs whereby young people are actively engaged in promoting the safe and confident living of older community members.

Youth and adult survey respondents also supported the ability of After-school activities for youth (12-18 years) to serve as a crime prevention program and commonly selected the program as desirable for introduction in their suburb. Recommendations are made regarding the examination of existing activities for youth and the benefits to be gained from a cooperative action by service providers to achieve optimal provision levels of activities in the hours outside of schooling.

The Research (in combination with earlier research conducted with adults) has clearly indicated that young people have very similar concerns to adult community members. Young people do tend to feel less vulnerable than adult community members, but also report higher levels of personal/violent victimisation. Young people tend to be less confident (than adult respondents) of the positive contribution their peer group makes to the community but demonstrate altruistic concern regarding the safety needs of older community members. Overall, the safety needs of young people are similar (as identified by respondents) to those of adults, but probably more urgent attention is required in the area of personal/violent victimisation and drug use prevention.

## **How to use this Report**

**The report contains a great deal of detailed information regarding the survey responses made by young people in Mackay.**

**Readers are encouraged to give some thought (prior to reading the report) regarding what they want to know from the report. Due to the level of detail and wide range of issues covered (in relation to crime) in the report we have provided some guidelines below that we hope will provide assistance to the reader.**

If you are interested in gaining an overview of what young people said and what the broad findings of the report are, then you may only want to read the **executive summary**.

If you are most interested in what recommendations have been made in relation to the survey findings, but would also like to get an overview of what young people said, then you should read the **executive summary** and the **recommendations**.

If you are interested in the different ways that males and females responded (to the survey) or the different ways that youth and adults responded along with the general survey findings, then you should read the **Analysis section summaries** (page references on the contents page).

If you are interested in a particular issue that may be covered in the report then you are advised to use the **index**. Some examples of issues that are discussed throughout the report and can be found in the index are bullying, personal/violent victimisation, and respondents attitudes towards crime and safety in their neighbourhoods.

If you have read the **recommendations** and are interested in a particular area of discussion and would like to read about some program ideas then you should read the **selected program concepts** (all or related to a particular issue). Some examples of topics for which program ideas are described in that section are older community members, youth, safety in local parks, and Domestic Violence.

## Recommendations

Youth and adult respondents reported feeling most vulnerable (as indicated by survey findings) when using parking lots at night. Females reported most diminished feelings of safety for both youth and adults. It may be that respondents are concerned about crime victimisation generally in this situation, however, given that both female youth and female adults reported feeling more vulnerable than their male counterparts it is likely that there is also considerable level of concern specifically regarding personal/violent victimisation.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that the parking facilities identified as being subject to regular use by community members (regardless of age) are subject to Safety Audits and the recommendations of such audits are prioritised for action.**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that Safety Audits are conducted during darkness and identified vulnerable groups (women and the elderly) are well represented in Audit teams.**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that the audits cover behavioural factors along with static environmental factors.**

Adults and youth identified local parks as the public space where they felt the most concern about safety and crime during the day and at night. Adults and youth expressed concern about the behaviour of people using these public spaces and at night, additionally were concerned about the inadequate level of lighting that exacerbated concerns about the dangers associated with these spaces. It should also be noted that both youth and adults rated Facilities such as lighting, paths etc, as the 'crime prevention program' they most desired for introduction in their suburb.

**Given the finding that youth and adults targeted local parks as areas that caused 'safety concerns' during the day and at night IT IS RECOMMENDED that local parks (particularly those specifically identified in the earlier Mail Out Survey) are subject to**

**Safety Audits that clearly identify the factors associated with an individual's sense of vulnerability to crime. The Safety Audit should also be concerned with the behaviours exhibited at these public spaces and these factors are subsequently addressed alongside more static issues, such as vegetation and lighting.**

Adults were more likely than youth to agree that young people make a positive contribution to the community. Less than half of all youth respondents agreed that young people make a positive contribution to the community.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that the reinforcement of young people as valued community members be widely and publicly addressed. It is acknowledged that local media locally profiles the achievements of young people. It is likely that efforts to reinforce the positive contribution young people make (to the community) needs to extend beyond the reporting of 'newsworthy events'. Positive images of youth and reporting of youth activities (not necessarily on those traditionally accepted outstanding achievements) should be actively promoted to reinforce to both youth and the wider community that young people are a valuable and vital part of community life.**

Youth reported greater levels of personal/violent victimisation than did adults. Youth reported more violence in the home, more bullying at school, and more violence based on racial or sexuality issues. It is not then surprising that youth respondents were more likely than adults to report they believed that personal/violent crime had increased in their suburb in the last three (3) years. Given these findings it is of significant concern that young people were less likely (than adults to agree that young people are more likely to be the victims of crime (than other age groups).

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that the level of personal victimisation of young people be treated as an issue of immediate concern to those agencies directly involved in service provision targeting youth clients or violence in the community. A cooperative approach (involving young people as key stakeholders) should be taken in the development of a program that can be provided to a wide range of young people, not just those considered 'at risk' (47.2% of all youth respondents reported at least one incident of personal or violent victimisation). The program should incorporate protective behaviours and options after victimisation has occurred. Young people (through the program) should be provided with opportunities to develop (with adult support) strategies that target the victimisation of young people in their local community.**

A little more than one quarter of all respondents reported that they had been bullied at school in the last three years. About half of the respondents who had experienced bullying had reported it to the school. It is encouraging that the most common reason given by respondents for not reporting the bullying was that the incident was not serious enough. It is of concern that about one in five respondents who had been bullied but had not reported it to the school gave their reason for non-reporting as fear of further/increased bullying as a result of reporting. It is also of concern that a common reason for not being satisfied with the outcome of school action against the bullying was that the bullying had continued/was still happening.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that programs that seek to address bullying be examined in relation to their ability to protect the victimised individual from further bullying. If current programs are found to be unable to adequately meet the 'protection' needs of young people then consultation with young people should occur to amend programs to more adequately meet these needs. Best practice programs from elsewhere (nationally and internationally) can also be examined to provide information regarding program efficacy.**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that the ability of current programs to follow-up the effectiveness of action taken regarding bullying victimisation is examined with young people actively involved in providing feedback. If current programs are found to be lacking effectiveness in the prevention of further bullying victimisation then consultation with young people should occur to enable programs to more adequately meet these needs. Best practice programs from elsewhere (nationally and internationally) can also be examined to provide information regarding program efficacy.**

Young people tended to report witnessing of crime more often than adults did. The most commonly witnessed crime (as indicated by survey results) was Drug Dealing. Drug Dealing was the fourth most commonly witnessed crime as reported by adults (after business theft/vandalism, break and enter, and domestic violence). It is accepted that respondents probably considered personal knowledge of the general distribution of drugs as the witnessing of Drug Dealing. Respondents (both youth and adult) who reported witnessing this offence were not necessarily reporting that they had observed drugs being exchanged for money, although it is likely that some respondents also witnessed this behaviour. Exposure to drugs is considered a risk factor in drug use. The availability of drugs is widely regarded as an important factor in the commencement of drug use by young people, it would seem to be logical that a decision to use drugs is more likely for a young person who is well aware of the steps necessary to obtain drugs in their local community.

The Central Region (as utilised by the Queensland Police Service) of which Mackay is one Regional Centre recorded drug offence rates (per 100 000 of population) quite similar to the Queensland average for 1996/1997. Of the eight Police Regions in Queensland, the Central Region had the third highest rate of drug offences for 1996/1997. It is difficult to determine significance of the rates for drug offences (per 100 000) for the different regions, as regions with higher populations (city urban areas) recorded lower rates than did regions with lower populations (rural areas). The rates recorded for the Central region do not appear to provide any information that would either discount or support the reported witnessing of Drug Dealing by survey respondents.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that an audit be conducted of drug use prevention programs currently being provided in the local community. The audit should consider; the age group being targeted, number of participants, the location of program provision, the regularity of program provision, the main content of program (media campaign, educational lecture, educational materials, interactive youth program, etc), evaluative materials available. This audit is to enable further action and should involve streamlined effective activities that do not require significant time expenditure. A suggested strategy is the use of a semi-structured phone interview with local service providers to solicit the required information.**

**Where it is found that the level of drug prevention program provision is inadequate IT IS RECOMMENDED that a plan of program implementation be developed and should incorporate time lines for program delivery by agencies best placed to effectively target young people in the local community. It would not seem necessary to develop a completely new drug use prevention program, but it may be necessary to consider those program factors that have been identified as adding to the effectiveness (in preventing drug use) of drug use prevention programs. Some of these factors include; program delivery to primary school aged children, booster sessions throughout secondary school (follow up program delivery), provision of social skills training, and a significant level of interactive features.**

More than half of all survey respondents (both youth and adult) believed that older community members are more likely to experience crime victimisation (than other age groups). This belief is completely inaccurate when examined in the context of both official and unofficial victimisation statistics. Older community members are victimised less often than even our youngest community members (refer Introduction: Table 1: current report: Victims of Crime by Age and Gender for the Central Region-1996/1997- Personal/Violent Offences). The 1995 Crime and Safety victimisation survey conducted in Queensland reported that as age increased the victimisation rate for personal crime decreased. It is perhaps reflective of this belief that the second most popular crime prevention program for both youth and adults was Safety checks for older neighbours. While it is true that older community members do not experience high levels of personal/violent victimisation it is also true that older community members tend to report higher levels of fear and concern regarding crime than do other community members. For a detailed explanation regarding heightened fear levels for older community members readers are referred to the earlier research conducted by ACRO in Mackay.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that the concern expressed by survey respondents regarding the safety of older community members is not disregarded on the basis that this concern is not reflected by actual victimisation rates (ie; the real crime situation). The fear of crime and strategies to address such is a component of all crime prevention practice and should be incorporated as a function of active crime prevention bodies.**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that an audit of local service providers that target older community members is conducted regarding activities that seek to address the isolation of older community members and reduce the fear of crime experienced by this section of the community. The audit should consider; the goal of the program, number of participants, the location of program provision, the regularity of program provision, the main content of program (media campaign, educational lecture, educational materials, home visits, etc), evaluative materials available. This audit is to enable further action and should involve streamlined effective activities that do not require significant time expenditure. A suggested strategy is the use of a semi-structured phone interview with local service providers to solicit the required information.**

**Where it is found that the programs currently being delivered do not (or cannot) incorporate fear reduction as a component of their delivery IT IS RECOMMENDED that a plan of program implementation be developed and should incorporate time lines for program delivery by agencies best placed to effectively target older members of the local community. There are many programs being delivered nationally and internationally that seek to reduce the isolation of older community members and additionally actively seek to reduce the fear of crime experienced by this group in the community.**

**Given the strong support expressed by young people for Safety checks for older neighbours it is additionally RECOMMENDED that efforts are made by local crime prevention bodies to ensure young people are included in programs that seek to reduce the isolation of older community members and reduce fear levels. It may be most practical for the crime prevention partnership**

**to actively foster a program delivered cooperatively by local organisations that already work closely with older community members or youth.**

Young people also strongly supported the utility of After school activities for youth (12-18 years) as a crime prevention activity they desired for introduction in their suburb. After school activities for youth was ranked third by youth and fourth by adults (in terms of popularity), above such program concepts as Foot/bike patrols by Police. It would seem that both youth and adults recognise the need for suitable, affordable, and accessible activities for young people and the crime prevention function these activities can perform. The limited research available does support the notion that recreational activities can prevent youth offending and a wide range of programs nationally and internationally have focused their energies on the hours young people spend outside of school. Some programs provide activities well into the evening hours while others focus on the hours after school and preceding darkness.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that the ability of existing service providers to operate recreational programs (active skills based programs) during the after school and evening period is examined. It is probable that services need to be more proactive in seeking youth participation and should clearly articulate their target group and the methods to be utilised to gain their participation in activities. Projects that take place in young people's own suburb or locality should be encouraged and where failure to access activities is a result of transportation difficulties then cooperative arrangements should be developed to address these shortfalls.**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that a cooperative approach be developed by those service providers with some ability to provide after school activities for youth. A cooperative approach would seek to maximise the effect of energies expended by services and highlight any significant service provision 'gaps' regarding recreational opportunities for youth. Agencies that could participate in such a cooperative approach could include youth agencies, the police, schools, sporting clubs, and the local Council.**

## Introduction

It is time to develop a more comprehensive way of discussing young people and crime. Round table discussions ('mini crime forums') will often generate high levels of apparent concern about 'juvenile offending' and the problem of 'teenagers hanging out'; the same discussions are unlikely to generate comparable levels of concern regarding the criminal victimisation of young people. Young people are often the focus of concerns about crime and crime prevention. Younger children are most commonly discussed in terms of victimisation issues. Young people of the 'teenage years' would seem to be most commonly the subject of discussions centering on offending behaviour, both that behaviour that involves offences against the law and also that behaviour that involves offences against the expectation of social order. There is a clear and direct link between child abuse and neglect and later offending. One study found that being the victim of childhood abuse increased the likelihood of juvenile delinquency and adult criminality by 40%. A mature approach to crime prevention necessitates an acceptance that the prevention of the victimisation of young people is a critical priority.

The picture of juvenile offending is complex. What we know is based on who gets caught. From that base of knowledge it is clear that juvenile offenders are generally overrepresented in the commission of property crimes while generally a higher proportion of adults are processed for violent crimes. There are many valid reasons to develop interventions that seek to prevent juvenile offending. While most juvenile offenders do not commit serious major offences (either physically or economically) it is true that most habitual adult offenders also offended as juveniles. The eventual result of offending is incarceration, a remedy that comes at prohibitive economic cost to the community and has no supported effect on the prevention of future offending or as deterrence for others. Preventing an offence being committed means that you have also prevented a victim being 'created'; criminal victimisation is an important factor in the fear of crime and the emotional and physical effects of victimisation can extend for long periods after the offence was committed.

Local communities appear to becoming increasingly concerned about young people's use of public space. These concerns may be more complex than what they initially appear and the clear articulation of the issues is important. The expressed concern may be directed at problematic behaviour that is occurring in specific public places, behaviour that may be criminal in nature and which create heightened fears of victimisation for those that witness the behaviour. The expressed concern may be directed at fears that young people are lacking in recreational (or other) opportunities/activities that would appropriately engage their participation and are in fact at increased risk of alcohol/drug use through their inability to participate in positive activities. Clear expression of the perceived problem is important and if interventions are decided upon, then they should be interventions that seek to engage young people rather than exclude them. A community that is serious about crime prevention is a community that seeks to be inclusive of its members and actively engages all community members in its efforts to create a safer community.

Effective crime prevention for young people needs to be comprehensive in its approach. Much crime prevention is focused on the

behaviour of young people in public space with more specific programming designed to target young people identified as 'at risk' for involvement in juvenile offending. To be truly effective and to promote community safety it is critical that the victimisation of young people also be targeted by crime prevention initiatives. **This report will look at the concerns of young people living on the Sunshine Coast as reflected by responses to a survey that examined attitudes, experiences, and crime prevention needs.** Survey respondents are all aged between 15 years and 24 years and this is the definition of young people that will be utilised in the report. The majority of discussion will focus on those young people aged between 12 and 17, as this age group is that which many program initiatives tend to target. This age group is also socially active and generally attending school (and not financially independent). **The report will examine the responses of young people and consider directions that can be taken regarding victimisation, offending, and the public activities of young people that concern the wider community.**

## Young People as Victims

The consideration of the victimisation experiences of young people is not the dominant focus of most discussions regarding young people and crime. There seems to be a perception within the community that young people are most appropriately targeted in 'crime discussions' as the perpetrators of crime. Discussions that do refer to the victimisation of young people often leave the impression that the higher personal/violent victimisation rate associated with younger adults is to a large degree the result of the active social life led by individuals in this age group and the associated risk taking behaviour exhibited by some young people (for example excessive alcohol consumption). The official victimisation statistics as provided within the Queensland Police Statistical Review, 1996/1997 does not contradict this widely held belief. However, they do provide additional information regarding the victimisation of more youthful adolescents, additional information that provides a somewhat chilling perspective on aspects of the personal/violent victimisation of individuals aged under 25 years.

In Australia in 1995, over 20% of victims of Sexual Assault were under the age of 10 and nearly 61% were aged less than 20 years. In Queensland in 1996/1997 females aged between 10 and 19 years were most at risk for victimisation of Sexual Offences, while for males those aged between 10 and 14 years were most at risk. Males and females aged between 15 and 19 years were at the greatest risk of Assault, while males in this age group experienced the greatest rate of victimisation of Robbery offences.

In the Central Region of Queensland in 1996/1997 (as utilised by Queensland Police Service) young people aged less than 14 years experienced greatest victimisation of Sexual Offences (39%). Young people aged between 15 and 24 years experienced greater victimisation in relation to Assault (36%) and Robbery (47%). The greatest number of Homicides involved victims aged between 15 and 34 years (67%). More victims of assault and sexual offences were aged under 14 years than were aged over 55 years. The age of victims reported here graphically illustrates the degree to which young people, particularly those aged between 15 and 24 years, are the victim of offences considered to be personal and/or violent in nature.

The victimisation of young people is of course not limited to that which is brought to the awareness of the Police Service, however, the majority of other data collection methods used to gather victimisation information (namely victimisation surveys) do not provide information for those individuals aged under 15 years. The 1995 Crime and Safety Survey does provide information regarding the victimisation of young people living in Queensland as reported by survey respondents. 10.4% of males aged between 15-24 reported victimisation of a personal crime, higher than any other age group for males, while 7.0% of females aged between 15 and 24 years reported victimisation of a personal crime, higher than any other age group for females. It is important to note that as with official Police statistics victimisation surveys also have limitations and the survey discussed here was concerned with only that personal crime victimisation (defined as Robbery, assault, or sexual assault) that occurred in the twelve (12) months prior to the survey.

Victimisation surveys can also provide information regarding the level of crime reporting to the Police and most surveys that ask about crime reporting tend to find higher rates of reporting to the police for offences involving property than for offences involving personal victimisation. In the 1995 Crime and Safety Survey (for Queensland), 77.6% of respondents who reported victimisation of Break and Enter and 94.1% of respondents who experienced Motor Vehicle Theft indicated they had reported the offence/s to the Police. In the same survey, only 36.5% of victims of Assault and 16.2% of Sexual Assault victims had reported the offences to the Police. It could be stated that the victimisation rate as provided by Police Services worldwide could be considered conservative, perhaps particularly so for the personal/violent victimisation of young people of an age where detection by police can be problematic. Young people have been identified as one group who are less likely (than other age groups) to report violent victimisation to the police and even less likely to report victimisation in situations where the offender was known to them.

Bullying is a form of victimisation experienced by many young people during their schooling years and bullying in the workplace has been previously reported with sometimes tragic results. It is difficult to gain a clear understanding of how many young people are bullied while at school. Previous research by the Australian Community Safety & Research Organisation (ACRO) has found (self-report) rates between 37% and 52%. Bullying can be either verbal or physical, it can be perpetrated directly (face to face) or indirectly (through gossip

or exclusion). Bullies can gain power over their victims through their physical size and strength, by their status in the peer group, by targeting individual characteristics of the victim, or by recruiting other children into the bullying. The effects of bullying can be significant and distress the victim long after the bullying has ceased. Children who are bullied can exhibit low self esteem, depression, and anxiety. One study reported that children who are bullied at school are at greater risk of depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and schizophrenia in later life.

Another 'victimisation' issue that deserves attention by virtue of the significant impact on young people, even though it is not directly related to crime victimisation, is suicide. Australia has one of the highest youth suicide rates in the developed world; Queensland generally recorded higher rates than the Australian average. Suicide is now the leading cause of death for males under 30 years of age, more common than death resulting from motor vehicle accidents. In Queensland between 1990 and 1995, the rate of completed suicide per 100 000 population were highest for males aged between 20 and 24 years (Queensland rate 37, Australian rate 34.2) followed by males aged between 15 and 19 years (Queensland rate 20, Australian rate 15). While suicide among young people is not a direct concern of the crime prevention focus (of the current research) and is not discussed elsewhere in the report it is the authors experience that discussions with young people regarding victimisation (relevant to their peer group) often invokes discussions of suicide and depression as victimisation issues of significant importance and relevance to young people. Suicide is an experience that many young people have direct or indirect contact with and as a cause of harm should be included in appropriate discussions of youth victimisation along with more traditional offender:victim paradigms.

## Young People as Offenders

Information regarding the offending behaviour of young people can be drawn from a wide variety of sources within Australia, most of which are either Government or quasi-Government reports and reports produced by non-government welfare agencies. The offending behaviour of young people has held sustained interest for the community in general and this is reflected in the amount of information regarding this issue that is increasingly becoming available. The involvement of young people in criminal offending is somewhat complex. Young people within the Criminal Justice System bridge the gap between juvenile and adult. In Queensland a juvenile is considered to be someone aged between 10 and 16 years, after which age they are considered an adult. Information regarding those considered as juveniles (under 17 years of age) and young people (under 25 years of age) will both be presented here, however, the reader should be cautioned to take particular care about which age group is being represented.

In the Central Region in 1996/1997 the majority of offenders apprehended for Homicide were aged between 25 and 39 years. A similar number of offenders from each age group covering the ages 15 to 29 were apprehended for offences of Assault. The highest number of offenders apprehended for Sexual offences were males aged between 30-39. The highest number of offenders apprehended for Robbery were aged between 15 and 19 years.

In the Central Region in 1996/1997 the greatest number of offenders apprehended for the listed property offences are aged between 15 and 19 years, followed by those aged under 14 years. While these figures could be seen to support a perception that juveniles are responsible for the greatest proportion of property related offences, the logic of this perception based on the figures presented does not withstand close scrutiny. The table lists the number of offenders apprehended for the listed offences in a particular region of Queensland and it may be unlikely that the age characteristics of apprehended persons accurately reflects the actual age characteristics of all offenders. Specifically, it would seem unlikely that a young person aged under 14 years is more likely to commit an act of Breaking and Entering than is a person aged between 20-24 years or 25-29 years, however, it would seem very likely that a person aged under 14 years would be more likely to be 'caught' committing such an offence than would an older person. Several factors characteristic of juvenile offending have been identified as increasing the likelihood that these young people will be apprehended by police at a greater rate than adult offenders; juveniles tend to offend in groups and tend to offend closer to their place of residence.

In order for the age of an offender to be identified and reported within official statistics there is an obvious requirement that some offence reported to the Police has been 'cleared' or in more common language that a specific individual has been identified by Police as having committed that particular offence, although not necessarily charged or found guilty of that offence. Personal/violent offences tend to have higher clear up rates than do those offences that involve higher involvement by juveniles. For Queensland, Central Region in 1996/1997, 88% of all Homicides reported in that year were cleared, 70% of all Assaults, 69% of all Sexual Offences, and 32% of all Robberies. In contrast, for the same area and period, 18% of Break and Entering offences reported in that year were cleared, 26% of all Arson offences, 22% of Other Property Damage offences, 33% Motor Vehicle Theft offences, 22% Stealing offences, and 59% of all Fraud offences.

The offences that appear to have the highest involvement of juvenile involvement are also those offences typically with low clear up rates and as such it is impossible to extrapolate the discussion of juvenile involvement in these offences to the level of an expectation that juveniles are responsible for the greatest percentage of these offences. It is true however that for the low percentage of these offences

that are cleared by Police, juveniles are often the offenders apprehended. This may say more about the offending behaviour of juveniles and lack of 'criminal expertise' displayed rather than the high level of involvement of these age groups in specific offences against property. Juvenile involvement in any offence is of concern to the community, however, for the reasons stated above it may not be possible to gauge (from Official statistics alone) an accurate level of juvenile involvement based on the level of apprehension for many property related offences.

The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) in 1997 provided some long term information regarding the involvement of juveniles and adults in specific cleared offences between 1983-1994, reported as change in the rate per 100 000 of age specific population for Australia. Between 1983 and 1994, juvenile involvement in Motor Vehicle Theft (increased by 59.8%), Fraud (increased by 37.7%), and Robbery (increased by 252.9%) had increased, while juvenile involvement in Break and Enter (decreased by 25.6%) had fallen. Adult involvement in all of the listed offences had increased; Motor Vehicle Theft by 31.8%, Fraud by 146.4%, Robbery by 40%, and Break and Enter by 50.4%. Information specific to Queensland was provided in Juvenile Crime and Justice (1997) and detailed changes in the rate of offending per 100 000 of juvenile population (10-16 years) between 1991 and 1996. For property related crimes, the rate of juvenile involvement in cleared offences had increased for; Arson and Property Damage, but decreased for; Break, Enter, and Steal-Total, Break, Enter, and Steal-Dwellings, Break, Enter, and Steal-Shops and Other, Motor Vehicle Theft, Stealing, and Fraud. For personal/violent crimes juvenile involvement in cleared offences had increased for; Serious Assault, Common Assault, Robbery-Total, Robbery-Armed and Robbery-Unarmed, but decreased for; Homicide. The rate (per 100 000) of adult involvement in all of the property and personal/violent offences (listed above for juveniles) had increased, except for Motor Vehicle Theft (rate remained stable) and Homicide (rate decreased).

### **Young People and Social Order**

"The children of today now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority, they show disrespect for adults and love to talk rather than work or exercise. They contradict their parents, chatter in front of company, gobble down food at the table, and intimidate their teachers" Socrates, 489-399 BC

The behaviour of young people that most concerns older members of the community may not necessarily involve any criminal act. The use of public space by young people as a place to 'hang out' without any associated tangible activity is often enough to cause concern for those people who observe this youthful ritual. Young people use public spaces for the same range of reasons as other people in society. However, young people tend to use public space to a more significant degree as places to provide peer interaction and as (affordable) places to spend time (outside of school and home). Community members are not only concerned about the likelihood of young people ('hanging out' in public places) offending against the law, many seem just as concerned about the seeming absence of positively focused, skill building activities that would draw involvement from young people and provide a protective factor against their involvement in a range of antisocial and risk associated behaviour (such as drug and alcohol abuse). The perception of a young generation in opposition with the accepted social order is not new, what may be new is the altruistic concern that is demonstrated by older community members regarding the perils that face young people growing up in contemporary society. The seeming lack of engagement of many young people in 'community life' is not only seen as a slight against the social order of that community but also to increase the risk of those disengaged young people becoming involved in activities that will have significant social and economic cost to themselves and the wider community.

The concern expressed by community members regarding the level of youth usage of public spaces is a consistent phenomenon across rural and urban communities. The concerns expressed by community members often refer to issues related to community safety, in terms of young people displaying nuisance behaviour, involvement in offending, and also the risk of victimisation for young people themselves. A 1996 report 'Young People in Public Spaces – Mackay ' reported on a youth consultation project and seven (7) activities conducted with young people visiting the Mackay city area. The report made a series of recommendations regarding the improved management of public spaces and usage by young people. The recommendations outlined specific strategies that generally focused on the citizenship and development skills (or the lack of) of young people, relationships between young people and other users of public space, and the social belonging of young people particularly in the targeted area (inner city spaces).

Several Mackay suburbs have also been subject to reports detailing consultation with youth (and other concerned community members) and specific projects undertaken to address 'youth issues' in these localised areas. The S.T.E.P.S Youth Project provided youth activities from a location extremely accessible to young people living in Andergrove/Beaconsfield and reported that the young people who participated in the program; demonstrated improved social skills, appreciated the opportunity to participate in skills based activities. The report identified difficulties for young people accessing transport to facilities and activities outside of their local suburb. The S.T.E.P.S project followed on from a youth needs analysis conducted in Andergrove/Beaconsfield that isolated a range of issues concerning youth in those suburbs, including; transport difficulties, access to supportive services (social and employment), recreational opportunities, and underage access to alcohol. Slade Point Youth Issues Research Report – December 1996 detailed research conducted as a result of stakeholder meetings targeting specific behaviour (by young people) that was considered problematic in the local area. The report made a series of recommendations that focused on; environmental design (to facilitate crime prevention), the 'migration' of young people to the City Heart, suitability/effectiveness of current youth services (in local operation), sense of community ownership, and community

mobilisation against crime.

## Conclusion

It is clear, both from victimisation surveys and official Police Statistics that young people aged under 25 years are subject to greater personal victimisation than are people in other age groups. It is perhaps unfortunate that the information available on personal and/or violent crime victimisation does not particularly reflect this situation accurately. It is also true that young people aged under 25 years are over-represented in certain specific criminal offences as perpetrators (as opposed to victims), however, this area of youth involvement in 'crime and safety' does not seem to be subject to the same degree of paucity of information as does the victimisation of youth. Young peoples use of public space is an issue that is generating a significant degree of discussion in local communities across Australia. Discussions may arise due to antisocial behaviour exhibited by young people and directed at or observed by other community members or the discussion may simply arise due to the highly visible nature of young people's presence in public spaces. Communities that enter into interventions regarding young peoples use of public space should be very specific about their concerns and what they are trying to achieve through the development of interventions.

Young people are obviously significant stakeholders in the issues of victimisation, offending, and public spaces. To seek to address the problematic nature of these issues by treating young people as a 'target group' will in all likelihood have effectively failed before commencement. Young people are at greater risk of personal/violent victimisation and as such have much to gain from becoming engaged in preventing victimisation. Young people are overrepresented in specific criminal offences, and given what we know about the implications of involvement in the Criminal Justice System (in terms of future offending), young people certainly have much to gain from interventions that seek to prevent crime. Young people in many communities heavily utilise public spaces (often not many other options are available) and certainly they have a significant stake in community action generally concerning public space (what facilities are available and where) and particularly where that action seeks to impact on their use of that area. Successful communities will be those that actively and consistently engage young people in decision-making processes regarding issues where they are clearly significant stakeholders.

## Methodology

### The Survey Instrument

Design of questions was driven by several factors; the focus of the research, the aims of the research, previous research conducted by ACRO, and previous research conducted worldwide. To be included questions needed to target three broad areas; crime attitudes, crime experiences, and crime prevention needs/attitudes/experiences.

The questionnaire was self-administered, combining open/closed response formats. Most closed format questions utilise a likert scale response or dichotomous response. Most questions required single responses, but several allowed for multiple responses.

The questionnaire is composed of four sections; Section One (1) Attitude questions; Section Two (2) Experiential questions; Section Three (3) Crime Prevention questions; Section Four (4) Demographic questions.

The questionnaire contained a total of thirty-eight (38) questions. The questionnaire booklet provided instructions for completion and a comment section for use by respondents.

Throughout development of the questionnaire, individuals within the community (not research population) completed draft surveys and provided feedback on the questions, format, and suggestions for inclusion. Feedback was also sought from crime prevention practitioners via the Internet, and from community organisations working with gay and lesbian community members and victims of domestic violence.

Readers who would like more information regarding the Survey Instrument are advised to contact the Publishers of this report: ACRO

Australian Community Safety

& Research Organisation, Incorporated

PO Box 440

## Survey Administration

Survey packages were delivered to each participating organisation, ready for distribution to young people.

Survey packages contained:

- A cover letter introducing the questionnaire, and instructions for questionnaire completion to be read by class leaders.
- Sufficient copies of the survey for each class level and extra copies should they be required.

## Sample

All State Secondary Schools in the Mackay Local Government Area were invited to participate in the survey process. Permission to conduct research in this setting was sought from and granted by Education Queensland. There was no onus on schools to participate.

All three (3) schools approached accepted the opportunity to participate, and all available year 10 to 12 classes were selected to complete the survey. As a self-administered instrument the survey did require a certain level of literacy and it was felt by the researchers that students in year 10 and onwards would have the optimal skills required for survey completion.

All schools that participated were offered feedback on the survey results.

The sample also includes participants from the earlier Community survey research (via mail) that reported their age as less than 25 years.

## Survey Distribution and Return

A Census day and time was individually nominated by each of the participating schools and the relevant number of class labeled survey packages were delivered to each school for administration during that time. Completed survey packages and any incomplete surveys were collected by the researchers shortly after the Census day.

# Demographics

## Gender

Of the 1014 surveys returned, the gender of 45 respondents was unable to be determined because no response was given to this question or a multiple response was given. Of the remaining respondents, 44.8% (434) were female and 55.2% (535) were male.

## Age

The Youth Report incorporates all respondents who completed surveys through the participation of Secondary State Schools and respondents aged less than 25 years who completed the earlier Community surveys conducted via mail. 93.8% (952) respondents were aged between 12 and 18 years while 6.2% (62) were aged between 19 and 24 years.

## Grade Level

Of the 1014 surveys returned the grade level of 62 respondents was unable to be determined because no response was given to this question or a multiple response was given. Of the remaining 952 respondents, 43.4% (413) of respondents were in Grade 10, 31.3% (298) of respondents were in Grade 11 and 25.3% (240) of respondents were in Grade 12.

## Racial/Ethnic Background

Respondents were asked to identify those ethnic categories that they most identified with, more than one choice was acceptable. A little

over three quarters of respondents identified as Australian, followed by European (9.6%), Aboriginal Australian (7.7%), Torres Strait Islander (7.1%), New Zealand (6.2%), and Asian (3.4%). 4.6% of respondent identified a racial/ethnic background other than those listed as an option was provided for South Sea Islander it is likely that many of those respondents reported this background in the other category. Refer Table 4.

**Table 4 Racial/Ethnic Background as Identified by Respondents (All)**

<b>Racial/Ethnic Background</b>	<b>% (n) of Respondents per Category (All)</b>
<b>Australian</b>	85.9% (871)
<b>Aboriginal Australian</b>	7.7% (78)
<b>Torres Strait Islander</b>	7.1% (72)
<b>Asian</b>	3.4% (34)
<b>European</b>	9.6% (97)
<b>New Zealand</b>	6.2% (63)
<b>Other</b>	4.6% (47)

## Employment

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the categories provided best described their employment situation. One of the options was Secondary Student, but many respondents felt other 'employment' options better fitted their situation. 160 respondents did not answer this question or provided a multiple response that could not be interpreted. Of the 854 respondents who provided responses, the greatest majority of respondents indicated that they were Secondary school students (50.2%), followed by student with part time employment (22.4%), or unemployed – seeking work (12.1%).

## Household

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the categories provided best described their household. 36 respondents did not answer this question or provided a multiple response that could not be interpreted. More than half of the remaining 978 respondents described their household as a couple with children (60.5%), followed by extended families (16.5%), one parent with children (15.8%), share accommodation (3.5%), as a couple (2.1%), and living alone (1.5%).

## Time Lived in Suburb

Respondents were asked to indicate how long they had lived in their current suburb. 14 respondents did not answer this question or provided a multiple response that could not be interpreted. Of the remaining 1000 respondents, 55.4% had lived in their suburb for longer than five years, 13.4% between three and five years, 17.2% between one and three years, and 14% for less than one year.



# Analysis

## Section 1

### Survey Responses of All Youth Respondents

#### Summary

The following summary provides brief highlights of the statistical analysis conducted on the surveys completed by all respondents aged between 12 and 24 years.

- Nearly eight out of ten respondents agreed they **felt safe from crime** when out alone in their neighbourhood during the day and when travelling to and from work/school alone. About three quarters of respondents agreed they felt safe from crime in their own home.
- Respondents **felt most vulnerable** when using parking lots at night, when passing a group of young men on the street and when out alone in their neighbourhood at night.
- Less than half of all youth respondents agreed that **young people make a positive contribution to the community**.
- About half of all youth respondents agreed that **young people commit most crime** while less than one in five agreed that **young people are more commonly victimised** (than other age groups).
- About half of all respondents agreed that **elderly people are more commonly victimised** (than other age groups).
- A little more than one quarter of all youth respondents agreed that **crime was a problem** (in their suburb) and **negatively impacted on lifestyle** (in their suburb).
- More than half of all respondents believed that **property crime had increased** in their suburb (in the last three years) but less than half believed that **personal/violent crime had increased**.
- A little more than one in ten respondents named **areas in their suburb** where they **did not feel safe during the day**. Over one-third of respondents named areas in their suburb where they **did not feel safe at night**. About one in ten respondents named areas in their **school** where they **did not feel safe**.
- Nearly half of all youth respondents had experienced **property crime victimisation**. Most offences had occurred while they were living in their current suburb and had occurred at their place of residence. About one quarter of respondents claimed to have personally known the person who committed the offence. About two thirds of respondents had reported the offence to the police, the most common reason given for non-reporting was that the matter wasn't serious enough. About half of respondents who had reported the offence to the police had received feedback regarding action taken. More than three quarters of respondents who received feedback from the police were satisfied with the outcome, while about a quarter of those who had not received feedback felt the same way.
- About one in five of all youth respondents had experienced **personal/violent victimisation**. More than half of those who reported victimisation said that they had been living in their current suburb. Nearly half of all respondents reported that the offence had occurred at their home. The other places where the victimisation had commonly occurred were on the street and at another home. More than two thirds of respondents (who reported victimisation) said that they personally knew the person who committed the offence. A little more than one third of respondents had reported the matter to the police, the most common reasons for non-reporting included that the matter wasn't serious enough, they handled it themselves, and fear/concern about revenge from the offender. A little more than half of respondents who had reported the matter to the police had received feedback regarding action taken. About two thirds of respondents who had received feedback were satisfied with the outcome, while about half of respondents who had not received feedback felt the same way.
- About one in ten respondents agreed that **violence is a problem in their family home**.
- About one in ten respondents reported they had experienced **victimisation** they felt was based on their **racial/ethnic background**. Less than one in ten respondents reported they had experienced **victimisation** they felt was based on their **sexuality**.
- About one quarter of all youth respondents reported they had been **bullied at school** in the last three years. About half of those who indicated they had been bullied had reported the matter to the school. The most common reasons for non-reporting included the matter wasn't serious enough, fear of further bullying as a result of reporting, the belief that the school would not take action,

and that the respondent had handled it themselves. More than half of those who had reported the matter to the school indicated they had received feedback regarding the action taken. More than two thirds of those respondents who had received feedback were satisfied with the outcome while less than one quarter of respondents who had not received feedback felt the same way. A common reason for dissatisfaction was that the bullying had continued/was still happening.

- A small percentage of respondents reported they had been **bullied at work**. Less than half of those who had been bullied had reported it to the employer. Most of the respondents who had reported the matter to the employer had received feedback and were satisfied with the outcome.
- About one third of all youth respondents reported they had **contact with the police** in the last three years. Nearly two thirds of those respondents reported that the police treated them positively. About one in five of those respondents who felt they were not treated positively by the police indicated they had been charged with an offence.
- Nearly one third of respondents indicated they had witnessed no offences during the last year. The most commonly **witnessed offences** were Drug Dealing, Break and Enter, Vandalism, and Assault. More than half of those respondents who indicated they had witnessed crime in the last year reported between one and three offences.
- About four in ten respondents indicated they had not undertaken any **safety strategies** in the last year because they felt safe, while less than one in ten reported they had not undertaken any safety strategies because they were not sure what to do. The most common strategies undertaken by respondents were Installing security screens/alarms, Bought a dog/guard dog, Discussed safety with children /parents and Locked doors when traveling in a car.
- About one in ten of youth respondents reported they were currently **involved in community groups/programs** while about one in five reported involvement in the last five (5) years. The most common groups nominated by respondents were sporting groups, Neighbourhood Watch, etc, and service groups.
- More than three quarters of all youth respondents reported they regularly **talked to their neighbours**.
- More than half of all youth respondents agreed that the **Community can be an active force in crime prevention**, while nearly half agreed that **effective crime prevention programs would benefit their suburb** and that **programs should tackle the underlying causes of crime**.
- About three quarters of all youth respondents agreed that the **police alone cannot prevent crime**, while about one quarter agreed that the **police were doing a good job tackling crime in the community**.
- The most commonly selected **crime prevention programs** for introduction in their suburb were Facilities such as lighting, paths etc, Safety checks for older neighbours, After school activities for youth,

## Section 1

### Survey Responses of All Youth Respondents

#### Detailed Analysis

The following pages contain the details of statistical analysis conducted on the surveys completed by all respondents aged between 12 and 24 years.

#### Feelings of Safety

Survey respondents were asked to respond to statements relating to their personal feelings of safety in specific situations. Seven

statements concerning feelings of safety from crime were posed to respondents, with responses ranging along a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. These statements were designed to gauge a level of general concern that respondents exhibit regarding crime and everyday situations.

Respondents reported feeling most safe when out alone in their neighbourhood during the day, followed by travelling to and from work/school alone, and when in their own home. Respondents felt less safe when using shopping centres at night, when alone in their neighbourhood at night and when passing a group of young men on the street. Respondents felt least safe when using parking lots at night. Refer Table 5.

**Table 5 Feelings of Safety in Specific Situations**

Safety Statements :Section One	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Total
I feel safe from crime in my own home	74.1% (748)	14.6% (147)	11.4% (115)	100% (1010)
I feel safe from crime when at Shopping Centres at night	50.5% (508)	24.7% (248)	24.9% (250)	100% (1006)
I feel safe when passing a group of young men on the street	30.9% (3110)	31% (312)	38.1% (384)	100% (1007)
I feel safe when using parking lots at night	22.6% (227)	34.9% (351)	42.5% (428)	100% (1006)
I feel safe when travelling to and from work/school alone	78.3% (788)	11.6% (117)	10.1% (102)	100% (1007)
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood during the day	81.6% (819)	9.8% (98)	8.7% (87)	100% (1004)
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood at night	38.6% (385)	18.7% (186)	42.7% (426)	100% (997)

### Attitudes towards Crime

Four questions in the survey asked about community perceptions regarding crime and young people. These questions were designed to gauge a level of support for the statements and thus an understanding of the level of community acceptance of the 'perceptions.'

40% (403) of respondents believed that *Young people make a positive contribution to the community*, while 17.8% (179) disagreed. Even though this statement directly targeted the respondent group and did not require any 'specialist knowledge' regarding crime issues, 42.2% (425) of young people were unsure of their belief regarding this statement.

Less than half of the respondents (44.8%) agreed that *Young people (under 24 years) commit most crime* while 23.6% disagreed with the statement. 16.8% (169) of respondents agreed that *Young people (under 24 years) are more likely than others to be the victims of crime*, while 39.3% (394) disagreed with the statement.

50.6% (508) of respondents agreed that *Elderly people are more likely than others to be the victims of crime*, while 23.6% (237) disagreed with the statement.

### **Crime in their Suburb**

Four questions in the survey asked about crime in the respondents own suburb. The respondents own suburb was targeted in these questions as it was felt that this was an area the respondents would have greatest 'lived knowledge' regarding the crime situation and their beliefs regarding the prevalence of crime.

About one quarter of the respondents agreed that *Crime is a problem in my suburb* (26.8%:268) while 38.1% (381) disagreed. 28.9% (291) agreed that *Crime had a negative effect on the lifestyle of people living in my suburb*. Many young people were unsure about their opinions in response to these statements, respondents were most unsure (52.9%:532) regarding the impact of crime on the lifestyle of people living in their suburb.

Respondents were also asked about their beliefs regarding the change in crime in their suburb in the last three (3) years. Respondents were more likely to believe that property crime had increased (57.5%:567) than personal/violent crime (44.5%:441).

### **Areas of Concern in their Neighbourhood and School**

Respondents were asked about areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe (during the day and at night) and also about areas in their schools where they did not feel safe. Respondents were also asked to provide their reason for feeling unsafe in these areas. Respondents could give any response as the questions were open ended, responses were then coded into the categories that best fitted the response. Responses that did not correspond with any coding category were coded as 'Other'.

13.5% (133) of respondents reported there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe during the day. The most common areas nominated were local parks and bushland (33.6%), followed by 'everywhere' (17.6%), their local streets/or suburb (15.1%), and local entertainment venue or shopping centre (15.1%). The most common reasons for feeling unsafe in these areas was that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent the areas (60.9%), that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (8.2%), that the area has poor lighting/poor design (7.3%), and that the area is alone/isolated (6.4%).

39.6% (389) of respondents reported there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe at night. The most common areas nominated were local parks and bushland (31%), followed by their local streets /or suburb (20.5%), everywhere (10.5%), local beaches (10%), and local entertainment venue or shopping centre (6.9%). The most common reasons for feeling unsafe in these areas were that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent the areas (45%), that the area has poor lighting/poor design (37.3%), that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (5.9%), and that the area is alone/isolated (2.8%).

8.3% (77) of respondents reported areas in their school where they felt unsafe. Readers are reminded that respondents came from several schools in the Mackay Local Government Area and the areas nominated by respondents obviously relate to areas within their own specific school. The most common areas nominated were an area near or on the oval (25.4%), an area near a classroom (16.4%), the toilets (14.9%), where the 'tough' kids sit (11.9%), and an area outside the school grounds (11.9%). The most common reasons for feeling unsafe in these areas were that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent that place (41.4%), the fear of being hurt (19%), and that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (15.5%).

### **Property Crime Victimization**

40.3% (394) of respondents reported that they had been the victim of a property related crime during their lifetime. Of those who had experienced property crime victimisation, 65.9% had been living in their current suburb when the offence occurred, 64.3% reported that the offence had occurred at their place of residence while 35.6% reported that the offence had occurred somewhere other than their place of residence. The most common places (other than the home) reported by respondents were school (28.3%), another home/place of residence (18.6%), a place of business (eg; shops) (17.7%), and on the street (15%).

27.6% (114) reported they had known the person who committed the offence.

64.3% had reported the offence to the police. Of those who didn't report the offence to the police the most common reasons for non-reporting were that it wasn't important enough (41.5%), they handled it themselves (often included reporting matter to school where relevant) (20.3%), that the police wouldn't catch the person/the courts would be too lenient in sentencing (8.5%), and that the police wouldn't do anything about it (8.5%).

Of those who had reported the offence to the police 44% indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding the offence. Of those who had received feedback 76.9% were satisfied with the outcome. Of those respondents who did receive feedback after reporting the offence (44%) the most common reasons for not being satisfied with the outcome were that the respondent believed the offender was not identified or apprehended (36%), not getting the items back (20%), believed their complaint was not taken seriously (12%), and believed that police took no action regarding their complaint (8%).

Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, only 27.2% were satisfied with the outcome. The most common reasons given for not being satisfied were that the respondent believed that their complaint was not taken seriously (25.3%), the offender was not identified or apprehended (18.9%), police took no action regarding their complaint (15.8%), and not getting the items back (15.8%).

### **Personal/ Violent Crime Victimization**

21.6% (211) of respondents reported that they had been the victim of a personal/violent crime during their lifetime. Of those who did report personal/violent victimisation 59.2% reported they had been living in their current suburb at the time of the offence. 45% reported that the offence had occurred at their home. Of those who reported the offence occurred at somewhere other than their home the most common locations reported were on the street (28.2%), at another home (24.5%), at an entertainment venues (23.6%), and school (14.5%).

67.6% (148) had known the person who committed the offence.

34.4% (76) indicated that they had reported the offence to the police. Of those who didn't report the matter to the police the most common reasons given for non-reporting were that the matter wasn't serious enough (24%), that they had handled it themselves (included reporting to the school where relevant) (19.2%), fear/concern about revenge from the offender (17.3%), didn't want anyone to know (11.5%), and that the offender would not be identified or that the courts would be lenient in sentencing (5.8%).

Of those who had reported the offence 51.2% indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding action taken. Of those who had received feedback from the police, 65% were satisfied with the outcome. Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, 52.2% were satisfied with the outcome.

### **Violence in the Home**

10% (101) of respondents agreed that *Violence from family members is a problem in my home*.

### **Violence based on Racial/Ethnic Background**

10.7% (107) respondents reported that in the last three (3) years they had been the victim of violence based on their racial/ethnic background.

### **Violence based on Sexuality**

7.3% (73) of respondents reported that in the last three (3) years they had been the victim of violence based on their sexuality.

### **Bullying at School**

26.1% (259) of respondents reported that in the last three (3) years they had been bullied at school. 52.6% of those who had been bullied had reported it to the school. The most common reasons for non-reporting were that the bullying was not serious enough (38%),

fear of further/increased bullying as a result of reporting (29%), handled it themselves (22%), and that the respondent believed the school wouldn't do anything about it (7%).

Of those who had reported the bullying to the school 61.7% had received feedback regarding action taken. Of those who had received feedback from the school 69% reported they were satisfied with the outcome. The most common reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome were that the bullying was still happening/continued, and that no action was taken. Note: these reasons are listed in the order of their frequency, percentages cannot be provided, as the number of respondents in this category was small.

Of those respondents who had received no feedback from the school, only 23.8% were satisfied with the outcome. Of the 76.2% who were not satisfied with the outcome the most common reasons given were that no action was taken (48.6%), and that the bullying was still happening/continued (14.3%).

### **Bullying in the Workplace**

2.9% (28) of respondents reported that in the last three (3) years they had been bullied at work. 43.9% of those who had been bullied had reported it to the employer. The most common reason for non-reporting was that the employer wouldn't do anything about it anyway.

77.8% of those who had reported the matter to the employer had received feedback from the employer and 71.4% of those were satisfied with the outcome. Of those who had reported the matter but had received no feedback 5.6% reported that they were satisfied with the outcome.

### **Police Contact**

35.3% (351) of respondents reported that they had contact with a member of the Police Service in the last three (3) years (excluding contact due to traffic offences). Of those who reported 'police contact' 59% (184) reported that they felt they had been treated positively by police. Of the 41% (128) who reported the 'police contact' was not positive, 22.9% reported that their contact resulted in charges being laid against them.

### **Witnessing Crime**

31.1% (315) of respondents reported that they (or a member of their household) had witnessed no crime in the last twelve (12) months. It is highly likely that respondents considered witnessing of the result of a crime (rather than a crime in progress) as 'witnessing' for survey completion. Table 6 shows the percentage and number of respondents who indicated they had witnessed each of the listed crimes on the survey form.

The most commonly reported property related crimes witnessed (as indicated by survey completion) by respondents were Vandalism and Break and Enter. The most commonly reported personal/violent related crimes witnessed (as indicated by survey completion) by respondents were Assault, Robbery, and Domestic Violence. 40.9% of respondents reported witnessing Drug Dealing, it is likely that witnessing of the distribution of drugs generally was considered by respondents as an incident of Drug Dealing.

The majority of respondents (54.6%) who reported witnessing offences in the last twelve (12) months reported witnessing between one (1) and three (3) forms of crime. 31.8% reported witnessing between four (4) and six (6) crimes, and 13.5% reported witnessing more than six (6) crimes.

**Table 6 Crimes Witnessed in Previous Twelve (12) months**

<b>Type of Offence</b>	<b>% (n) Witnesses</b>
Break and Enter	36.4% (369)
Motor Vehicle Theft	14.5% (147)

Vandalism	38.9% (394)
Business Theft/Vandalism	10.9% (111)
Bag Snatching	6.3% (64)
Stalking	12.7% (129)
Domestic Violence	18.5% (188)
Assault	24.2% (245)
Robbery	20.6% (209)
Rape	8% (81)
Homicide	2% (20)
Other Sexual Offences	4.5% (46)
Child Abuse/Neglect	9.2% (93)
Drug Dealing	40.9% (415)
Other	3.6% (37)

**Table 7 Safety Strategies Undertaken in Previous Twelve (12) Months**

<b>Safety Strategy</b>	<b>% (n) of Respondents</b>
Pruned shrubs away from doors/windows	6.7% (68)
Discussed safety with children/parents	12.8% (130)
Bought a dog/guard dog	18.4% (187)
Installed security screens/alarms	24.3% (246)
Moved house	4.2% (43)
Changed method of transport/travel	2.7% (27)
Changed leisure activities	1.9% (19)
Changed shopping times/places	3.1% (31)
Restricted activities at night	6% (61)
Stopped living alone	1.3% (13)
Locked doors when traveling in a car	11.2% (114)
Other	5.7% (58)

## Safety Strategies

Respondents were asked about strategies they or a member of their household had undertaken in the last year to improve their safety. 44.1% (447) of respondents reported they had not undertaken any of the listed safety strategies because they felt safe while 6.7% (68) reported they had not undertaken strategies as they were not sure what to do. Table 7 shows the percentage and number of respondents who indicated they had undertaken the listed safety strategy on the survey form.

The most common strategies undertaken by respondents were the installation of security screens/alarms, bought a dog/guard dog, discussed safety with children/parents, and locked doors when traveling in a car.

## Community Involvement

14.1% (141) of respondents reported that they were currently involved in local community groups/programs. The most common groups respondents reported involvement with were sporting groups (45.5%), Neighbourhood Watch, Safety House, YACCA, or PCYC (18.2%), and scouts/guides/cadets/service groups (12.9%).

20.8% (207) of respondents reported that in the last five (5) years they had been involved in local community groups/programs. The most common groups respondents reported involvement with were sporting groups (38.7%), Neighbourhood Watch, Safety House, YACCA, or PCYC (25.3%), and scouts/guides/cadets/service groups (14.5%).

77.4% (779) reported that they regularly talked to the people living nearby in their neighbourhood.

## Attitudes towards Crime Prevention

58% (584) of respondents agreed that *The Community (with Police/Government support) can be an effective force in preventing crime*, while 11.9% (120) disagreed.

41.1% (415) of respondents agreed that *Effective community programs that tackle crime issues would benefit my suburb*, while 14% (141) disagreed. 47.6% (477) of respondents agreed that *Crime prevention programs should target the underlying causes of crime*, while 8.1% (81) disagreed.

74.8% (755) of respondents agreed that *Police alone cannot prevent crime occurring in the Community*, while 9.7% (98) disagreed. 27% (269) of respondents agreed that *The Police are doing a good job tackling crime in the Community*, while 37.3% (372) disagreed.

## Crime Prevention Programs

The most commonly selected programs (for introduction in their suburb) were Facilities such as lighting, paths etc, Safety checks for older neighbours, After school activities for youth (12-18 years), and Foot/bike patrols by Police. Refer Table 8.

**Table 8 Crime Prevention Programs for Introduction in Suburb**

Crime Prevention Program/Facilities	% (n) of Respondents
After school activities for youth (12-18 years)	30% (304)
Safety checks for older neighbours	32.7% (332)
Support services for families	14.8% (150)

Support networks for those living alone	16.4% (166)
Programs for increased communication between neighbours	16% (162)
Neighbourhood graffiti clean-ups	13.8% (140)
Foot/bike patrols by Police	24.4% (247)
Facility for Community development programs	7.7% (78)
School based crime prevention programs	19% (193)
Facilities such as lighting, paths, etc	53% (537)
Other	6.3% (64)

## Section 2

### Survey Responses of All Youth Respondents by Gender

#### Summary

The following summary provides brief highlights of the statistical analysis conducted on the surveys based on gender.

- Male respondents reported **feeling safer** than females in all of the situations asked about in the survey. The greatest **differences in safety feelings between males and females** were evident for the following situations; When using parking lots at night, When out alone in their neighbourhood at night, and When passing a group of young men on the street.
- Females were slightly more likely than males to agree that **young people make a positive contribution to the community**.
- Males were more likely than females to agree that **young people commit most crime** and females were slightly more likely than males to agree that **young people are more likely to experience victimisation** (than other age groups).
- Males were more likely than females to agree that **elderly people are more likely to experience victimisation** (than other age groups).
- Female respondents were more likely than males to report **areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe**, during the day and at night. Females were slightly more likely than males to report **areas in their school where they did not feel safe**.
- Similar number of males and females were more likely to have experienced **property crime victimisation**. Females were slightly more than males to report the offence had occurred at their home. Females were slightly more likely to have reported the offence to the police. Females were also more likely to have received feedback from the police.
- Females were more likely than males to have experienced **personal/violent victimisation**. Females were more likely than males

to have reported the offence occurred at their home. Of those respondents who reported the offence occurred somewhere other than their home, males were more likely to have reported the offence occurred at an entertainment venue while females were more likely to have reported the offence occurred at another home. Females were more likely than males to have personally known the person who committed the offence. Females were more likely than males to have indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding their complaint.

- Similar numbers of males and females reported that **violence was a problem in their family home**.
- Males were slightly more likely than females to have reported **victimisation** they felt was based on their **racial/ethnic background**, while females were more likely than males to report victimisation they felt was based on their **sexuality**.
- Similar numbers of males and females had experienced **bullying at school**. Females were more likely than males to have reported the bullying to the school.
- Similar numbers of males and females had experienced **bullying at work**.
- Similar numbers of males and females had **contact with the police** in the last three years.
- Males were slightly more likely to have reported they had not **witnessed crime** in the last year. Females were more likely than males to have witnessed Business Theft/Vandalism, Bag Snatching, Domestic Violence, Rape, Other Sexual Offences, and Child/Abuse Neglect.
- Males were more likely than females to have not undertaken any **safety strategies** because they felt safe. Females were more likely than males to have Pruned shrubs away from doors/windows, Discussed safety with children/parents, Bought a dog/guard dog, Installed security screens/alarms, Changed leisure activities, Restricted activities at night, and Locked doors when traveling in a vehicle.
- Males and females reported similar levels of **involvement in community groups/programs** and were involved in similar groups.
- Similar numbers of males and females reported that they **regularly talked to their neighbours**.
- Males and females had similar opinions regarding the ability of the **Community to be an active force** in crime prevention, regarding the likelihood that **effective crime prevention programs would benefit their suburb** and that **programs should tackle the underlying causes of crime**.
- Males and females had similar opinions when responding to the statement **police alone cannot prevent crime in the community** and also regarding whether the **police are doing a good job tackling crime in the community**.
- When asked about **crime prevention programs** they would like introduced in their suburb, females were more likely (than males) to have selected After school activities for youth, Safety checks for older neighbours, Support services for families, Support networks for those living alone, and Facilities such as lighting, paths, etc.

## Section 2

### Survey Responses of All Youth Respondents by Gender

#### Detailed Analysis

Only the surveys of those respondents who indicated their gender (as male or female) have been used in this analysis. This section provides information regarding the differences between males and females in their completion of the survey.

#### Feelings of Safety

Survey respondents were asked to respond to statements relating to their personal feelings of safety in specific situations. Seven statements concerning feelings of safety from crime were posed to respondents, with responses ranging along a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. These statements were designed to gauge a level of general concern that respondents exhibit regarding crime and everyday situations.

Male respondents reported feeling safer than females in all situations asked about in the statements. The greatest difference between male and female respondents (with males feeling safer) were in response to the situations *When using parking lots at night* followed by *When out alone in their neighbourhood at night*, and *When passing a group of young men on the street*. Refer Table 9.

**Table 9 Feelings of Safety in Specific Situations by Gender**

Safety Statements :Section One	Agree		Unsure		Disagree	
	M	F	M	F	M	F

I feel safe from crime in my own home	80.3%	68%	11.6%	17.4%	8.1%	14.6%
I feel safe from crime when at Shopping Centres at night	55.7%	46.1%	24.2%	24.4%	20%	29.5%
I feel safe when passing a group of young men on the street	40.7%	22.1%	32.6%	29.6%	26.6%	48.3%
I feel safe when using parking lots at night	31%	14.4%	40.3%	31.3%	28.7%	54.3%
I feel safe when travelling to and from work/school alone	83.4%	74%	9.6%	13.1%	7%	12.9%
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood during the day	85.3%	77.7%	8.1%	11.5%	6.5%	10.8%
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood at night	50.6%	28.5%	19.9%	17.8%	29.6%	53.7%

### Attitudes towards Crime

Four questions in the survey asked about community perceptions regarding crime and young people. These questions were designed to gauge a level of support for the statements and thus an understanding of the level of community acceptance of the 'perceptions.'

Male and Female respondents had similar opinions in response to the statement *Young people make a positive contribution to the community*, female respondents tended to agree with the statement only slightly more frequently than male respondents (39.4% male, 41.1% female).

A little less than half of the respondents (44.6%) agreed that *Young people (under 24 years) commit most crime*, however males were more likely to agree with the statement than female (52.3% male, 38.3% female). Male and female respondents had similar opinions regarding the statement *Young people (under 24 years) are more likely than others to be the victims of crime*, female respondents tended to agree with the statement only slightly more frequently than male respondents (16.7% male, 17.1% female)..

Males were more likely (than females) to agree with the statement *Elderly people are more likely than others to be the victims of crime* (62.2% male, 41.1% female), while females disagreed with the statement more often than males (17% male, 29.8% female).

### Crime in their Suburb

Four questions in the survey asked about crime in the respondents own suburb. The respondents own suburb was targeted in these questions as it was felt that this was an area the respondents would have greatest 'lived knowledge' regarding the crime situation and their beliefs regarding the prevalence of crime.

Females were more likely (than males) to agree that *Crime is a problem in my suburb* (22.5% male, 30.2% female). 9.7% of males and 27.8% of females agreed that *Crime has a negative effect on the lifestyle of people living in my suburb*.

Respondents were also asked about their beliefs regarding the change in crime in their suburb in the last three (3) years. 54.2% of males and 59% of females believed that property crime had increased. Females were more likely than males to believe that personal/violent crime had increased (36.6% male, 50.2% female).

### Areas of Concern in their Neighbourhood and School

Respondents were asked about areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe (during the day and at night) and also about areas in their schools where they did not feel safe. Respondents were also asked to provide their reason for feeling unsafe in these areas. Respondents could give any response as the questions were open ended, responses were then coded into the categories that best fitted the response. Responses that did not correspond with any coding category were coded as 'Other'.

Females were more likely (than males) to have reported that there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe during the day (9.7% male, 16.1% female). The most common area nominated was local parks and bushland (34.3% male, 32.1% female), followed by local streets/suburb (20% male, 12.8% female), local entertainment venues/shopping centres (20% male, 12.8% female), and local beaches (8.65 male, 10.35 female). The most common reason given by both males and females for feeling unsafe in these areas were that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent the area (67.7% male, 57.5% female) and that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (9.7% male, 8.2% female).

Female respondents were more likely than males to report there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe at night (31.1% male, 46.9% female). The most common areas nominated for both male and females were local parks and bushland (27% male, 31.8% female), followed by their local streets /or suburb (20.9% male, 20.6% female), everywhere (8.7% male, 11.6% female), and local beaches (11.3% male, 9.9% female). The most common reason given by males for feeling unsafe in these areas was that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent the area (58.2% male, 38% female), for females the most common reason given was poor lighting/poor design (25.5% male, 42.7% female).

7.7% of male and 9.3% of female respondents reported areas in their school where they felt unsafe. Readers are reminded that respondents came from several schools located in the Mackay Local Government Area and the areas nominated by respondents obviously relate to areas within their own specific school. The area most commonly nominated by both male and female was an area near the oval (26.7% male, 25.7% female). Males were more likely (than females) the toilets (20% male, 11.4% female), while females were more likely (than males) to nominate an area outside of school ground (6.7% male, 17.1% female). The most common reasons for feeling unsafe in these areas were that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent that place (34.6% male, 46.7% female), the fear of being hurt (23.1% male, 16.7% female), and that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (15.4% male, 16.7% female).

### **Property Crime Victimization**

40.2% (169) of male and 39.5% (204) of female respondents reported that they had been the victim of a property related crime during their lifetime. The majority of males and females had been living in their current suburb when the offence occurred (63% male, 68.5% female). The majority of males and females reported that the offence had occurred at their place of residence (60% male, 67.8% female). 40.2% males and 30.6% females reported that the offence had occurred somewhere other than their place of residence (some respondents reported victimisation at home and elsewhere resulting in a total exceeding 100%). The most common places (other than the home) reported by respondents were school (28.8% male, 29.6% female) and another home/place of residence (15.4% male, 22.2% female).

27.8% of males and 28% of females reported they had known the person who committed the offence.

60.3% (105) of males and 67.2% (137) of females had reported the offence to the police. Of those who didn't report the offence to the police the most common reasons for non-reporting were that it wasn't important enough (45.6% male, 39.6% female), they handled it themselves (often included reporting matter to school where relevant) (26.3% male, 13.2% female), and that the police wouldn't catch the person/the courts would be too lenient in sentencing (5.3% male, 13.2% female).

36.3% of males and 48.9% of females who had reported the offence to the police indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding the offence. 76.3% of males and 74.6% of females who had received feedback were satisfied with the outcome. Of those respondents that did receive feedback the most common reasons for not being satisfied with the outcome were that the offender was not identified or apprehended and not getting the items back.

Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, only 24.7% of males and 28.6% of females were satisfied with the outcome. The most common reasons given for not being satisfied were the offender was not identified or apprehended, not getting the items back, and that the respondent believed the police took no action regarding their complaint.

### **Personal/ Violent Crime Victimization**

Females were more likely (than males) to have reported that they had been the victim of a personal/violent crime during their lifetime (13.3%:56 male, 27.9%:143 female). Of those who did report personal/violent victimisation most reported they had been living in their current suburb at the time of the offence (54.3% males, 62.1% females). Females were more likely (than males) to have reported that the offence had occurred at their home (26.5% male, 53.2% female). Of those who reported the offence occurred at somewhere other than their home the most common location reported by males was at an entertainment venue (37.8% male, 15.7% female), while for females the most common location was at another home (13.5% male, 31.4% female). A common location reported by both males and females was on the street (29.7% male, 27.2% female).

Females were more likely (than males) to have known the person who committed the offence (59.4% males, 73% females).

34.8% of males and 33.8% of females indicated that they had reported the offence to the police. Of those who didn't report the matter to the police the most common reasons given for non-reporting were that the matter wasn't serious enough (30% males, 22.6% females), fear/concern about revenge from the offender (33.3% male, 22.1% female), that they had handled it themselves (included reporting to the school where relevant) (29.2% male, 16.9% female), didn't want anyone to know (2% male, 6.8%). Another common reason for non-reporting given by males that nothing would happen to the offender even if they did report it (16.7% male, 2.6% female), while for females a common reason given was fear/concern about revenge from the offender (8.3% male, 18.2% female).

Females were more likely (than males) to indicate that the police had provided feedback regarding action taken (31.8% male, 72.3% female). Of those who had received feedback from the police, 71.4% of males and 63.6% of females were satisfied with the outcome. Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, 44.8% of males and 34.8% of females were satisfied with the outcome.

### **Violence in the Home**

8.4% (36) of males and 10.7% (57) of females agreed that *Violence from family members is a problem in my home*.

### **Violence based on Racial/Ethnic Background**

12.6% of males and 9% of females reported that in the last three (3) years they had been the victim of violence based on their racial/ethnic background.

### **Violence based on Sexuality**

Females (10.3%) were more likely than males (3.5%) to report that in the last three (3) years they had been the victim of violence based on their sexuality.

### **Bullying at School**

23.2% (99) of males and 28.8% (151) of females reported that in the last three (3) years they had been bullied at school. 46.9% of males and 55.8% of females had reported the bullying to the school. The most common reasons for non-reporting were that the bullying was not serious enough (42.9% males, 33.9% females), handled it themselves (21.4% males, 23.2% females) and fear of further/increased bullying as a result of reporting (11.9% males, 7.1% females).

61.5% of males and 62.3% of females reported they had received feedback from the school regarding action taken. Most of those who had received feedback from the school reported they were satisfied with the outcome (70.6% male, 66.7% female). The most common reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome were that the bullying was still happening/continued and that no action was taken. Note: these reasons are listed in the order of their frequency, percentages cannot be provided, as the number of respondents in this category was small.

Of those respondents who had received no feedback from the school, only 24.3% of males and 22.5% of females were satisfied with the outcome. The most common reason given for dissatisfaction was that no action was taken.

### **Bullying in the Workplace**

2.4% (10) of males and 3.3% (17) of females reported that in the last three (3) years they had been bullied at work. 30% of males and 66.7% of females who had been bullied had reported it to the employer. No other analysis of these responses could be conducted due to the low number of respondents who answered survey questions on this issue. For further information regarding Bullying in the Workplace readers are advised to use the Index.

### Police Contact

35.6% (153) of males and 34.6% (181) of females reported that they had contact with a member of the Police Service in the last three (3) years (excluding contact due to traffic offences). 54.1% of males and 63.8% of females reported that they were treated positively by police. Of those respondents who reported the 'police contact' was not positive, 29.1% of males and 15.4% of females reported that their contact resulted in charges being laid against them.

### Witnessing Crime

33.4% (145) of males and 29.5% (158) of females reported that they (or a member of their household) had witnessed no crime in the last twelve (12) months. It is highly likely that respondents considered witnessing of the result of a crime (rather than a crime in progress) as 'witnessing' for survey completion. Table 10 shows the percentage and number of respondents who indicated they had witnessed each of the listed crimes on the survey form.

Females were more likely (than males) to report witnessing of Business Theft/Vandalism, Bag Snatching, Domestic Violence, Rape, Other Sexual Offences, and Child/Abuse Neglect. 57% of males and 52.7% of males (who had reported witnessing some offence) reported witnessing between one (1) and three (3) offences.

**Table 10 Crimes Witnessed in Previous Twelve (12) months by Gender**

Type of Offence	% (n) Witnesses	
	Male	Female
Break and Enter	36.2% (157)	37% (198)
Motor Vehicle Theft	14.5% (63)	14.6% (78)
Vandalism	38.2% (1660)	40% (214)
Business Theft/Vandalism	8.5% (37)	12.7% (68)
Bag Snatching	3.5% (15)	8.6% (46)
Stalking	7.8% (34)	16.3% (87)
Domestic Violence	15.4% (67)	21.3% (114)
Assault	23.7% (103)	24.3% (130)
Robbery	19.1% (83)	21.3% (114)
Rape	4.4% (19)	10.8% (58)
Homicide	2.1% (9)	1.9% (10)
Other Sexual Offences	2.5% (11)	6.4% (34)
Child Abuse/Neglect	5.8% (25)	12% (64)
Drug Dealing	38.7% (168)	43% (230)

Other	3% (13)	4.3% (23)
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## Safety Strategies

Respondents were asked about strategies they or a member of their household had undertaken in the last year to improve their safety. Males were more likely to have reported they had not undertaken any of the listed safety strategies because they felt safe (57.8% male, 33.1% female). Females were more likely (than males) to have reported they had not undertaken strategies as they were not sure what to do (3.9% males, 9% females). Table 11 shows the percentage and number of male and female respondents who indicated they had undertaken the listed safety strategy on the survey form.

**Table 11 Safety Strategies Undertaken in Previous Twelve (12) Months by Gender**

Safety Strategy	% (n) of Respondents	
	Male	Female
Pruned shrubs away from doors/windows	4.1% (18)	8.4% (5)
Discussed safety with children/parents	6% (26)	18.5% (99)
Bought a dog/guard dog	14.1% (610)	22.1% (118)
Installed security screens/alarms	18.7% (81)	28.8% (154)
Moved house	3.5% (15)	4.9% (26)
Changed method of transport/travel	2.8% (12)	2.8% (15)
Changed leisure activities	0.9% (4)	2.8% (15)
Changed shopping times/places	1.8% (8)	4.3% (23)
Restricted activities at night	2.3% (10)	9.3% (50)
Stopped living alone	0.7% (3)	1.7% (9)
Locked doors when traveling in a car	6.7% (29)	15% (80)
Other	5.1% (22)	6.4% (34)

Females were more likely than males to have Pruned shrubs away from doors/windows, Discussed safety with children/parents, Bought a dog/guard dog, Installed security screens/alarms, Changed leisure activities, Changed shopping times/places, Restricted activities at night, and Locked doors when traveling in a vehicle.

## Community Involvement

14.9% (63) of males and 13.3% (71) of females reported that they were currently involved in local community groups/programs. 50% of males and 44.1% of females reported involvement with sporting groups. 19% of males and 16.2% of females reported involvement with Neighbourhood Watch, Safety House, YACCA, or PCYC. 15.5% of males and 10.3% of females reported involvement with scouts/guides/service groups.

19.4% (82) of males and 21.7% (115) of females reported that in the last five (5) years they had been involved in local community

groups/programs. The most common groups respondents reported involvement in were sporting groups (48% male, 34% female), Neighbourhood Watch/ Safety House/YACCA/or PCYC (21.3% male, 27.2% female), and scouts/guides/service groups (13.3% male, 15.5% female).

76.8% (331) of males and 78% (415) of females reported they regularly talked to the people living nearby in their neighbourhood.

### Attitudes towards Crime Prevention

60.4% (259) of males and 57.6% (307) of females agreed that *The Community (with Police/Government support) can be an effective force in preventing crime*, while 11.9% (51) of males and 11.6% (62) of females disagreed.

43.8% (189) of males and 39.2% (209) of females agreed that *Effective community programs that tackle crime issues would benefit my suburb*, while 13.9% (60) of males and 13.5% (72) of females disagreed. 46.7% (201) of males and 48.6% (257) of females agreed that *Crime prevention programs should target the underlying causes of crime*, while 7.7% (33) of males and 8.1% (43) of females disagreed.

71.3% (308) of males and 77.7% (414) of females agreed that *Police alone cannot prevent crime occurring in the Community*. 30.7% (130) of males and 23.8% (126) of females agreed that *The Police are doing a good job tackling crime in the Community*, while 36.8% (156) of males and 37.2% (197) of females disagreed.

### Crime Prevention Programs

Respondents were provided with ten (10) options of crime prevention programs/facilities (plus an other category) and were asked to nominate the programs/facilities they would like to see introduced in the their suburb. 804 respondents selected at least one option from those listed (and had provided their gender) and their responses are provided in Table 12.

Females tended to select more programs than males, 79% (256) of males and 66.8% (321) of females selected between one (1) and three (3) programs for 'desired introduction' in their neighbourhood.

Females were more likely (than males) to have selected After school activities for youth, Safety checks for older neighbours, Support services for families, Support networks for those living alone, and Facilities such as lighting, paths, etc.

**Table 12 Crime Prevention Programs for Introduction in Suburb by Gender**

Crime Prevention Program/Facilities	% (n) of Respondents	
	Male	Female
After school activities for youth (12-18 years)	31.8% (103)	38.5% (185)
Safety checks for older neighbours	32.7% (106)	44.6% (214)
Support services for families	12.3% (40)	21.7% (104)

## Methodology

Support networks for those living alone	15.7% (51)	22.9% (110)
Programs for increased communication between neighbours	16.7% (54)	21% (101)
Neighbourhood graffiti clean-ups	16.7% (54)	16% (77)
Foot/bike patrols by Police	33% (107)	28.1% (135)
Facility for Community development programs	8% (26)	10.4% (50)
School based crime prevention programs	22.5% (73)	24% (115)
Facilities such as lighting, paths, etc	54.3% (176)	71.9% (345)
Other	11.1% (36)	5% (24)

## Section 3

### Survey Responses of Youth and Adult Respondents

#### Summary

The following summary provides brief highlights of the statistical analysis conducted on the surveys based on age. Respondents who reported their age as 12-24 years are reported as Youth while respondents aged 25 years and over are reported Adults.

- Youth respondents reported **feeling safer** than adults in many of the situations asked about in the survey. The greatest **differences in safety feelings between youth and adults** were evident for the following situations; I feel safe from crime in my own home and When at Shopping Centres at night. The safety feelings of youth and adults were most similar in the following situations; When out alone in my neighbourhood during the day and When traveling to and from work/school alone.
- Adults were more likely than youth to agree that **young people make a positive contribution to the community**.
- Similar numbers of youth and adults agreed that **young people commit most crime** while youth were more likely than adults to agree that **young people are more likely to experience victimisation** (than other age groups).
- Adults were slightly more likely than youth to agree that **elderly people are more likely to experience victimisation** (than other age groups).
- Similar numbers of youth and adults agreed that **crime was a problem in their suburb**, while adults were slightly more likely to agree that **crime negatively impacted on lifestyles in their suburb**.
- Similar numbers of youth and adults believed that **property crime had increased** in their suburb in the last three years while youth were more likely than adults to believe that **personal/violent crime had increased**.
- Similar numbers of youth and adults respondents reported areas in their **areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe** during the day. Adults were more likely than youth to have reported there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe at night.
- Adults were more likely to have experienced **property crime victimisation**. Youth were more likely than adults to have been living in their current suburb when the offence occurred. Adults were more likely than youth to have indicated the offence took place at their place of business/employment. Youth were more likely than adults to have claimed they had personally known the person who committed the offence. Adults were more likely than youth to have reported the offence to the police.
- Youth were more likely than adults to have experienced **personal/violent victimisation**. Youth were more likely than adults to have been living in their current suburb when the offence occurred. Adults were more likely to have reported the offence occurred at their own home. Adults were more likely than youth to have reported the offence to the police. For those respondents who reported the offence to the police but did not receive feedback, youth were more likely than adults to report they were satisfied with the outcome.
- Youth were more likely than adults to have reported that **violence was a problem in their family home**.
- Youth were more likely than adults have reported **victimisation** they felt was based on their **racial/ethnic background**. Youth were also more likely than adults to report victimisation they felt was based on their **sexuality**.

- Youth were more than twice as likely than adults to have reported **bullying at school** (of children for adult respondents). Adults were more likely than youth to have reported the bullying to the school. For those respondents who reported the bullying to the school but did not receive feedback, youth were more likely than adults to report they were satisfied with the outcome.
- Adults were more likely than youth to have experienced **bullying at work**.
- Similar numbers of youth and adults had **contact with the police** in the last three years. Adults were more likely than youth to have reported they were treated positively by police. Youth who felt they were not treated positively were more likely than adults to have been charged with an offence.
- Adults were more likely than youth to have reported they had not **witnessed crime** in the last year. Youth were more likely than adults to have witnessed Break and Enter, Motor Vehicle Theft, Vandalism, Bag Snatching, Stalking, Domestic Violence, Assault, Robbery, Rape, Homicide, Other Sexual Offences, Child Abuse/Neglect and Drug Dealing.
- Youth were far more likely than adults to have not undertaken any **safety strategies** because they felt safe. Similar percentages of youth and adults reported having Bought a dog/guard dog, Moved house, Changed method of transport/travel and Stopped living alone.
- Adults were slightly more likely than youth to have reported current and past **involvement with community groups/programs**. Youth were more likely than adults to have reported involvement in sporting groups. Adults were more likely than youth to have reported involvement with welfare/supportive groups
- Nearly eight out of every ten youth and adult respondents reported that they **regularly talked to their neighbours**.
- Adults were more likely than youth to have agreed that the **Community can be an active force in crime prevention**, that **effective crime prevention programs would benefit their suburb** and that **crime prevention programs should tackle the underlying causes of crime**.
- The greatest majority of youth and adults agreed that the **police alone cannot prevent crime in the community** while youth were more likely than adults to disagree that the **police are doing a good job tackling crime in the community**.
- When asked about **crime prevention programs** they would like introduced in their suburb, adults generally selected more programs than youth, however, the top six programs were the same for youth and adults. Facilities such as lighting, paths, etc was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> (in terms of popularity) by both youth and adults. Safety checks for older neighbours was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> for both. After school activities for youth ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> for youth and 4<sup>th</sup> for adult. Foot/bike patrols by Police was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> for youth and 6<sup>th</sup> for adults, while School based crime prevention programs was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> for youth and 3<sup>rd</sup> for adults.

### Section 3

## Survey Responses of Youth and Adult Respondents

### Detailed Analysis

Respondents who reported their age as 12-24 years are reported as Youth while respondents aged 25 years and over are reported as Adults. This section provides information regarding the differences between Youth and Adults in their completion of the survey.

### Feelings of Safety

Survey respondents were asked to respond to statements relating to their personal feelings of safety in specific situations. Seven statements concerning feelings of safety from crime were posed to respondents, with responses ranging along a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. These statements were designed to gauge a level of general concern that respondents exhibit regarding crime and everyday situations.

Youth respondents reported feeling safer than adults did in many of the situations asked about. The greatest differences between youth and adult respondents (with youth feeling safer) were in response to the situations *I feel safe from crime in my own home* and *When at Shopping Centres at night*. Youth respondents also reported feeling safer than adults *When using parking lots at night* and *When out alone in their neighbourhood at night*, although the safety levels of all respondents was diminished for these situations. Refer Table 13.

**Table 13 Feelings of Safety in Specific Situations by Age**

Safety Statements :Section One	Agree		Unsure		Disagree	
	Youth	Adult	Youth	Adult	Youth	Adult

I feel safe from crime in my own home	74.1%	51.6%	14.6%	21.8%	11.4%	26.6%
I feel safe from crime when at Shopping Centres at night	50.5%	28.4%	24.7%	29%	24.9%	42.6%
I feel safe when passing a group of young men on the street	30.9%	21.5%	31%	34.3%	38.1%	44.2%
I feel safe when using parking lots at night	22.6%	13%	34.9%	22.3%	42.5%	64.7%
I feel safe when travelling to and from work/school alone	78.3%	77.2%	11.6%	14.2%	10.1%	8.6%
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood during the day	81.6%	79.1%	9.8%	11.7%	8.7%	9.2%
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood at night	38.6%	23.7%	18.7%	20%	42.7%	56.3%

### Attitudes towards Crime

Four questions in the survey asked about community perceptions regarding crime and young people. These questions were designed to gauge a level of support for the statements and thus an understanding of the level of community acceptance of the 'perceptions.'

Adult respondents were more likely (than youth) to agree with the statement *Young people make a positive contribution to the community*, (40% youth, 55.5% adult).

44.8% of youth and 43.1% of adults agreed that *Young people (under 24 years) commit most crime*, while 23.6% of youth and 20.3% of adults disagreed. Youth respondents were more likely (than adults) to agree with the statement *Young people (under 24 years) are more likely than others to be the victims of crime* (16.8% youth, 11.7% adult), and less likely (than adults) to disagree (39.3% youth, 51.4% adult).

57.6% of all respondents agreed that *Elderly people are more likely than others to be the victims of crime*, adults were more likely (than youth) to agree with the statement (50.6% youth, 62.5% adult).

### Crime in their Suburb

Four questions in the survey asked about crime in the respondents own suburb. The respondents own suburb was targeted in these questions as it was felt that this was an area the respondents would have greatest 'lived knowledge' regarding the crime situation and their beliefs regarding the prevalence of crime.

26.8% (268) of youth and 27.5% (384) of adults agreed that *Crime is a problem in my suburb* while 38.1% (381) of youth and 40% (557) of adults disagreed. Adults were slightly more likely (than youth) to agree *Crime had a negative effect on the lifestyle of people living in my suburb* (28.9% youth, 34% adult), however, youth tended to be more unsure (than adults) about their opinions regarding this statement (52.9% youth, 37.5% adult).

Respondents were also asked about their beliefs regarding the change in crime in their suburb in the last three (3) years. 57.5% (567) of youth and 58.8% (784) of adults believed that property crime had increased. Youth were more likely (than adults) to believe that personal/violent crime had increased (44.5% youth, 32.1% adult).

### Areas of Concern in their Neighbourhood

Respondents were asked about areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe (during the day and at night). Respondents were also asked to provide their reason for feeling unsafe in these areas. Respondents could give any response as the questions were open ended, responses were then coded into the categories that best fitted the response. Responses that did not correspond with any coding category were coded as 'Other'.

13.5% (133) of youth and 13.6% (177) of adult respondents reported there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe during the day. The most common areas nominated by respondents were local parks and bushland (33.6% youth, 28.8% adult), followed by local streets/suburb (15.1% youth, 17% adult), and entertainment venue/shopping centres (15.1% youth, 11.8% adult). The most common reason given by respondents for feeling unsafe in these areas were that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent the area (60.9% youth, 53% adult).

Adult respondents were more likely (than youth) to report there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe at night (39.6% youth, 50.8% adult). The most common areas nominated for both youth and adults were local parks and bushland (31% youth, 23.5% adult), followed by their local streets /or suburb (20.5% youth, 25.4% adult). The most common reason given by respondents for feeling unsafe in these areas were that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent the area (45% youth, 43% adult), followed by poor lighting/poor design (37.3% youth, 37.8% adult).

### **Property Crime Victimization**

Adult respondents were more likely (than youth) to report that they had been the victim of a property related crime during their lifetime (40.3% youth, 50.6% adult). Youth were more likely to report they were living in their current suburb when the offence occurred (65.9% youth, 58% adult). The majority of youth and adults reported that the offence had occurred at their place of residence (64.3% youth, 76.1% adult). 10.9% of youth and 20% of adults reported that the offence had occurred at their business/place of employment.

27.6% of youth and only 10.3% of adults reported they had known the person who committed the offence.

64.3% of youth and 84.1% of adults had reported the offence to the police. The most common reason given by respondents for non-reporting was that the incident wasn't serious enough (41.5% youth, 48.9% adult). 44% of youth and 46.2% of adults who had reported the offence to the police indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding the offence. 76.4% of youth and 70.5% of adults who had received feedback were satisfied with the outcome. Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, only 27.6% of youth and 26.4% of adults were satisfied with the outcome.

### **Personal/ Violent Crime Victimization**

21.6% (211) of youth and 15.4% (209) of adults reported that they had been the victim of a personal/violent crime during their lifetime. Youth were more likely (than adults) to report they had been living in their current suburb at the time of the offence (59.2% youth, 34.7% adults). Adults were more likely (than youth) to have reported that the offence had occurred at their home (45% youth, 60.7% adult). Of those who reported the offence occurred at somewhere other than their home the most common location reported by all respondents was on the street (28.2% youth, 40% adult). Youth also commonly reported that the offence had occurred at another home (24.5% youth, 10.8% adult), while adults commonly reported that the offence occurred at a business place (including entertainment venues/shopping centres) (5.5% youth, 23.1% adult).

67.6% of youth and 62.7% of adults reported they had known the person who committed the offence.

34.4% of youth and 55.9% of adults indicated that they had reported the offence to the police. Of those who didn't report the matter to the police the most common reasons given by youth for non-reporting were that the matter wasn't serious enough (24% youth, 13% adult) and that they had handled the matter themselves (including reporting to the school where relevant) (19.2% youth, 15.9% adult). The most common reason given by adults for non-reporting was that they didn't want anyone to know (11.5% youth, 17.4% adult).

58.1% of youth and 69.9% of adults who reported the offence indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding action taken. Of those who had received feedback from the police, 66.7% of youth and 63.5% of adults were satisfied with the outcome. Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, 42.1% of youth and only 2.4% of adults were satisfied with the outcome.

## Violence in the Home

10% (101) of youth and 3% (42) of adults agreed that *Violence from family members is a problem in my home*.

## Violence based on Racial/Ethnic Background

Youth (10.7%) were more likely than adults (3.2%) to report that in the last three (3) years they had been the victim of violence based on their racial/ethnic background.

## Violence based on Sexuality

Youth (7.3%) were more likely than adults (4.4%) to report that in the last three (3) years they had been the victim of violence based on their sexuality.

## Bullying at School

26.1% (259) of youth and 12.7% (161) of adults reported that in the last three (3) years they/or their children had been bullied at school. Adults were more likely (than youth) to have reported the bullying to the school (52.6% youth, 77.3% adult). Adults were more likely (than youth) to report they received feedback from the school regarding action taken (61.7% youth, 74.8% adults). Most of those who had received feedback from the school reported they were satisfied with the outcome (69% youth, 73.5% adults). Of those respondents who had received no feedback from the school, only 23.8% of youth and 14.6% of adults were satisfied with the outcome.

## Bullying in the Workplace

2.9% (28) of youth and 4.6% (59) of adults reported that in the last three (3) years they/or their children had been bullied at work. 43.9% of youth and 47.8% of adults who had been bullied had reported it to the employer. The majority of those who had reported the matter to the employer had received feedback from the employer (77.8% youth, 77.4% adult). Of those who had received feedback from the employer, youth were far more likely to report satisfaction with the outcome (71.4% youth, 38.1% adult).

## Police Contact

35.3% (351) of youth and 37.3% (509) of adults reported that they had contact with a member of the Police Service in the last three (3) years (excluding contact due to traffic offences). Adults were more likely (than youth) to report that they were treated positively by police (59% youth, 82.5% adult). Of those respondents who reported the 'police contact' was not positive, 22.9% of youth and 3% of adults reported that their contact resulted in charges being laid against them.

## Witnessing Crime

31.1% (315) of youth and 43.8% (627) of adults that they (or a member of their household) had witnessed no crime in the last twelve (12) months. It is highly likely that respondents considered witnessing of the result of a crime (rather than a crime in progress) as 'witnessing' for survey completion. Table 14 shows the percentage and number of respondents who indicated they had witnessed each of the listed crimes on the survey form.

Youth and adults reported similar levels of witnessing Business Theft/Vandalism. Youth were more likely (than adults) to report witnessing of Break and Enter, Motor Vehicle Theft, Vandalism, Bag Snatching, Stalking, Domestic Violence, Assault, Robbery, Rape, Homicide, Other Sexual Offences, Child Abuse/Neglect and Drug Dealing.

37% of youth and 39.1% of adults reported witnessing between one (1) and three (3) crimes during the last twelve (12) months and 21.6% of youth and 9.2% of adults reported witnessing between four (4) and six (6) crimes during this period.

## Table 14 Crimes Witnessed in Previous Twelve (12) months by Age

Type of Offence	% (n) Witnesses	
	Youth	Adult
Break and Enter	36.4% (369)	24.3% (347)
Motor Vehicle Theft	14.5% (147)	8.3% (119)
Vandalism	38.9% (394)	28.1% (402)
Business Theft/Vandalism	10.9% (111)	8.5% (121)
Bag Snatching	6.3% (64)	1.9% (27)
Stalking	12.7% (129)	3.7% (53)
Domestic Violence	18.5% (188)	13.6% (195)
Assault	24.2% (245)	7.8% (111)
Robbery	20.6% (209)	9.4% (135)
Rape	8% (81)	0.6% (8)
Homicide	2% (20)	0.8% (11)
Other Sexual Offences	4.5% (46)	0.8% (11)
Child Abuse/Neglect	9.2% (93)	5.9% (85)
Drug Dealing	40.9% (415)	12.3% (176)
Other	3.6% (37)	3.5% (50)

### Safety Strategies

Respondents were asked about strategies they or a member of their household had undertaken in the last year to improve their safety. Youth were more likely to have reported they had not undertaken any of the listed safety strategies because they felt safe (44.1% youth, 21.3% adult). 6.7% of youth and 4.6% of adults reported they had not undertaken strategies as they were not sure what to do. Table 15 shows the percentage and number of youth and adult respondents who indicated they had undertaken listed safety strategies on the survey form.

Adults were more likely than youth to report utilising most of the safety strategies listed on the survey form. Similar percentages of youth and adults reported having Bought a dog/guard dog, Moved house, Changed method of transport/travel and Stopped living alone.

**Table 15 Safety Strategies Undertaken in Previous Twelve (12) Months by Age**

Safety Strategy	% (n) of Respondents	
	Youth	Adult

Pruned shrubs away from doors/windows	6.7% (68)	16% (229)
Discussed safety with children/parents	12.8% (130)	22.6% (323)
Bought a dog/guard dog	18.4% (187)	17.9% (256)
Installed security screens/alarms	24.3% (2460)	33.8% (484)
Moved house	4.2% (43)	3.4% (49)
Changed method of transport/travel	2.7% (27)	1.9% (27)
Changed leisure activities	1.9% (19)	4.8% (69)
Changed shopping times/places	3.1% (31)	7.7% (110)
Restricted activities at night	6% (61)	18.4% (263)
Stopped living alone	1.3% (13)	1.4% (20)
Locked doors when traveling in a car	11.2% (114)	33.3% (476)
Other	5.7% (58)	6.4% (91)

### Community Involvement

14.1% (141) of youth and 20.3% (278) of adults reported that they were currently involved in local community groups/programs. Youth were more likely (than adults) to have reported involvement with sporting groups (45.5% youth, 3.2% adult). Adults were more likely (than youth) to have reported involvement with welfare/supportive groups (6.8% youth, 33% adult).

20.8% (207) of youth and 25.6% (339) of adults reported that in the last five (5) years they had been involved in local community groups/programs. Youth were more likely (than adults) to have reported involvement with sporting groups (38.7% youth, 5.2% adult). Adults were more likely (than youth) to have reported involvement with welfare/supportive groups (7% youth, 28.7% adult). 25.3% of youth and 25% of adults reported involvement with Neighbourhood Watch, Safety House, YACCA, or PCYC.

77.4% (779) of youth and 81.8% (1147) of adults reported that they regularly talked to the people living nearby in their neighbourhood.

### Attitudes towards Crime Prevention

Adults were more likely (than youth) to agree that *The Community (with Police/Government support) can be an effective force in preventing crime* (86.4% adult, 58% youth), while youth were more likely (than adults) to report they were unsure or disagreed with the statement.

Adults were more likely (than youth) to agree that *Effective community programs that tackle crime issues would benefit my suburb* (41.1% youth, 72.7% adult), while 45% of youth were unsure about their opinions in response to the statement. 47.6% (477) of youth and 84.2% (1184) of adults agreed that *Crime prevention programs should target the underlying causes of crime*, while 44.4% of youth were unsure about their opinion in response to the statement.

74.8% (755) of youth and 94.1% (1335) of adults agreed that *Police alone cannot prevent crime occurring in the Community*. 27% (269) of youth and 48.1% (670) of adults agreed that *The Police are doing a good job tackling crime in the Community*, while 37.3% (372) of youth and 21.7% (303) of adults disagreed.

### Crime Prevention Programs

Respondents were provided with ten (10) options of crime prevention programs/facilities (plus an other category) and were asked to nominate the programs/facilities they would like to see introduced in their suburb. 2118 respondents selected at least one option from those listed and their responses are provided in Table 16. Adults generally selected more of the options than youth respondents, however, there are striking similarities in the 'popularity' of some of the provided crime prevention options for both groups.

Facilities such as lighting, paths, etc was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> (in terms of popularity) by both youth and adults. Safety checks for older neighbours was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> for both. After school activities for youth ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> for youth and 4<sup>th</sup> for adult. Foot/bike patrols by Police was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> for youth and 6<sup>th</sup> for adults, while School based crime prevention programs was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> for youth and 3<sup>rd</sup> for adults.

**Table 16 Crime Prevention Programs for Introduction in Suburb by Age**

Crime Prevention Program/Facilities	% (n) of Respondents	
	Youth	Adult
After school activities for youth (12-18 years)	36.4% (304)	51.2% (657)
Safety checks for older neighbours	39.7% (332)	54.6% (700)
Support services for families	17.9% (150)	25.4% (326)
Support networks for those living alone	19.9% (166)	42.5% (545)
Programs for increased communication between neighbours	19.4% (162)	29.3% (375)
Neighbourhood graffiti clean-ups	16.7% (140)	19.7% (253)
Foot/bike patrols by Police	29.5% (247)	42.3% (542)
Facility for Community development programs	9.3% (78)	18.7% (240)
School based crime prevention programs	23.1% (193)	53.6% (687)
Facilities such as lighting, paths, etc	64.2% (537)	54.8% (703)
Other	7.7% (64)	6.2% (80)

## Selected Program Concepts

The following pages are included as a base level resource guide of community based initiatives that have been implemented with particular target groups or targeting particular issues. The descriptions below are of programs in existence here in Australia or internationally and are provided here in the report to be used as a discussion resource for local communities who may be looking for 'ideas' when developing locally specific strategies.

### Physical Environment

- Local parks are often the focus of crime and safety concerns of people living nearby in the neighbourhood. Parks can be a focus of community (neighbourhood) life. Safety audits of local parks will highlight the major concerns that need to be dealt with to make the park safer for all community members. Lighting should be of a level that no area of the park is in complete darkness, gathering places such as seating, tables, and barbecues should be readily visible through the use of lighting, vegetation should provide ample shade but should not be of a type that obscures visibility and provides places of concealment, play equipment should be well maintained and graffiti free, and regular checks for litter should be conducted. Once you have dealt with the physical issues you can focus efforts on clarifying and reinforcing the purpose of the park; focus neighbourhood activities on that location, activities for mothers with young children, legitimise the use of the park by youth (create ownership of the space – what do young people need to make the park more user friendly for them).
- If travelling in your neighbourhood at night is a concern then you can look at creating a Safepath. A Safepath should be created where the majority of pedestrian (and other transport, excluding motor vehicles) activity occurs in your neighbourhood. These common thoroughfares are often well beaten paths to the local shops, the area near the school, or even leading to the beach. A Safepath is a well-designed landscaped walkway; the lighting is adequate and subject to maintenance programs. Once the key components to a Safepath have been implemented – suitable vegetation, adequate pathways, adequate and well maintained lighting it is then important to incorporate signage that publicly announces the existence of the Safepath. It is largely up to the community what features they would like their Safepath to incorporate, houses along the pedestrian corridor could be lobbied for their involvement in the Safety House program.
- Safety Audits are an important tool in efforts to improve the safety of the physical environments. Safety audits can be conducted anywhere that people are found although it may be important to tailor your Safety Audit tool (questionnaire) to for particular areas. Anyone can be involved in Safety Audits, in fact the more diverse your team of auditors are, the better. You should be very conscious of ensuring the involvement of vulnerable groups of people in your audit teams and conducting the audits at times when the greatest amount of information can be gathered about your target site. Some issues that should be included in Safety Audit tools are; your general impressions of the site (gut reactions), lighting, signage, accessibility, sightlines (clarity of view), isolation, predictability of movement, entrapment sites, escape routes, exits, washrooms, phones, maintenance, civility, and overall design.

### Older Community Members

- Older community members who have been the victims of crime are provided a home visit service by Liaison Workers (who are aged 55 years and over) who ensure clients have access to all social services that can assist with their 'social service needs'.
- A scheme whereby a register of tradesman is developed that can provide free assistance to older victims of crime. The tradesman repair damage to doors and locks (or replace damaged equipment) for older community members.
- Street wise – a workshop where older community members are provided with information about physical cues that they can utilise to reduce the likelihood of their targeting as a victim. Also incorporates information about avoiding victimisation of 'fraudulent crime'.
- A neighbourhood watch within neighbourhood watch where older community members are actively targeted and provided with special support and contact neighbours from 'support families' who live near by. Older community members benefit from inclusion when the contact provided from 'support families' reduces the sense of isolation experienced and provides close at hand assistance should the need arise. A number of families who live close by set up a network where they can provide immediate assistance. Features include support families numbers are programmed into speed dial of older neighbours, support families are

of a combination that seeks to ensure someone will always be available if contact is sought, support families have numbers to contact (on behalf of older neighbour) should the need arise.

## Young people

- The use of mentoring relationships has developed a strong support base in the United States. There are many well-established programs overseas worthy of closer examination and there is little reason why effective programs cannot be imported to this country and be equally effective. A quick reminder that in crime prevention it is vital to "Think Globally, Act Locally". Volunteers are screened, trained, and monitored by coordinators of the program. Orientation is provided to volunteers, parents, and young people prior to inclusion in the program. Young people are carefully matched to a volunteer on a mutually accepted basis by both parties. Of importance are the needs that both parties wish to be met by the mentoring relationship. The mentoring occurs outside of the school environment and can consist of any positive activity that will enrich the young mentees and provide positive opportunities. Mentors and mentees are also provided access to workshops that provide skills in relationship building, communication, values clarification, child development, and problem solving. The aspects of the program and mentoring relationships found to be effective are; high levels of contact and the mentor as friend.
- Bullying reduction and prevention programs that can be effective through altering environmental norms regarding bullying. Educational booklets are distributed to school personnel (booklets define the problem, steps to counteract bullying behaviour), booklets with advice is distributed to parents, students actively targeted through posters throughout school. Other actions taken during the program included; establishing and publicising clear rules about bullying, consistent contingent sanctions, regular student discussions about school norms regarding bullying (reinforcement), and improved supervision of the playground.

## Domestic Violence

- An initiative used elsewhere assists to raise the profile of domestic violence in the local community, to reinforce the idea that domestic violence is an issue that should concern all community members, and to raise funds in support of local domestic violence prevention initiatives. The initiative involves enlisting the support of local businesses (great percentage of involvement is important) to have a nominated day where they donate a percentage of their takings to support local specified domestic violence initiatives. The initiative is sold to the community (publicity and media strategies must be effective) as an opportunity to 'shop till they drop, to prevent domestic violence'. Participating businesses also permanently prominently display stickers that publicises their involvement in the initiative provides local numbers to call, and offers the use of their phone in the event of a 'dangerous situation'.
- Support for women in their communities. Educate Neighbourhood Watch and actively take the responsibility for assistance in domestic violence situations to the local community via an active campaign be Neighbourhood Watch, or other body who can act very locally. An initiative that targets the responsibility of neighbours to call for assistance if they are aware of a domestic violence situation in their neighbourhood, that requires intervention.
- Involve children and adolescents in Campaigns. One initiative to raise the awareness of the effects of violence on children involved primary school aged children drawing an outline of their hand and drawing a caption or illustration that depicted the statement 'Hands are not for Hitting'. Illustrations drawn by children are then prominently displayed at various venues across the local community.
- Local companies physically support the needs of women's shelters by providing free of charge, goods and labor needed to refurbish facilities that often operate on extremely limited funding.

## Drugs

- Research has suggested that drug prevention programs should be introduced in primary school and reinforced (through booster sessions) throughout secondary school. The most effective (as shown from evaluations) programs featured the following components; clarifying and communicating norms about behaviour, instructional programs that focus on a range of social competency skills, such as developing self-control, stress management, decision making, problem solving, and communication skills – including conflict resolution, and behavioural modification programs and programs that teach thinking skills to high-risk youth. The most effective components of drug prevention programs are those that actively impart skills to young people, provide opportunities to practice those skills, and are followed up throughout school attendance to ensure maintenance of skills. There is little evidence that simply educating young people about drugs has any effect on the decision to take drugs.
- Drug education programs can involve the whole community. One program that appeared promising (according to evaluation results) was the Illawarra Drug Education Program targeted at 10 to 11 year olds. The program commenced with a parent education evening, the participating children are introduced to the program by the previous years 'graduates' and the program is then delivered over several weeks. The program units include instruction on decision-making strategies, information on drug misuse, peer pressure and conformity resistance, and assertiveness skills. During the program there is a second parent's evening. Immediately after the instructional phase of the program the children work together to produce various drug related materials and a short piece of drama. The program culminates in a third parent evening at which the program participants present the projects they have been working on during the program. Evaluations of the program effects over several years found that program participants had lower usage of tobacco and cannabis than did control groups who had not participated in the program.

# Research Notes

## Sampling Procedure

The original parameters of the research sample were the voluntary participation of all state secondary schools in the Mackay Local Government Area. The research was conducted for use by a State Government Program and as such State Government Schools were included in the research sample.

All three (3) state secondary schools in the Mackay Local Government Area agreed to participate in the survey.

A sample of students in years 10 to 12 attending these schools were included in the survey sample.

## Statistical Testing and Reporting

In Sections 2 and 3 of the Analysis of survey responses the differences between groups of respondents was examined. In Section 2 the survey responses of male and female participants were examined to identify any differences in the responses these 'respondent groups' made to each question in the survey. In Section 3 the survey responses of youth and adult participants were examined to identify any differences in the responses these 'respondent groups' made to each question in the survey.

Chi-square statistical testing was conducted to examine any differences. The statistical test is based on the hypothesis that there are no differences in the way different 'respondent groups' answered each question in the survey. If a difference is found between the responses made by the respondent groups (male:female, youth:adult) then a significance level is examined to see whether we can then reject the original hypothesis (that there is no difference). The significance levels accepted in the current research were levels less than .05, .01, and .001. The lower the significance level the more confident we can be that the original hypothesis (that there is no difference) can be rejected.

In the writing of the current research this type of statistical testing was used. The reporting of statistically significant differences between groups was not presented in a traditional manner. The authors aimed at all times in the report writing to provide information that was accessible and provided detailed information in a non-intimidatory manner to encourage the reports use by young people. It was felt that the extensive use of traditional statistical reporting (with its appearance of mathematical equations) would not promote the use of the report by young people.

Where the differences between groups (male:female, youth:adult) are significant at the level of .05, then one group is described as *slightly more likely* than the other group to have responded in a certain way. Where the differences between groups (male:female, youth:adult) are significant at the level of .01, then one group is described as *more likely* than the other group to have responded in a certain way. Where the differences between groups (male:female, youth:adult) are significant at the level of .001, then one group is described as *far more likely* than the other group to have responded in a certain way.

# Index

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## Appendix

**Table 1 Victims of Crime by Age and Gender for the Central Region – 1996/1997**

**Personal/Violent Offences**

	<b>0-14</b>	<b>15-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55 &amp;over</b>

	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<b>Homicide</b>	0	0	5	3	6	2	4	1	3	0	0	0
<b>Assault</b>	89	57	245	218	188	128	119	83	74	24	33	17
<b>Sexual Offences</b>	44	87	9	96	6	37	9	30	3	10	2	3
<b>Robbery</b>	1	0	29	7	15	5	10	0	2	1	5	1

**Table 2 Offenders by Age and Gender for the Central Region – 1996/1997**  
**Personal/Violent Offences**

	0-14		15-19		20-24		25-29		30-39		0-49		50-59		60 & over	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<b>Homicide</b>	0	0	3	1	2	1	9	0	9	1	4	1	0	0	1	0
<b>Assault</b>	34	18	157	46	147	32	157	16	149	33	67	14	25	0	5	2
<b>Sexual Offences</b>	8	0	18	0	13	0	22	0	55	0	21	0	22	0	26	0
<b>Robbery</b>	8	1	41	4	7	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Table 3 Offenders by Age and Gender for the Central Region – 1996/1997**  
**Property Offences**

	0-14		15-19		20-24		25-29		30-39		0-49		50-59		60 &over	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<b>Breaking &amp; Entering</b>	280	33	738	48	137	2	56	4	50	9	15	2	4	1	0	0
<b>Arson</b>	2	1	6	0	6	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
<b>Other Property Damage</b>	168	19	334	24	130	10	85	15	79	15	28	5	6	1	1	0
<b>Motor Vehicle Theft</b>	40	3	132	11	42	2	22	1	20	0	5	2	2	0	0	0
<b>Stealing</b>	365	163	520	173	171	62	94	35	91	47	45	13	13	6	2	4
<b>Fraud</b>	23	4	112	47	85	32	45	42	72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

