



# 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 on the Sunshine Coast*

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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 on the Sunshine Coast. The earlier research involved the completion of surveys by 1718 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 1030 young people aged between 12 and 24 years. The greatest majority of survey respondents completed the survey while attending secondary school in the Local Government Areas of Maroochy, Noosa, and Caloundra.

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. The statistical significance (or otherwise) of expressed differences was reported literally in the earlier research but not in the current research. 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.

Respondents provided information regarding their feelings of safety in a range of specific situations. 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 more than half of all adult respondents reported that there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe at night. 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 along common thoroughfares as identified in local neighbourhoods.

While respondents did report diminished feelings of safety in particular situations and in particular areas of their neighbourhood at night, the majority of respondents (both youth and adults) did not agree that crime was a problem in their suburb. The greatest majority of respondents felt safe when out alone in their neighbourhood during the day and when travelling to and from/work school alone. Recommendations are made regarding the promotion of the generally positive attitude by residents regarding safety in their local area and through promotion-fostering community acceptance that they can have an impact on the lifestyle they experience in their local area.

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. Despite reporting more frequent experiences 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.

Another form of victimisation experienced by nearly one-third of the young people surveyed was bullying at school. Nearly 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. Recommendations are made regarding the provision of drug abuse prevention programs specifically available to young people in the community.

After-school activities for youth (12-18 years) was the second most commonly selected 'crime prevention program' by youth for introduction in their suburb. The Report recognised previous reports regarding social issues on the Sunshine Coast that related to the occurrence of underage drinking and a desire by young people for a facility that provided opportunities for music, dance and socialising without alcohol. Recommendations are also made regarding the examination of currently available after-school services and activities for young people.

Young people were also very supportive of Safety checks for older neighbours, as a crime prevention initiative that 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.

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 do, 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 on the Sunshine Coast.**

**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.**

Youth did report diminished feelings of safety when out alone in their neighbourhood at night, female youth were far more concerned than male youth. Adults reported much more diminished feelings of safety in this situation than did youth. It is acknowledged that the area covered by this report (the Sunshine Coast) incorporates many neighbourhoods and to recommend blanket action to achieve greater feelings of safety for residents when in their neighbourhoods at night is to perhaps recommend the impossible. What may be possible is carefully targeted interventions that seek to provide maximum benefit for individual neighbourhoods.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that areas of 'common thoroughfare' in neighbourhoods throughout the Sunshine Coast be subject to interventions designed to enhance residents' feelings of safety when using these routes. Some areas that are often used as 'common thoroughfares' in neighbourhoods are those routes that lead to shopping facilities, to public transport, to schools, and to the beach. Individual neighbourhoods would need to be active in deciding the route of their own 'common thoroughfare' and Safety Audits can highlight some immediate issues for action to render the area more 'user friendly'. Additionally the maintenance of work implemented in such 'safe passages' is vital and signage can also be used to identify that route as one designed for safety and actioned by local residents.**

Adults were more likely than youth to agree that young people make a positive contribution to the community. 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 only 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.**

The majority of youth and adult respondents did not agree that crime was a problem in their suburb. The promotion of this reality is important for local communities. Most respondents felt safe in their neighbourhoods during the day did not think crime was a problem, and regularly talked to their neighbours. The positive aspects of community life should be fostered through public recognition.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that a campaign to recognise the positive aspects of residents neighbourhoods be supported by the local media. A vital factor in community safety is the sense of community and the connection that people feel to their local community. Residents (youth and adults) could participate in a campaign that focuses on the positive aspects of their community. The focus should be on people and lifestyles rather than the traditional recognition of 'sun and sand'.**

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'. 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.**

Nearly one-third of 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 fifth most commonly witnessed crime as reported by adults (after vandalism, break and enter, domestic violence, and business theft/vandalism). 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.

**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.**

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 second by youth. It would seem that youth 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 also noted that previous research conducted on the Sunshine Coast has highlighted underage drinking as a problem and additionally a desire by young people for social 'music and dance' venues for young people under 18 years.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that the viability of a permanent under 18 venue be seriously considered by local government, business, and**

welfare agencies. The venue can incorporate purely recreational activities in dance and social interaction, employment training through youth participation in staffing and management, and outreach capabilities for services. The facility should not be 'owned' by any one service/organisation but should be a cooperative joint venture that seeks to have multiple benefit for young people and the wider community.

**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.**

Youth and adult respondents were supportive of Safety checks for older neighbours as a crime prevention strategy. It would seem that young people do appreciate the needs of older community members and are clearly able to express their concern for the safety of these people. This finding may be seen to challenge a perception sometimes expressed that young people display a lack of concern for older community members.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that young people be provided with practical opportunities to assist in the safer and more confident living of older community members. A program that actively involved young people as service providers and older community members as the target group for assistance should be developed in cooperation with two key groups of stakeholders, interested young people and older community members.**

Both young people and adults supported School based crime prevention programs. It is acknowledged that the most prolific of these currently in evidence in Queensland State Secondary Schools is the School Based Policing program. There is currently no evaluative material available regarding this program, however, the proactive activities undertaken by these officers is likely to be far more relevant than merely the presence of uniformed officers on school campuses. A school focus for youth crime prevention efforts has a long history internationally and several evaluated programs have been identified as being effective in reducing and/or preventing juvenile delinquency. Features of successful programs (as indicated by evaluation) include; building school capacity to initiate and sustain innovation, clarifying and communicating norms about behaviours through school wide campaigns, and comprehensive instruction that focus on a range of social competency skills. Other popular program components have not been shown to be effective (in reducing *delinquency*) through evaluative efforts, these popular though not proven methods include; counseling, unstructured life skills programs and community service programs. That is not to suggest that these activities are not worthwhile, but simply that their utility as crime prevention strategies has not been supported.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that school based crime prevention programs that specifically seek to reduce delinquency in high-risk groups should be nested in mainstream timetabling and curricula. The programs should be highly proactive in the provision and maintenance of a range of social competency skills, such as developing self-control, stress management, decision making, problem solving, and communication skills – including conflict resolution).**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED that problem behaviours identified by stakeholders (school, students, parents, and community members) are the subject of school wide and possibly community wide campaigns regarding norm clarification and reinforcement. Some problem behaviours often associated with school age children (and are appropriate subject matter for such campaigns) include bullying and vandalism.**

## 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 be 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 North Coast Region (1996/1997) young people aged less than 14 years experienced greater victimisation in relation to Sexual Offences followed by those aged between 15 and 24 years. In the North Coast Region those aged less than 14 years made up 53% of victims of Sexual Offences in 1996/1997 (where age of victim was specified) and those aged between 15 and 24 years made up 28% of victims for the same offence and period. Young people aged between 15 and 24 years experienced greater victimisation in relation to Assault (32% of victims) and Robbery (37% of victims). The greatest number of Homicides involved victims aged between 25 and 34 years. More victims of assault and sexual offences were aged under 14 years than were aged over 55 years. The age of victims reported in the Tables (Appendix) 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. 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.

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. 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.

For the North Coast Region in 1996/1997 the majority of offenders apprehended for Homicide were aged between 20-24 years and 30-39 years. The majority of offenders apprehended for Assault were aged between 15 and 29 years. The majority of offenders apprehended for Sexual offences were aged between 30 and 59 years. The majority of offenders apprehended for Robbery were aged between 15 and 29 years.

For the North Coast Region in 1996/1997 the greatest number of offenders apprehended for the listed property offences were aged between 15 and 24 years followed by those aged under 14 years. Offenders in this age group made up 67.5% of those apprehended for Break and Enter, 44% for Arson, 60.2% Other Property Damage, 66.2% for Motor Vehicle Theft, 51.7% for Stealing, and 40.5% for Fraud. These figures could be seen to support a perception that juveniles are responsible for the greatest proportion of property related offences, however, the logic of this perception based on the figures presented does not withstand close scrutiny. The figures discussed above are based on 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. 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, North Coast Region in 1996/1997, 93% of all Homicides reported in that year were cleared, 57% of all Assaults, 82% of all Sexual offences, and 35% of all Robberies. In contrast, for the same area and period, 13% of Break and Entering offences reported in that year were cleared, 10% of all Arson offences, 18% of Other Property Damage offences, 23% Motor Vehicle Theft offences, 19% Stealing offences, and 58% 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. 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). A student survey of young people aged between 10 and 17 years attending school in Nambour found that young people commonly reported the most important 'thing' to them (from a list of options) was their friends and additionally that they spent the majority of their leisure time (increasing with age) in 'passive unstructured activities (perhaps hanging out with their friends).

Community members are not only concerned about the likelihood of young people ('hanging out' in public places) offending against the law, many are 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. While 'hanging out' may be meeting a young persons need to gather socially with members of their peer group, it can also mark a more problematic issue, the 'marking time' that demonstrates a lack of access to more desirable pursuits with a resultant frustration at being 'locked out' of the lifestyles accessed by more independent community members.

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 the risk of victimisation for young people themselves. A report on public drunkenness on the Sunshine Coast reported that the most common age of males arrested for public drunkenness was 22 years while for females the same measure was for 19 years, with males being arrested far more often than females. The report identified underage drinking as

## Methodology

an issue consistently raised during consultation on the coastal strip and in the hinterland areas. A survey of young people consulted while using facilities in the Maroochydore CBD found underage clubs and alcohol free venues as an issue consistently raised (across a number of questions) by young respondents.

Communities that decide to take action on young people's use of public space need to do so thoughtfully and act in a just and equitable manner. If the level of public space 'domination' by young people is considered problematic in specific locations then interventions could be considered. Some important considerations (if intervention is decided upon) that must be formally addressed prior to any action is taken (that seeks to reduce public space usage by youth) are as follows; what alternatives are currently available to young people in that area, recognition that young people have a legitimate right to access public space, whether the concern is generated by the behaviour of young people or simply the presence of young people, whether the behaviour of young people is genuinely problematic (alcohol, drugs, violence etc) or whether the problem behaviour is more symptomatic of a 'generation gap'.

## 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

Lutwyche, Q, 4030

### **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 Sunshine Coast 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 and some schools declined to participate, often for stated reasons of 'existing excessive curricula demands'.

Of the twelve (12) schools approached, five (5) schools accepted the opportunity to participate, and a selection of 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 1030 surveys returned, the gender of 35 respondents was unable to be determined because no response was given to this question or a multiple response was given. Of the remaining respondents, 59.1% (588) were female and 40.9% (407) 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. The age of 100 respondents was unable to be determined because no response was given to this question or a multiple response was given. Of the remaining respondents, 92.7% (862) respondents were aged between 12 and 18 years while 7.3% (68) were aged between 19 and 24 years.

### **Grade Level**

Of the 1030 surveys returned the grade level of 68 respondents was unable to be determined because no response was given to this question or a multiple response was given. Of the remaining 962 respondents, 41.3% (398) of respondents were in Grade 10, 42.2% (406) of respondents were in Grade 11 and 16.5% (158) 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. 84.2% of respondents identified as Australian, followed by European (13.3%), New Zealand (7.2%), Aboriginal Australian (5%), Asian (2.4%), and Torres Strait Islander (0.8%). 3.6% of respondent identified a racial/ethnic background other than those listed. Refer Table 4.

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

Racial/Ethnic Background	% (n) of Respondents per Category (All)
Australian	84.2% (867)
Aboriginal Australian	5% (51)
Torres Strait Islander	0.8% (8)
Asian	2.4% (25)
European	13.3% (137)
New Zealand	7.2% (74)
Other	3.6% (37)

## 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. 155 respondents did not answer this question or provided a multiple response that could not be interpreted. Of the 875 respondents who provided responses, the greatest majority of respondents indicated that they were Secondary school students (51.4%), followed by student with part time employment (23.8%), or unemployed – seeking work (9.3%).

## Household

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the categories provided best described their household. 22 respondents did not answer this question or provided a multiple response that could not be interpreted. More than half of the remaining 1008 respondents described their household as a couple with children (55.2%), followed by one parent with children (19.2%), extended families (18.7%), share accommodation (3.3%), as a couple (2%), and living alone (1.7%).

## Time Lived in Suburb

Respondents were asked to indicate how long they had lived in their current suburb. 15 respondents did not answer this question or provided a multiple response that could not be interpreted. Of the remaining 1015 respondents, 51.4% had lived in their suburb for longer than five years, 19.5% between three and five years, 17.6% between one and three years, and 11.4% 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 nine out of ten respondents agreed they **felt safe from crime** when out alone in their neighbourhood during the day while about eight out of ten agreed they felt safe from crime 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.
- Half of all youth respondents agreed that **young people make a positive contribution to the community**.
- About one third of youth respondents agreed that **young people commit most crime** while about one in ten agreed that **young people are more commonly victimised** (than other age groups).
- About half of youth respondents agreed that **elderly people are more commonly victimised** (than other age groups).
- A little more than half of all youth respondents disagreed that **crime was a problem** (in their suburb) while nearly one third agreed that crime **negatively impacted on lifestyles** (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. Nearly three quarters of respondents who received feedback from the police were satisfied with the outcome, while only one third 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, at another home, and at a place of business (including shops, entertainment venues). Nearly 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, fear/concern about revenge from the offender, and that they had handled it themselves. 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 less than one third of respondents who had not received feedback felt the same way.
- Nearly one in ten respondents agreed that **violence is a problem in their family home**.
- About one in twenty 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**.
- Nearly one third of all youth respondents reported they had been **bullied at school** in the last three years. A little less than 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, that the respondent had handled it themselves, and the belief that the school would not take action. 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. Common reasons for dissatisfaction were that no action was taken and that the bullying had continued/was still happening.
- One in twenty respondents reported they had been **bullied at work**. About one third 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. More than half 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 Domestic Violence. More than half of those respondents who indicated they had witnessed crime in the last year reported between one and three offences.
- Nearly half of all youth 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 Bought a dog/guard dog, Installing security screens/alarms, Discussed safety with children /parents and Locked doors when traveling in a car.

- A little more than 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, scouts/guides/cadets/service groups, and Neighbourhood Watch, etc.
- A little 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 more than one third agreed that **effective crime prevention programs would benefit their suburb**. Half of all youth respondents agreed that **crime prevention programs should tackle the underlying causes of crime**.
- A little less than three quarters of all youth respondents agreed that the **police alone cannot prevent crime**, while a little less than 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, After school activities for youth, Safety checks for older neighbours, and School based crime prevention programs.

## 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	75.7% (775)	13% (133)	11.3% (116)	100% (1024)

I feel safe from crime when at Shopping Centres at night	52.8% (541)	25.2% (258)	22% (226)	100% (1025)
I feel safe when passing a group of young men on the street	38.9% (399)	27.9% (286)	33.2% (340)	100% (1025)
I feel safe when using parking lots at night	29.3% (297)	33.6% (341)	37.1% (377)	100% (1015)
I feel safe when travelling to and from work/school alone	80.7% (822)	11.5% (117)	7.9% (80)	100% (1019)
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood during the day	86.3% (880)	7.8% (80)	5.9% (60)	100% (1020)
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood at night	48.2% (488)	18.5% (1870)	33.4% (338)	100% (1013)

### 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.'

50.1% (512) of respondents believed that *Young people make a positive contribution to the community*, while 14.8% (151) disagreed. Even though this statement directly targeted the respondent group and did not require any 'specialist knowledge' regarding crime issues, 35.1% of young people were unsure of their belief regarding this statement.

About one third of respondents (34.9%:358) agreed that *Young people (under 24 years) commit most crime* while 33.8% (346) disagreed with the statement. 12.7% (129) of respondents agreed that *Young people (under 24 years) are more likely than others to be the victims of crime*, while 43.2% (438) disagreed with the statement.

49.2% (504) of respondents agreed that *Elderly people are more likely than others to be the victims of crime*, while 25.3% (259) 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.

18.5% (188) of respondents agreed that *Crime is a problem in my suburb* while 51.7% (525) disagreed. 30.1% (308) 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 (47.3%) 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 (52.7%:532) than personal/violent crime (38.3%:383).

### 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'.

13.9% (141) 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 (36.9%), followed by their local streets/or suburb (22.3%), local beaches (9.2%), local entertainment venue or shopping centre (6.9%), and 'everywhere' (6.2%). The most common reasons for feeling unsafe in these areas was that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent the areas (49.1%), that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (15.5%), and that the area is alone/isolated (12.9%).

38.5% (381) 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 (35.8%), followed by their local streets /or suburb (19.2%), everywhere (16%), local beaches (6.2%) and local entertainment venue or shopping centre (4.9%). The most common reasons for feeling unsafe in these areas were that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent the areas (34.8%), that the area has poor lighting/poor design (29.2%), that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (15.6%), and that the area is alone/isolated (13%).

8.2% (80) of respondents reported areas in their school where they felt unsafe. Readers are reminded that respondents came from many schools throughout the Sunshine Coast and the areas nominated by respondents obviously relate to areas within their own specific school. The most common areas nominated were the toilets (17.2%), an area near or on the oval (15.6%), where the 'tough' kids sit (10.9%), and an area near a classroom (10.9%). The most common reasons for feeling unsafe in these areas were the fear of being hurt (33.9%), they had been a victim there before (18.6%), that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent that place (11.9%), and that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (10.2%).

### **Property Crime Victimization**

42.2% (420) 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, 58.3% had been living in their current suburb when the offence occurred, 67.4% reported that the offence had occurred at their place of residence while 33.8% 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 on the street (33.6%), school (14.7%), another home/place of residence (10.5%), a business/place of employment (9.8%), and a carpark (9.1%).

25.2% (112) reported they had known the person who committed the offence.

66.7% 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%), that the police wouldn't do anything about it (11.4%), they handled it themselves (often included reporting matter to school where relevant) (9.5%), they personally knew the offender (6.7%), they didn't want the police involved (5.7%), and that the police wouldn't catch the offender or that the courts would be lenient in sentencing (4.8%).

Of those who had reported the offence to the police 48.6% indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding the offence. Of those who had received feedback 71.1% were satisfied with the outcome. Of those respondents who did receive feedback after reporting the offence (48.1%) the most common reasons for not being satisfied with the outcome were that the respondent believed the police took no action regarding their complaint (38.7%), not getting the items back (19.4%), and that the offender was not identified or apprehended (19.4%).

Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, only 33.3% were satisfied with the outcome. The most common reasons given for not being satisfied were not getting the items back (30.3%), that the respondent believed the police took no action regarding their complaint (25.8%), that the offender was not identified or apprehended (13.5%), and that the respondent was not told of the outcome (10.1%).

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

19.2% (190) 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 56.3% reported they had been living in their current suburb at the time of the offence. 39% 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 (50.9%), at another home (18.9%), at a place of business (including shops, entertainment venues) (15.1%), and school (9.4%).

64% (135) had known the person who committed the offence.

36.8% (74) indicated that they had reported the offence to the police. Of those who didn't report the matter to the police the most common

## Methodology

reasons given for non-reporting were that the matter wasn't serious enough (24.2%), fear/concern about revenge from the offender (20.2%), that they had handled it themselves (included reporting to the school where relevant) (17.2%), didn't want anyone to know (6.1%), and that they didn't think the police would do anything regarding their reporting the offence (6.1%).

Of those who had reported the offence 61.1% indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding action taken. Of those who had received feedback from the police, 68.2% were satisfied with the outcome. The most common reasons given for dissatisfaction were that the offender that charges were laid but they were not satisfied with the sentence received in court (33.3%) and that the offender was identified but that no charges were laid (25%).

Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, 30.2% were satisfied with the outcome. The most common reasons given for not being satisfied were the offender was not identified or apprehended (42.1%) and that the offender was identified but no charges were laid (36.8%).

## Violence in the Home

8.7% (88) of respondents agreed that *Violence from family members is a problem in my home*.

## Violence based on Racial/Ethnic Background

5.2% (53) 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

7.8% (79) of respondents reported that in the last three (3) years they had been the victim of violence based on their racial/ethnic background.

## Bullying at School

31.2% (314) of respondents reported that in the last three (3) years they had been bullied at school. 41.9% 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 (36.9%), fear of further/increased bullying as a result of reporting (22%), handled it themselves (14.9%), and that the respondent believed the school wouldn't do anything about it (12.1%).

Of those who had reported the bullying to the school 61.9% had received feedback regarding action taken. Of those who had received feedback from the school 80.7% reported they were satisfied with the outcome. The most common reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome were that the bullying was still happening/continued, that no action was taken, and that action was taken but they were not satisfied with that action. 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 24.7% were satisfied with the outcome. Of the 75.3% who were not satisfied with the outcome the most common reasons given were that no action was taken and that the bullying was still happening/continued.

## Bullying in the Workplace

5% (49) of respondents reported that in the last three (3) years they had been bullied at work. 35.9% of those who had been bullied had reported it to the employer. The most common reasons for non-reporting were that the employer wouldn't do anything about it anyway and that the incident wasn't serious enough.

59.1% of those who had reported the matter to the employer had received feedback from the employer and 73.7% of those were satisfied with the outcome. Of those who had reported the matter but had received no feedback 13% reported that they were satisfied with the outcome.

## Police Contact

35.3% (357) 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' 60.1% (199) reported that they felt they had been treated positively by police. Of the 39.9% (132) who reported the 'police contact' was not positive, 17.6% reported that their contact resulted in charges being laid against them.

## Witnessing Crime

31.2% (321) 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, Break and Enter, and Motor Vehicle Theft. The most commonly reported personal/violent related crimes witnessed (as indicated by survey completion) by respondents were Domestic Violence, Robbery, and Assault. 38.9% of respondents reported witnessing Drug Dealing, it is likely that the witnessing of the distribution of drugs generally was considered by respondents as an incident of Drug Dealing.

The majority of respondents (59.1%) who reported witnessing offences in the last twelve (12) months reported witnessing between one (1) and three (3) forms of crime. 27.7% reported witnessing between four (4) and six (6) crimes, and 13.2% reported witnessing more than six (6) crimes.

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

Type of Offence	% (n) Witnesses
Break and Enter	29.3% (302)
Motor Vehicle Theft	14.1% (1450)
Vandalism	35.9% (370)
Business Theft/Vandalism	9.2% (95)
Bag Snatching	9.2% (95)
Stalking	14.7% (151)
Domestic Violence	22.7% (234)
Assault	18.3% (189)
Robbery	20.9% (215)
Rape	6% (62)
Homicide	2.5% (26)
Other Sexual Offences	5.1% (53)
Child Abuse/Neglect	11.3% (116)
Drug Dealing	38.9% (401)
Other	4% (41)

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

Safety Strategy	% (n) of Respondents
Pruned shrubs away from doors/windows	5% (51)

Discussed safety with children/parents	13.6% (140)
Bought a dog/guard dog	20.4% (210)
Installed security screens/alarms	19.2% (198)
Moved house	5% (51)
Changed method of transport/travel	2.3% (24)
Changed leisure activities	1.6% (16)
Changed shopping times/places	1.7% (17)
Restricted activities at night	6.1% (63)
Stopped living alone	1.3% (13)
Locked doors when traveling in a car	11.4% (117)
Other	6.4% (66)

### Safety Strategies

Respondents were asked about strategies they or a member of their household had undertaken in the last year to improve their safety. 47.3% (487) of respondents reported they had not undertaken any of the listed safety strategies because they felt safe while 7.8% (80) 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 Bought a dog/guard dog, Installation of security screens/alarms, Discussed safety with children/parents, and Locked doors when traveling in a car.

### Community Involvement

15.5% (160) of respondents reported that they were currently involved in local community groups/programs. The most common groups respondents reported involvement with were sporting groups (49.6%), scouts/guides/cadets/service groups (22.3%), Neighbourhood Watch, Safety House, YACCA, or PCYC (12.2%), and recreational/leisure groups (7.2%).

19.5% (200) 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 (40.8%), scouts/guides/cadets/service groups (34%), Neighbourhood Watch, Safety House, YACCA, or PCYC (7.2%), and recreational/leisure groups (6.7%).

76% (783) reported that they regularly talked to the people living nearby in their neighbourhood.

### Attitudes towards Crime Prevention

56.2% (574) of respondents agreed that *The Community (with Police/Government support) can be an effective force in preventing crime*, while 15.2% (155) disagreed.

38.6% (394) of respondents agreed that *Effective community programs that tackle crime issues would benefit my suburb*, while 17.9% (183) disagreed. 50.3% (514) of respondents agreed that *Crime prevention programs should target the underlying causes of crime*, while 7.1% (73) disagreed.

73.1% (749) of respondents agreed that *Police alone cannot prevent crime occurring in the Community*, while 12 % (123) disagreed. 23.6% (241) of respondents agreed that *The Police are doing a good job tackling crime in the Community*, while 41.2% (420) disagreed.

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

<b>Crime Prevention Program/Facilities</b>	<b>% (n) of Respondents</b>
After school activities for youth (12-18 years)	44.7% (4220)
Safety checks for older neighbours	35.8% (3380)
Support services for families	20.2% (191)
Support networks for those living alone	19.5% (184)
Programs for increased communication between neighbours	22.9% (216)
Neighbourhood graffiti clean-ups	14.7% (139)
Foot/bike patrols by Police	22.9% (216)
Facility for Community development programs	13.5% (128)
School based crime prevention programs	26.8% (253)
Facilities such as lighting, paths, etc	66.6% (629)
Other	8.3% (78)

### Crime Prevention Programs

The most commonly selected programs (for introduction in their suburb) were Facilities such as lighting, paths etc, After school activities for youth (12-18 years), and Safety checks for older neighbours. Programs selected approximately a quarter of all respondents included School based crime prevention programs, Foot/bike patrols by Police and Programs for increased communication between neighbours. Refer Table 8.

## 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 out alone in their neighbourhood at night, When using parking lots at night, and When passing a group of young men on the street.
- About half of all males and females agreed that **young people make a positive contribution to the community**.
- Males were more likely than females to agree that **young people commit most crime** while males and females had similar opinions regarding the statement **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).
- Males were more likely than females to agree that **crime is a problem** (in their suburb) and that **crime negatively affects lifestyles** (in their suburb).
- Female respondents were more likely than males to report **areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe** at night. Males were more likely than females to report **areas in their school where they did not feel safe**.
- Males were more likely to have experienced **property crime victimisation**. Females (who had reported the offence) were more likely to have received feedback from the police. Of those respondents who had not received feedback from the police, males were more likely than females to have reported they were satisfied with the outcome.
- 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. Females were slightly more likely than males to have personally known the person who committed the offence. When asked about reporting the offence to the police males (who hadn't reported) were more likely to give reasons that they had handled it themselves while females were more likely to give reasons of fear/concern about revenge from the offender. Of those respondents who did report the offence to the police, females were more likely to have received feedback from police.

- Similar numbers of males and females reported that **violence was a problem in their family home**.
- Similar numbers of males and females 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**. For those respondents who didn't report the bullying, males were more likely to give reasons that the bullying wasn't serious enough while females were more likely to give reasons of fear or further/increased bullying as a result of reporting.
- Similar numbers of males and females had experienced **bullying at work**.
- Males were slightly more likely than females had **contact with the police** in the last three years. Of those respondents who reported the contact was not positive, males were more likely to have indicated that they had been charged with an offence.
- Similar numbers of males and females reported they had not **witnessed crime** in the last year. Males were more likely than females to have witnessed Vandalism while females were more likely to have witnessed 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 Discussed safety with children/parents, Installed security screens/alarms, Restricted activities at night, Stopped living alone 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 Safety checks for older neighbours, Support services for families, Support networks for those living alone, Programs for increased communication between neighbours 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 out alone in their neighbourhood at night*, followed by *When using parking lots 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	81%	72.3%	10.9%	14.2%	8.1%	13.5%
I feel safe from crime when at Shopping Centres at night	60.3%	47.7%	21.9%	27.9%	17.7%	24.4%
I feel safe when passing a group of young men on the street	50.6%	30.9%	26.6%	29.2%	23.2%	39.8%

I feel safe when using parking lots at night	42%	20.1%	33.8%	33%	24.1%	46.8%
I feel safe when travelling to and from work/school alone	87.3%	76.5%	7.9%	13.6%	4.7%	9.9%
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood during the day	90.8%	82.9%	4.7%	10.4%	4.5%	6.7%
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood at night	65.8%	35%	16.3%	20.2%	18%	44.8%

### 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*, male respondents tended to agree with the statement a little more frequently than female respondents (51.1% male, 49.8% female).

About one third of the respondents (34.9%) agreed that *Young people (under 24 years) commit most crime*, however males were more likely to agree with the statement than female (43.1% male, 29.4% 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*, 12.6% of males and 12.3% of females agreed with the statement while 44.1% of males and 43.7% of females disagreed.

48.9% of respondents agreed that *Elderly people are more likely than others to be the victims of crime*, males were more likely than females to agree with the statement (60.2% male, 41.1% 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.

Males were more likely (than females) to agree that *Crime is a problem in my suburb* (20.4% male, 17.2% female). Males were also more likely to agree that *Crime had a negative effect on the lifestyle of people living in my suburb* (37.4% male, 24.3% female).

Respondents were also asked about their beliefs regarding the change in crime in their suburb in the last three (3) years. 52.1% of males and 53.4% of females believed that property crime had increased, while 35.7% of males and 40.6% of females believed that personal/violent crime had increased.

### 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'.

12% of male and 15.4% of female respondents reported there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe during the day. The most common area nominated for both males and females were local parks and bushland (34.1% male, 40% female), followed by local streets/or suburb (22% male, 21.2% female) and local entertainment venue/shopping centres (7.35 male, 7.1% female). Females nominated local beaches more often than males (2.4% male, 11.8% female), while males nominated everywhere more often than females (9.8% male, 3.5% 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 (60% male, 44.7% female), followed by the area has a reputation for being dangerous (17.1% male, 14.5% female). Females were more likely than males to give reasons that referred to the area being alone/isolated (8.6% male, 15.8% female).

Female respondents were more likely than males to report there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe at night (27.6% male, 46.6% female). The most common areas nominated for both male and females were local parks and bushland (41.7% male, 32.6% female), followed by their local streets /or suburb (17.5% male, 20.2% female), and everywhere (10.7% male, 18.2% 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 (47.3% male, 30.3% male), poor lighting/poor design (24.2% male, 31.1% female), that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (12.1% male, 17% female) and that the area was alone/isolated (8.8% male, 14.5% female).

Males were more likely (than females) to have reported areas in their school where they felt unsafe (11.2% male, 6.2% female). Readers are reminded that respondents came from many schools throughout the Sunshine Coast 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 of the oval (13.9% male, 19.2% female). Males were more likely (than females) to nominate the toilets (27.8% male, 3.8% female). Females were more likely (than males) to nominate an area where the 'tough kids' sit (8.3% male, 15.4% female). The most common reasons for feeling unsafe in these areas were the fear of being hurt (36.4% male, 28% female). Males were more likely (than females) to give reasons that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (15.2% male, 4% male). Females were more likely (than males) to give reasons that they feel unsafe around the people who frequent that area (9.1% male, 16% female) and the fear of being hurt (9.1% male, 16% female).

### **Property Crime Victimization**

Male respondents were more likely to report that they had been the victim of a property related crime during their lifetime (47.1% male, 38.7% female). The majority of males and females had been living in their current suburb when the offence occurred (61.7% male, 55.4% female). The majority of males and females reported that the offence had occurred at their place of residence (65.7% male, 70% female). 38.2% males and 28.9% 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 on the street (34.3% male, 34.8% female), at school (14.3% male, 16.7% female), and another home/place of residence (8.6% male, 13.6% female).

22.6% of males and 25.5% females reported they had known the person who committed the offence.

64.1% of males and 69% 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 (41.3% male, 41.8% female) and that the police wouldn't do anything about it (17.4% male, 7.3% female).

34.7% of males and 59.9% of females who had reported the offence to the police indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding the offence. 72.1% of males and 69% 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 respondent believed the police did nothing regarding their complaint, not getting the items back, and that the offender was not identified or apprehended.

Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, 40.4% of males and 25.6% of females were satisfied with the outcome. The most common reasons given for not being satisfied were not getting the items back, that the respondent believed the police did nothing regarding their complaint, and that they were not told of the outcome.

### **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 (12.4% male, 24.2% 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 (65.6% males, 51.1% females). 31.1% of males and 42.7% of females 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 location reported by males and females was on the street (50.1% male, 51.3% female), followed by at another home (12.5% male, 22.2% female).

59.7% of males and 67.1% of females reported they had known the person who committed the offence.

36.2% of males and 36.7% 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 (20% males, 26.9% females), fear/concern about revenge from the offender (16.7% male, 22.4% female) and that they had handled it themselves (included reporting to the school where relevant) (23.3% male, 13.4% female).

## Methodology

45% of males and 66% of females indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding action taken. Of those who had received feedback from the police, 70% of males and 69.7% of females were satisfied with the outcome. Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, 31.8% of males and 29% of females were satisfied with the outcome.

## Violence in the Home

10.2% of males and 7.7% of females agreed that *Violence from family members is a problem in my home*.

## Violence based on Racial/Ethnic Background

6% of males and 4.5% 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 (9.8%) were more likely than males (4.7%) to report that in the last three (3) years they had been the victim of violence based on their sexuality.

## Bullying at School

31.4% of males and 30.7% of females reported that in the last three (3) years they had been bullied at school. 41.9% of males and 42.5% of females had reported the bullying to the school. The most common reasons for non-reporting were that the bullying was not serious enough (47.4% males, 30.9% females), fear of further/increased bullying as a result of reporting (17.5% males, 24.7% females), and that they handled it themselves (15.8% males, 14.8% females).

The majority of males and females reported they had received feedback from the school regarding action taken (61.5% males, 62% female). Most of those who had received feedback from the school reported they were satisfied with the outcome (82.4% male, 80.4% female). Of those respondents who had received no feedback from the school, only 31.6% of males and 21.3% of females were satisfied with the outcome. The most common reasons given for dissatisfaction were that no action was taken and that the bullying continued.

## Bullying in the Workplace

3.6% of males and 5.8% of females reported that in the last three (3) years they had been bullied at work. 35% of males and 36.6% of females who had been bullied had reported it to the employer. No further analysis of responses to this question was possible as the number of respondents who reported workplace bullying was not adequate.

## Police Contact

38.5% of males and 33.6% 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). 61.2% of males and 60.2% of males reported that they were treated positively by police. Of those respondents who reported the 'police contact' was not positive, 23.4% of males and 11.1% of females reported that their contact resulted in charges being laid against them.

## Witnessing Crime

30.7% of males and 31% 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.

Males were more likely (than females) to have reported witnessing Vandalism, while females were more likely to report witnessing Other sexual offences and Child Abuse/Neglect.

57% of males and 60.4% of females (who reported witnessing crime) had witnessed between one (1) and three (3) offences. 29.8% of males and 26.2% of females had witnessed between four (4) and six (6) offences. 13.1% of males and 13.3% of females had witnessed seven (7) or more offences.

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

Type of Offence	% (n) Witnesses	
	Male	Female
Break and Enter	28.5% (116)	30.4% (179)
Motor Vehicle Theft	13.35 (54)	14.6% (86)
Vandalism	41% (167)	33% (194)
Business Theft/Vandalism	10.6% (43)	8.7% (51)
Bag Snatching	9.8% (40)	9% (53)
Stalking	12.5% (51)	16.2% (95)
Domestic Violence	19.9% (81)	25.2% (148)
Assault	20.4% (83)	16.8% (99)
Robbery	23.3% (95)	19.9% (117)
Rape	5.2% (21)	6.6% (39)
Homicide	2.7% (11)	2.4% (14)
Other Sexual Offences	3.2% (13)	6.3% (37)
Child Abuse/Neglect	8.4% (34)	13.3% (78)
Drug Dealing	39.6% (161)	39.3% (231)
Other	3.7% (15)	4.4% (26)

**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 (56.8% male, 40.5% female). 9.6% of males and 6.5% of females reported they had not undertaken strategies as they were not sure what to do. 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.

Females were more likely than males to have Discussed safety with children/parents, Installed security screens/alarms, Restricted activities at night, Stopped living alone and Locked doors when traveling in a vehicle.

**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	4.2% (17)	5.6% (33)
Discussed safety with children/parents	7.9% (32)	17.9% (105)

Bought a dog/guard dog	18.4% (75)	22.3% (131)
Installed security screens/alarms	15.5% (63)	21.9% (129)
Moved house	3.7% (15)	6.1% (36)
Changed method of transport/travel	2% (8)	2.7% (16)
Changed leisure activities	1% (4)	2% (12)
Changed shopping times/places	1.5% (6)	1.9% (11)
Restricted activities at night	1.7% (7)	9.2% (54)
Stopped living alone	0.2% (1)	2% (12)
Locked doors when traveling in a car	9.1% (37)	13.6% (80)
Other	4.9% (20)	7.7% (45)

### Community Involvement

17.9% (73) of males and 14.5% (85) of females reported that they were currently involved in local community groups/programs. The most common groups nominated by both males and females were sporting groups and scouts/guides/cadets/service groups.

17.3% (70) of males and 21.4% (126) 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 and scouts/guides/cadets/service groups.

77.6% (316) of males and 75.2% (442) of females reported they regularly talked to the people living nearby in their neighbourhood.

### Attitudes towards Crime Prevention

58.6% of males and 55.7% of females agreed that *The Community (with Police/Government support) can be an effective force in preventing crime*, while 13.9% of males and 15.2% of females disagreed.

38.9% (157) of males and 38.4% (224) of females agreed that *Effective community programs that tackle crime issues would benefit my suburb*. 49.5% (200) of males and 51.2% (299) of females agreed that *Crime prevention programs should target the underlying causes of crime*.

71.4% (290) of males and 74.7% (436) of females agreed that *Police alone cannot prevent crime occurring in the Community*. 27.3% (111) of males and 21.6% (126) of females agreed that *The Police are doing a good job tackling crime in the Community*, while 42.1% (171) of males and 39.9% (232) 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. 916 respondents selected at least one option from those listed and their responses are provided in Table 12.

Females were more likely (than males) to have selected Safety checks for older neighbours, Support services for families, Support networks for those living alone, Programs for increased communication between neighbours, 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)	44.1% (162)	45% (247)
Safety checks for older neighbours	26.4% (97)	43.4% (238)
Support services for families	12% (44)	26.2% (144)
Support networks for those living alone	11.4% (42)	25.3% (139)
Programs for increased communication between neighbours	19.3% (71)	25.1% (138)
Neighbourhood graffiti clean-ups	13.6% (50)	16% (88)
Foot/bike patrols by Police	25.1% (92)	21.1% (116)
Facility for Community development programs	15.3% (56)	12.2% (67)
School based crime prevention programs	27% (99)	26.8% (147)
Facilities such as lighting, paths, etc	58% (213)	72.5% (398)
Other	9.8% (36)	7.3% (40)

### 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 all of the situations asked about in the survey. The greatest **differences in safety feelings between youth and adults** were evident for the following situations; When out alone in their neighbourhood at night, When using parking lots at night, When at Shopping Centres at night and When in their own home. The safety feelings of youth 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**.
- Adults were more likely than youth to have agreed that **young people commit most crime** while youth were slightly more likely than adults to agree that **young people are more likely to experience victimisation** (than other age groups).
- Adults were more likely than youth to agree that **elderly people are more likely to experience victimisation** (than other age groups).
- Adults were more likely than youth to have agreed that **crime was a problem in their suburb** and that **crime negatively impacted on lifestyles in their suburb**.
- Adults were more likely than youth to have believed that **property crime had increased** in their suburb in the last three years and 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 slightly 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 did not report the offence to the police, youth were more likely than adults to give reasons (for non-reporting) as they had handled it themselves and fear/concern about revenge from the offender while adults were more likely to give reasons that they had a personal relationship with the offender.
- 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 three times 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.
- Similar numbers of youth and adults had 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 Vandalism, Bag Snatching, Stalking, Domestic Violence, Assault, Robbery, Rape, Other Sexual Offences, and Drug Dealing. Adults were more likely than youth to report witnessing of Business Theft/Vandalism.
- 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 Moved house, Changed method of transport/travel and Stopped living alone.
- Adults were almost twice as likely as 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 Neighbourhood Watch, etc.
- Adults were slightly more likely than youth to have 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 five 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. Both youth and adults supported Safety checks for older neighbours (3<sup>rd</sup> for youth, 4<sup>th</sup> for adults), and School based crime prevention programs (4<sup>th</sup> for youth, 2<sup>nd</sup> for adults). Youth also supported After school activities for youth (2<sup>nd</sup> for youth, 5<sup>th</sup> for adults) while Foot/bike patrols was a popular option for adults (5<sup>th</sup> for youth, 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 all of the situations asked about. The greatest differences between youth and adult respondents (with youth feeling safer) were in response to the situations *When out alone in their neighbourhood at night*, *When using parking lots at night*, *When at Shopping Centres at night* and *I feel safe from crime in my own home*. 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	75.7%	49.5%	13%	20.9%	11.3%	29.6%
I feel safe from crime when at Shopping Centres at night	52.8%	25.4%	25.2%	28.7%	22%	45.9%
I feel safe when passing a group of young men on the street	38.9%	24.6%	27.9%	33.2%	33.2%	42.2%
I feel safe when using parking lots at night	29.3%	11.2%	33.6%	21.6%	37.1%	67.2%
I feel safe when travelling to and from work/school alone	80.7%	72%	11.5%	15.6%	7.9%	12.4%
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood during the day	86.3%	76.6%	7.8%	11.3%	5.9%	12.1%
I feel safe when out alone in my neighbourhood at night	48.2%	19.8%	18.5%	19.7%	33.4%	60.5%

### 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*, (50.1% youth, 61.4% adult).

Less than half of the respondents (41.3%:1096) agreed that *Young people (under 24 years) commit most crime*, however adults were more likely to agree with the statement than youth (34.9% youth, 45.3% adult). Youth respondents were slightly 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* (12.7% youth, 11.9% adult), and youth were more likely to report they were unsure than disagree.

56.2% 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 (49.2% youth, 60.6% 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.

Adults were more likely (than youth) to agree that *Crime is a problem in my suburb* (18.5% youth, 32% adult) while youth disagreed more often than adults (51.7% youth, 38.3% adult). Adults were also more likely (than youth) to agree *Crime had a negative effect on the lifestyle of people living in my suburb* (30.1% youth, 39.8% adult), however, youth tended to be unsure about their opinions regarding this statement.

Respondents were also asked about their beliefs regarding the change in crime in their suburb in the last three (3) years. Adults were more likely (than youth) to believe that property crime had increased (52.7% youth, 68.7% adult) and that personal/violent crime had increased (38.3% youth, 45.6% 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'.

13.9% of youth and 16.4% of adult respondents reported there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe during the day. The most common nominated by all respondents local parks and bushland (36.9% youth, 26.2% adult). Youth were more likely (than adults) to have nominated local streets/suburb (22.3% youth, 14.3% adult), while adults were more likely (than youth) to have nominated local beaches (9.2% youth, 21.9% adult). The most common reasons given by all for feeling unsafe in these areas were that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent the area (49.1% youth, 50.9% adult) and that the area has a reputation for being dangerous (15.5% youth, 15.4% adult).

Adult respondents were more likely (than youth) to report there were areas in their neighbourhood where they did not feel safe at night (38.5% youth, 55.2% adult). The most common areas nominated by youth were local parks/bushland (35.8% youth, 17.7% adult) while the most common area nominated by adults was local streets/suburb (19.2% youth, 22.4% adult). The most common reason given by both youth and adults for feeling unsafe in these areas were that they felt unsafe around the people who frequent the area (34.8% youth, 38.1% adult) and poor lighting/poor design (29.2% youth, 38.4% 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 (42.2% youth, 54.6% adult). The majority of youth and adults had been living in their current suburb when the offence occurred (58.3% youth, 52% adult). The majority of youth and adults reported that the offence had occurred at their place of residence (67.4% youth, 75.7% adult). 11.8% of youth and 21.8% of adults reported that the offence had occurred at their business/place of employment.

25.2% of youth and only 9.4% of adults reported they had known the person who committed the offence.

66.7% of youth and 86% of adults had reported the offence to the police. 48.6% of youth and 47.9% of adults who had reported the offence to the police indicated that the police had provided feedback regarding the offence. 71.1% of youth and 69.9% of adults who had received feedback were satisfied with the outcome. Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, only 33.3% of youth and 22.6% of adults were satisfied with the outcome.

## Personal/ Violent Crime Victimization

19.2% of youth and 15.8% of adults reported that they had been the victim of a personal/violent crime during their lifetime. Youth were more likely (than adults) to have reported they had been living in their current suburb at the time of the offence (56.3% youth, 36.7% adults). 39% of youth and 55% of adults 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 by all respondents were on the street (50.9% youth, 45% adult) and at another home (18.9% youth, 26% adult).

Youth were more likely (than adults) to have known the person who committed the offence (64% youth, 47.9% adult).

Adults were more likely (than youth) to have indicated that they had reported the offence to the police (36.8% youth, 65.2% adult). Of those who didn't report the matter to the police the most common reasons given by youth and adults for non-reporting were that the matter wasn't serious enough (24.2% youth, 19.4% adult). Youth were more likely (than adults) to have given reasons that they had handled it themselves (17.2% youth, 10.4% adult) and fear/concern about revenge from the offender (20.2% youth, 7.5% adult). Adults were more likely (than youth) to have given the reason that they had a personal relationship with the offender (6.1% youth, 17.9% adult).

61.1% of youth and 65.6% 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, 68.2% of youth and 68.3% of adults were satisfied with the outcome. Of the respondents who had not received feedback from the police, 30.2% of youth and only 26.3% of adults were satisfied with the outcome.

### Violence in the Home

8.7% of youth and 2.5% of adults agreed that *Violence from family members is a problem in my home.*

### Violence based on Racial/Ethnic Background

Youth (5.2%) were more likely than adults (1.4%) 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 (7.8%) were more likely than adults (3.3%) to report that in the last three (3) years they had been the victim of violence based on their sexuality.

### Bullying at School

31.2% of youth and 9.8% 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 (41.9% youth, 75.5% adult). Adults were more likely (than youth) to report they received feedback from the school regarding action taken (61.9% youth, 84.5% adults). Most of those who had received feedback from the school reported they were satisfied with the outcome (80.7% youth, 75.8% adults). Of those respondents who had received no feedback from the school, only 24.7% of youth and 21.7% of adults were satisfied with the outcome.

### Bullying in the Workplace

5% of youth and 5.2% of adults reported that in the last three (3) years they/or their children had been bullied at work. Adults were more likely (than youth) to have reported the bullying to the employer (35.9% youth, 62.8% adult). Of those who had reported the matter to the employer 59.1% of youth and 48.9% of adults had received feedback from the employer. Of those who had received feedback from the employer, youth were far more likely to report satisfaction with the outcome (73.7% youth, 38.1% adult).

### Police Contact

35.3% of youth and 37.6% 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 (60.1% youth, 83% adult). Of those respondents who reported the 'police contact' was not positive, 17.6% of youth and 2.8% of adults reported that their contact resulted in charges being laid against them.

### Witnessing Crime

31.2% of youth and 42.2% 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 Break and Enter, Motor Vehicle Theft, and Homicide. Youth were more likely (than adults) to report witnessing of Vandalism, Bag Snatching, Stalking, Domestic Violence, Assault, Robbery, Rape, Other Sexual Offences, and Drug Dealing. Adults were more likely (than youth) to report witnessing of Business Theft/Vandalism.

Of those respondents who reported witnessing crime during the last twelve (12) months 59.1% of youth and 71.9% of adults reported witnessing between one (1) and three (3) crimes, 27.6% of youth and 19.5% 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

	% (n) Witnesses
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Type of Offence	% (n) of Respondents	
	Youth	Adult
Break and Enter	29.3% (302)	25.8% (427)
Motor Vehicle Theft	14.1% (145)	11.5% (191)
Vandalism	35.9% (370)	30.1% (499)
Business Theft/Vandalism	9.2% (95)	12.1% (200)
Bag Snatching	9.2% (95)	5.7% (94)
Stalking	14.7% (151)	3.3% (55)
Domestic Violence	22.7% (234)	12.2% (202)
Assault	18.3% (189)	8.7% (144)
Robbery	20.9% (215)	11.8% (196)
Rape	6% (62)	2.2% (36)
Homicide	2.5% (26)	2.4% (40)
Other Sexual Offences	5.1% (53)	1.5% (25)
Child Abuse/Neglect	11.3% (116)	5.8% (96)
Drug Dealing	38.9% (401)	11.9% (197)
Other	4% (41)	3.3% (54)

### 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 far more likely to have reported they had not undertaken any of the listed safety strategies because they felt safe (47.3% youth, 18.4% adult). 7.8% of youth and 3.7% 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 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	5% (51)	18.8% (3120)
Discussed safety with children/parents	13.6% (140)	20.6% (341)
Bought a dog/guard dog	20.4% (210)	14.4% (239)
Installed security screens/alarms	19.2% (198)	39.8% (659)

Moved house	5% (51)	4.2% (70)
Changed method of transport/travel	2.3% (24)	1.7% (28)
Changed leisure activities	1.6% (16)	5.2% (86)
Changed shopping times/places	1.7% (17)	8.3% (137)
Restricted activities at night	6.1% (63)	20.2% (335)
Stopped living alone	1.3% (13)	1% (17)
Locked doors when traveling in a car	11.4% (117)	37.1% (614)
Other	6.4% (66)	8.6% (142)

## Community Involvement

15.8% of youth and 29.8% of adults reported that they were currently involved in local community groups/programs. 22.3% of youth and 23.1% of adults reported involvement with scouts/guides/cadets/service groups. Youth were more likely (than adults) to have reported involvement with sporting groups (49.6% youth, 9% adult). Adults were more likely (than youth) to have reported involvement with Neighbourhood Watch, Safety House, YACCA, or PCYC (12.2% youth, 30.1% adult).

19.9% of youth and 32.3% of adults reported that in the last five (5) years they had been involved in local community groups/programs. 34.1% of youth and 23.6% of adults reported involvement with scouts/guides/cadets/service groups. Youth were more likely (than adults) to have reported involvement with sporting groups (40.8% youth, 7.2% adult). Adults were more likely (than youth) to have reported involvement with Neighbourhood Watch, Safety House, YACCA, or PCYC (7.3% youth, 27.1% adult).

76.6% of youth and 83.5% 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* (56.2% youth, 85.3% adult), 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* (38.6% youth, 76.4% adult). 50.3% of youth and 87.8% of adults agreed that *Crime prevention programs should target the underlying causes of crime*, while 42.5% of youth were unsure about their opinion in response to the statement.

73.1% of youth and 92.6% of adults agreed that *Police alone cannot prevent crime occurring in the Community*. 23.6% of youth and 46.7% of adults agreed that *The Police are doing a good job tackling crime in the Community*, while 41.2% of youth and 25.4% 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 the their suburb. 2470 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 similarities in the 'popularity' of some of the provided crime prevention options for both groups.

Both youth and adults supported Facilities such as lighting, paths etc (ranked 1<sup>st</sup> for both in 'popularity'), Safety checks for older neighbours (3<sup>rd</sup> for youth, 4<sup>th</sup> for adults), and School based crime prevention programs (4<sup>th</sup> for youth, 2<sup>nd</sup> for adults). Youth also supported After school activities for youth (2<sup>nd</sup> for youth, 5<sup>th</sup> for adults) while Foot/bike patrols was a popular option for adults (5<sup>th</sup> for youth, 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)	44.7% (422)	52.9% (806)
Safety checks for older neighbours	35.8% (338)	54.4% (830)
Support services for families	20.2% (191)	28.2% (430)
Support networks for those living alone	19.5% (184)	48.6% (741)
Programs for increased communication between neighbours	22.9% (216)	33.4% (509)
Neighbourhood graffiti clean-ups	14.7% (139)	23.2% (354)
Foot/bike patrols by Police	22.9% (216)	54.6% (833)
Facility for Community development programs	13.5% (128)	22.1% (337)
School based crime prevention programs	26.8% (253)	55.6% (848)
Facilities such as lighting, paths, etc	66.6% (629)	56.9% (867)
Other	8.3% (78)	7.4% (113)

## 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'.

## Methodology

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 Sunshine Coast 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.

A sample of students from years 10 to 12 in each participating school were included in the sample.

A sample percentage from each eligible school was calculated by the researchers, based on the participation of all schools and a maximum sample of 2000 respondents.

A sample of 1030 respondents was achieved because of the twelve (12) eligible schools, five (5) schools agreed to participate in the research.

### 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 North Coast Region 1996/1997 - Personal/Violent Offences**

	0-14		15-24		25-34		35-44		45-54		55 & over	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<b>Homicide</b>	2	0	3	2	7	1	2	2	2	1	3	1
<b>Assault</b>	186	103	415	184	224	175	170	135	127	52	75	28
<b>Sexual Offences</b>	80	235	43	124	13	60	6	14	3	11	0	1

<b>Robbery</b>	13	3	43	7	16	10	8	4	5	0	9	16
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**Table 2 Offenders by Age and Gender for the North Coast Region – 1996/1997**

**Personal/Violent Offences**

	10-14		15-19		20-24		25-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		60 &over	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<b>Homicide</b>	0	1	4	0	5	0	3	1	4	0	6	0	1	2	0	0
<b>Assault</b>	87	33	226	57	161	30	132	26	172	30	73	16	23	2	10	1
<b>Sexual Offences</b>	30	0	36	0	22	1	29	0	59	0	73	0	66	0	35	0
<b>Robbery</b>	9	2	28	0	17	0	9	1	4	5	1	1	2	0	0	0

Table 3 Offenders by Age and Gender for the North Coast Region – 1996/1997

## Property Offences

	10-14		15-19		20-24		25-29		30-39		40-49		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>	328	35	1001	84	352	20	77	12	82	8	25	6	4	0	0	1
<b>Arson</b>	9	0	15	0	8	0	7	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Other Property Damage</b>	229	43	623	46	243	20	149	11	112	17	32	10	11	0	3	0
<b>Motor Vehicle Theft</b>	75	5	341	21	113	8	57	6	29	4	11	3	2	0	0	0
<b>Stealing</b>	473	369	931	256	360	140	152	88	153	107	49	36	57	23	22	18
<b>Fraud</b>	8	17	236	70	207	57	111	121	130	74	64	23	7	0	10	0