

# Young people: Back on the agenda

**A new year, a new government, an apology.**

**We are excited that youth is back on the agenda, and the Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies hopes to be closely involved in the strengthening of this nation's commitment to the future of its young people.**

**We feel it is timely that this original research focuses on serious youth issues that are of concern not only to researchers, but also to politicians, policy-makers, service providers and the general public.**

- **THE BIG 18!** The time to celebrate new freedoms and adult responsibilities, but for some young Australians it is the time that the rug is pulled out from under them.
- **HOMELESSNESS – BETTER FOR MOST, BAD FOR SOME.** If you're an Indigenous young person, from a single parent or blended family or you've been in state care and protection, you're still more likely to be homeless.
- **BUDGETING, NOW THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.** Young workers think they should manage their finances in a sound manner, but in practice they don't seek help and often get into trouble.
- **EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS = IDEAL APPRENTICES?** Not according to this research. If we are to solve our skill shortage problem then we need to optimise conditions for young people's entry into training.
- **YOUR PARENT HAS A MENTAL ILLNESS,** and you're looking after them, what does that do to you? You're already more likely to develop a mental illness than your peers, so it's important that you are supported.
- **IS IT TRUE THAT SPORT IS ALWAYS HELPFUL FOR REFUGEES?** Depends on the circumstances. This research indicates that sport and recreation can be very beneficial, but sensitivity is required and such organised activities shouldn't be used as an excuse to neglect other needs.

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## **The bleedin' obvious: Long-term support reconnects at-risk young people**

Alistair Lemmon

We lead with hard-hitting research which suggests that governments need to work with non-government service providers to supply sustained, committed and non-judgmental support for young people leaving state care. Whitelion researcher Alistair Lemmon has found that the combined efforts of service providers within and outside 'the system' can work for young people who lack family support.

'A lot of people say it is up to the person, but that's not totally true. It is up to the person, but they have to have the support there to be able to pull through.'

## **Youth homelessness 2006**

David MacKenzie & Chris Chamberlain

Indigenous young people make up 3.9% of Australia's young people aged 12 to 18 years, but they make up 19% of Australia's homeless young people. While this paper reveals that there has been a decrease in youth homelessness, largely as a result of the implementation of programs that have reconnected families, some sections of the youth demographic remain more vulnerable to homelessness than others.

The 2001 census found that Indigenous people were overrepresented in all sections of the homeless population.

## **Financial management and young Australian workers**

Nicki Dowling, Lauren Hoiles, Tim Corney & David Clark

In these times of increasing inequity between the financially secure and the financially insecure in Australian society, this research suggests a significant number of young workers are in serious financial difficulty, but are not seeking help to improve their financial literacy and management skills.

The findings highlight the need to increase young workers' awareness of the potential benefits of seeking professional financial assistance.

## **Hanging in there: What makes a difference in the first year of an apprenticeship**

Angela Hill & Leanne Dalley-Trim

Given the widespread concern in Australia about skill shortages, we need to know why young people quit apprenticeships. Interestingly, this research suggests remuneration is less of a factor than issues such as leaving school early, workplace conditions and a lack of family support.

'A lot of tradesmen think it is their job in life to make it hard for apprentices because assholes picked on them.'

## **The PATS peer support program: Prevention/early intervention for adolescents who have a parent with a mental illness**

John Hargreaves, Lyndal Bond, Matt O'Brien, Danielle Forer & Liz Davies

Young people who care for a parent with a mental illness are more likely than other young people to develop a mental illness themselves. This paper describes a program involving expert information, youth participation, peer support and ongoing participation, which provides a model for successful prevention/early intervention for these young carers.

'I also changed schools, which made it easier to make a new start. I don't tell anyone about my Dad, not cause I'm ashamed, but because they don't understand.'

## **Playing for the future: The role of sport and recreation in supporting refugee young people to 'settle well' in Australia**

Louise Olliff

While the benefits of sport in helping refugee young people to 'settle well' are considerable, and include information sharing, participation and building trust, this research stresses that other resettlement needs, such as accommodation, education, training and family support, must not be neglected.

Racism within sport and in the Australian community more broadly is a mediating factor that may deter young people from participating.

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