

Where to now for young people?

The election is behind us and for the first time in over three years the Australian Government will include a ministry with the word youth in its title. It will be interesting to see what impact the change of government and policy has on issues of concern to young people.

We also ask 'Where to now ...' for young people who are bereaved, negotiating sexual relationships, facing isolation in rural environments, adjusting to life in Australia as refugees or dealing with public services in at-risk situations:

- **MOST OF THE DEATHS** that young people face among peers and siblings are shocking and sudden. In 2004, land transport accidents accounted for 30.1% of deaths among 12–24-year-olds and intentional self-harm (suicide) accounted for another 18.5%. Andrew McNess has undertaken important research on the effect on a young person of the private or public nature of the death of a sibling and also the effectiveness of various support strategies.
- **THE SERIOUS PROBLEM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE** has not been effectively tackled in sexuality education. In our second paper, Anastasia Powell finds that young women and young men both want more knowledge about negotiating the social aspects of safe and consensual sex.
- **RURAL YOUTH ARE STILL SOCIALLY ISOLATED.** The third paper describes efforts to reduce this isolation using multimedia. The research project had some success but some physical and social barriers proved resistant.
- **HOW MUCH PARTICIPATION IS SAFE** for refugee young people? Those working with these young people need to be sensitive to cultural issues to ensure that programs are beneficial, not harmful.
- **AN INTERAGENCY PUBLIC SERVICE APPROACH** that is collaborative, individualised, integrated and strength-based? The outcomes of a program for at-risk young people, which has been implemented in the ACT, are evaluated.

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The social consequences of 'how the sibling died' for bereaved young adults

by Andrew McNess

This research considers whether young adults whose sibling suicided experience more social isolation than young adults whose sibling died of a terminal illness. And, additionally, whether a 'public' death (e.g. bombing victim or one of a spate of suicides in a geographically small area) affords the bereaved individual a greater level of public empathy and ongoing support than a 'private' death (e.g. an isolated suicide).

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Youth 'at risk'? Young people, sexual health and consent

by Anastasia Powell

In Australia, one in 10 young women aged 18 to 24 reports experiencing sexual violence in the previous 12 months. Sexual health education has been marked by a consistent assumption that young men's sexuality is 'uncontrollable', and a focus on policing young women's sexuality. This research suggests if young people have appropriate information, and the resources to act upon this information, they are capable of protecting their sexual health and autonomy.

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Rural youth and multimedia: An interagency approach

by Susan Brumby, Robyn Eversole, Kaye Scholfield and Leanne Watt

Observations of divisions among young people as well as between young people and the rest of the community in regional Victoria led to the development of the 10MMM multimedia project which aims to decrease the social isolation of rural young people and stimulate the expression of youth 'voice' and leadership using multimedia tools. While the project has helped a number of young people 'find their voice', geographic, transport, communication and technology issues have affected the project.

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Mind the gap: Considering the participation of refugee young people

by Jen Couch

In the area of young people and participation, it is sometimes assumed that more is better; however, refugee young people may be placed at risk if participatory programs are ill-conceived and under-researched. If programs involve families and the wider community, there is a greater chance that everybody will be able to successfully negotiate and accept the changes that participation will make to young people's lives.

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Success with Wraparound: A collaborative, individualised, integrated & strength-based model

By Paul Wyles

A model of service delivery called Wraparound, which was developed in the USA, focuses on maximising collaboration between stakeholders, including the client and their support network, as well as services involved. This paper reviews the literature exploring evaluations of the model and also examines an example of the application of Wraparound in an Australian context – the Turnaround program in the ACT – and its preliminary evaluation.

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'I don't quite know how to kind of explain it, but it definitely makes it easier when your sister has passed away and the government is putting you on a plane to Canberra for a memorial service.'

The overwhelming focus on youth engaging in sex as a 'danger' in and of itself may cause us to forget that young people should be developing a healthy, positive sexual identity.

Face-to-face meetings are still a powerful and vital way for young people to communicate and grow socially.

Parents and community members have the ability to thwart young people's efforts if these are perceived to threaten the status of older adults.

Turnaround has been very effective in reaching its target group, with young people with intense and complex needs willing to accept referrals and join the program.