

# 1 Employment

Vinson (2004) cites the World Health Organisation as stating *that unemployment puts health at risk and unemployed people and their families suffer a substantial increased risk of premature death. Job uncertainty and the threat of job loss are related to increased psychological disorder, anxiety, depression, and harmful bodily effects. When joblessness becomes concentrated within particular neighbourhoods an environment is created that isolates residents from the world or work and promotes a culture of dependency.*

## 1.1 Outline

Participation, and the capacity to participate, in employment are significant factors in determining whether individuals and communities are able to achieve economic and social independence and a reasonable standard of living.

The nature of employment and the amount of employment available in south Sydney has changed dramatically over the last decade. This has been due primarily to the relocation or demise of a number of traditional manufacturing industries and the development of Sydney as a major centre for business, finance, communications, technology, art and culture.

The evolution in the business and commercial environment has meant that many of the 'unskilled or semi-skilled' jobs that traditionally existed in south Sydney have been replaced by jobs that require considerable and new skills, qualifications and experience. This has made it increasingly difficult for those local people without formal training and specialist qualifications to secure employment.

The transformation of local industry and employment has coincided with significant changes in the housing market and general social environment of the area. Such changes have made the south Sydney area much more attractive to high income earners who want to live in close proximity to work and in an increasingly vibrant entertainment, cultural and social scene. In contrast with this, the majority of longer term residents of the area are low income families, older people, people with disabilities, Aboriginal families and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, who have limited incomes and qualifications, and who rely on rental accommodation.

## 1.2 Employment statistics

Waterloo has a very high proportion of people not in the labour force. In comparison, the proportion of people not in the labour force in Redfern is below the proportion for Sydney as a whole. The labour force profile for Indigenous people in the area shows lower levels of employment in both Waterloo: 20.1% compared with 27% in the general population (full time and part time employment) and Redfern: 26.3% compared with 60% in the general population (full time and part time employment).

Despite these figures, employment has not emerged as an area of significant concern in community consultations (McCallum 2003). Various consultations with and about youth however, have pointed to the need for employment opportunities for young people and Indigenous people.

Although the Commonwealth Government has primary responsibility for employment, the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project (RWPP) Team has worked with other stakeholders to explore employment opportunities for the residents of Redfern and Waterloo. This has involved the creation of an employment taskforce and identification of areas in which employment opportunities may arise through the RED Strategy. Information about this work is outlined below. Particular government agencies also have their own employment programs operating in Redfern and Waterloo. Summaries of the public housing related employment programs which operate in the area are also included in this chapter. Other initiatives that are positively impacting on employment opportunities for the local community are outlined in Chapter 10.

### **1.3 Employment and Training Taskforce**

The South Sydney Employment and Training Taskforce (SSETT) was established in 2002 as a combined initiative of RWPP, South Sydney Development Corporation (SSDC) and the former South Sydney City Council (SSCC). The Taskforce was established to explore options for increasing local employment and business opportunities arising from infrastructure development in Green Square and the RED Strategy.

In December 2002 the SSDC presented a draft background paper to the SSETT which explored synergies between the RWPP and the Green Square Community Development Partnership. The paper makes reference to a survey of 202 Waterloo residents. The survey was conducted to gain a greater understanding of employment opportunities and barriers to employment for residents of the Waterloo public housing estate.

The survey found that almost 1 in 5 of the currently unemployed respondents indicated that their health would need to improve in order for them to be in work. Men were slightly more likely than women to indicate this as a barrier. 17.6% of respondents indicated that the main barrier to them gaining employment was a lack of job opportunities. Again nearly twice as many men as to women indicated this as the main barrier to employment. Importantly this barrier was selected by twice as many people under the age of 30 relative to their proportion of the unemployed. It was also selected by twice as many respondents with a primary education relative to their proportion of unemployed. Of the total respondents, one in five indicated that the highest level of education they had attained was primary school level. All responses to the question about barriers to employment are detailed in the following table.

**Table 28 Perceived barriers to employment**

	Number (N=108)*	(%)
More Job Opportunities	19	17.6
Age acceptable	5	4.6
Economic Climate/employer confidence	11	10.2
Child care	11	10.2
Improved Health	21	19.4
English skills	5	4.6
Recognition of qualifications	9	8.3
Not applicable (studying, pensions)	15	13.9
Other	12	11.2
	108	100.0

Two cases missing

Green Square Community Development Partnership 2002

The survey went on to ask employment service providers, community based organisations, schools and peak organisations to identify the main gaps in service provision. The following issues and service gaps were identified:

- there is a need to better meet the requirements of high need groups including young people, Indigenous people and those with disabilities
- cumbersome client screening and service provider allocation often leads to poor allocation and matching of needs with appropriate services and opportunities
- there are a substantial number of employment agencies in south Sydney mostly aiming to make a profit. This only benefits job ready individuals. In contrast, there are only a limited number of intensive assistance programs
- there is a lack of continuity between local schools, TAFE and employers to provide school to work programs and even summer placements.

The SSETT utilised the information in the background paper to inform the development of a Skilling and Employment Strategy and Business Plan (discussed in more detail below).

From the outset it was agreed that SSETT would have a limited lifespan i.e., its role would be limited to researching employment trends and opportunities across the local government area and to making recommendations for the future approaches to employment in both Redfern and Waterloo and in the Green Square development area. Consequently it was decided in late 2003 that the SSETT would be replaced by a new Taskforce in line with the recommendations of the Skilling and Employment Strategy and Business Plan.

## 1.4 The Skilling and Employment Strategy and Business Plan

The Employment Strategy was prepared by the Hornery Institute, a non-profit charity, for the SSETT. The Strategy seeks to capitalise on the continuing opportunities presented by development and the creative potential of the area by establishing an employment and training program. It was devised to support on going economic well being and genuine community benefit to all constituents across south Sydney. It sought to achieve this by encouraging, facilitating and delivering training and employment services in the area.

The Employment Strategy refers to the following particular employment-related challenges in relation to south Sydney:

- the increasing mismatch between the skills required by industry and the skills available in the local workforce
- the broader south Sydney area will be an area of strong employment growth while simultaneously characterised by large areas of very high unemployment and long term structurally unemployed.

The Employment Strategy seeks to align community engagement with regional development. This means that arrangements will need to be put in place to:

- identify where and what jobs will emerge as a result of the development across south Sydney
- influence the curricula of learning providers and institutions to better reflect training in emerging regional jobs
- encourage and facilitate individuals, particularly those disenfranchised from training and employment, to undertake training to be in a better position to compete for those jobs
- continue to improve the skills of the local labour force to make sure they keep the jobs and progress a career
- encourage business to utilise the advantages of a better skilled labour supply and promote employer interest in training and job creation.

Two recommendations were included in the Employment Strategy. The first related to the creation of a Skilling and Employment Taskforce comprising of representatives from state and local government, business, learning and employment services. The purpose of the taskforce would be to act as the governing body for employment and training service delivery in and around south Sydney and Redfern and Waterloo.

This recommendation has been taken up by the RWPP, in conjunction with SSCC, GROW, and other employment services. The Commonwealth Government will also be involved

through the participation of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. The taskforce is due to hold its first meeting in the coming weeks.

The second recommendation related to the establishment of a skilling and employment hub. The purpose of the hub would be to deliver training and employment initiatives. To date, this recommendation has not been adopted. The view of the stakeholders is that the initiatives do not lend themselves to the Redfern and Waterloo community at this stage. It is considered that work around stakeholder engagement and alignment of priorities and programming needs to occur before any initiatives can be implemented.

## **1.5 The RED Strategy**

A number of economic development opportunities are being explored as part of the development of the RED Strategy (see Chapter 16 for more information). It is anticipated that these opportunities may lead to future job creation in the area. Additionally, one of the RED Strategy's guiding principles is to ensure social equity in relation to employment. The following mechanisms are expected to contribute to this:

- increasing supply of employment land
- matching the local unemployed to employment opportunities
- delivering employment and training outcomes in government contracts
- developing employment partnerships between the community and Sydney University.

### **1.5.1 Increasing supply of employment land**

There are approximately 20,000 jobs in the RED area, which is double the resident workforce of approximately 10,000. The highest numbers of workplaces are at the Australian Technology Park, Sydney University and Australia Post as well as the remaining workshops, factories and warehouses. Whilst the nature of employment in the area is changing from semi-skilled to high-skill industries, there remain a considerable volume of semi-skilled employment opportunities.

Increasing the Floor Space Ratio (FSR) on the Australian Technology Park (ATP) site is seen by Cox Richardson (the consultants engaged to develop the RED Strategy) as an effective approach to increasing employment opportunities in the area.

Future commercial developments will offer employment opportunities in the Redfern and Waterloo areas. Any such development must be considered in the context of the work that the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources is currently undertaking through the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy. The Strategy is planning for the whole of Sydney's future commercial development requirements. The position of the RED area within this context cannot be defined until the broader Sydney strategy is completed,

particularly in light of the proposed developments at the Carlton and United Brewery site, Green Square, Cooks Cove, Wooli Creek and Sydney Airport.

### **1.5.2 Matching the unemployed to employment opportunities**

As noted above, the issue of unemployment in the RED area is not generally one of a lack of employment opportunities either in the local area or from the adjoining CBD of Sydney. Rather, the unemployment issues relate to the mismatch between skills of the unemployed and the jobs available; and to the problems associated with long term unemployment, i.e., many of the unemployed are not skilled in securing and maintaining jobs. There are a number of training programs operating in the area which assist people in gaining employment. Chapter 12 outlines these programs in detail.

The 2001 ABS data indicates that the unemployment rate in the area is 5.06% compared to South Sydney at 4.23% and Sydney at 3.75%. The majority of registered unemployed in the RED area are youth.

In addition to the registered unemployed, the RED area has significantly high levels of people not in the workforce at 36.5% (6364 persons). The majority of these people reside in public housing estates. Increasingly, the culture of employment is declining with trans-generational unemployment increasing.

The 'Review of Human Services' currently being undertaken by the RWPP will assess the effectiveness of employment service providers (refer to Chapter 25 about doing business differently). It is expected that the review will make recommendations as to how improved employment outcomes can be delivered. The Australian Commonwealth's recent agreement to participate in the RWPP will result in the capturing of invited Commonwealth funded projects in the Review. This is particularly important given the role the Australian Government has in relation to employment services.

### **1.5.3 Delivering employment outcomes through government contracts**

One of the most concrete mechanisms for providing employment opportunities for the unemployed, particularly Aboriginal unemployed, is through the implementation of the Aboriginal Participation in Construction guidelines in government contracts. The Government and the University of Sydney are considering significant infrastructure projects in the area. The combined construction program would support significant training and employment outcomes. Ongoing government contracts for building maintenance, security, cleaning and landscaping could provide additional employment opportunities.

#### **1.5.4 Brokering employment partnerships between Sydney University and the community**

The University of Sydney, as a partner in the RED Strategy, has committed to the creation of targeted employment opportunities for local Aboriginal people. As the University is the largest employer in the area, these initiatives are invaluable in establishing a positive working culture between a leading learning institution and the local community.

### **1.6 Employment and training opportunities for social housing residents**

Given that a high percentage of people who are not in the workforce in Redfern and Waterloo live in public housing estates, the Department of Housing conducts specific employment programs targeted at those residents. A brief description of the programs is included below.

#### **1.6.1 Handyperson Program**

The Handyperson Program provides a responsive minor maintenance and repair service for tenants within the Intensive Tenancy Management (ITM) team's area of responsibility. A Handyperson is attached to the Redfern Hill ITM project and is auspiced by the Salvation Army's Oasis Youth Support Network. Oasis Youth Services have recruited a previously unemployed social housing resident, who will receive training during their employment and will be supported to attain a relevant qualification.

A primary goal of the Handyperson program is to carry out minor repairs and maintenance within a short turnaround period by performing responsive, low-level maintenance work for a tenant and/or contract area. A supplementary goal of the program is providing employment for a small number of appropriately skilled unemployed social housing residents.

#### **1.6.2 WorkiT Employment and Training Program**

The Department of Housing has implemented the WorkiT employment and training program in five areas across New South Wales. The program commenced in the Redfern and Waterloo areas in October 2003. The Salvation Army's Oasis Youth Services successfully tendered for the 2 year program development funding and Departmental minor works and service contracts to provide employment and training opportunities for local long-term unemployed social housing residents.

#### **1.6.3 Tenant employment initiatives**

The Department of Housing has implemented a range of other local strategies to increase social housing residents' access to employment and training opportunities. These include:

- OddJobbers - a volunteer tenant run home help and handyman service operating from an office in the James Cook high rise building.
- Recyclers - a tenant run furniture-recycling project that utilises the skills of retired residents and provides reconditioned furniture and other household goods to tenants in need within the Matavai and Turanga aged high rise complex community.
- inclusion of a Tenant Employment Clause in common area cleaning contracts and common area lawns and grounds maintenance contracts, requiring contractors to employ tenants for a minimum of 30% of labour hours.
- an annual clerical traineeship for one young person leaving Cleveland Street High School.
- employing a local resident in the Clerical Officer role with the Redfern Hill ITM project.
- supporting the partnership with the University of NSW to conduct research projects to identify the needs and aspirations of public housing tenants that then inform the development of tenant employment and training strategies.
- commissioning Work Ventures (a Job Network provider) to develop a Redfern and Waterloo focused tenant pathway to employment opportunities. Work Ventures is actively involved in the community to improve access to employment opportunities and the Department has been exploring other models of tenant employment such as Community Contracts.

## **2 Families and Children**

The way that families are supported in the early years of their children's lives will have a lasting influence. Support networks of prevention and early intervention can benefit children and families, and ultimately communities, by:

- improving the health of mothers and babies
- helping children to start school better equipped to learn
- building communities that work to support families
- reducing the conditions that lead to child abuse, crime and drug use.

This chapter outlines the Government programs that have been established to support families and increase the life chances of children. Just as these programs have wider benefits in that they also prevent crime, most programs specifically designed to prevent crime have wider quality of life benefits. Part 6 outlines the various Government strategies to improve community safety in Redfern and Waterloo, which will in turn have benefits for families and children.

Chapter 11 outlines the health issues of relevance to Redfern and Waterloo and the Government's strategies to address these issues, including strategies to improve the health of children and families.

Chapter 12 provides the Government's education strategies which impact on the students within the education system but also those that are distanced from it, and more broadly on their families and communities.

### **2.1 Strengthening service delivery**

The Government is making significant efforts to strengthen the service network in the Redfern and Waterloo area, including those services that reach children and families. It has recognised that the existing service system in the area is inflexible and does not have the capacity to meet community needs. It is also clear that the approach to program funding, monitoring of the service system and evaluation of its programs has been inadequate.

The Government has made a commitment to build the capacity of both government and non-government organisations in order to improve their responses to the complexity of needs in Redfern and Waterloo.

The Government has put in place a service system assessment process through its Human Services Review which began in January 2004 and will be completed by the end of June 2004. It is also supporting, as an immediate measure, the established services in the area to better service the community through enhancement projects supporting family and non-

government youth services. A few examples, which are discussed in other sections of this submission, of the initiatives include the:

- Alexandria Park Community School
- Redfern/Waterloo Street Team
- Mudgin-Gal In-Home Support for Aboriginal Families Project
- Centacare Family Support Counselling Service for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities
- Alexandria Park Sports Development Program
- Police camps and mentoring program
- Barnardos Intensive Family Support Service.

Complementing these initiatives, there has been a move to considerably enhance coordination, communication and planning across the service system. A number of Taskforces have been set up which have a direct impact on the delivery of services to families and children. These are discussed in more detail in Chapter 9 of this submission. Government agencies have had intensive involvement in these, for example, the Redfern/Waterloo Drug and Alcohol Taskforce, the Redfern/Waterloo Child and Family Taskforce, the Redfern/Waterloo Community Safety Taskforce and the Redfern/Waterloo Youth Taskforce.

The Government will strengthen the monitoring of service delivery. Agencies will continue to work closely with services that the Government funds to help ensure that they provide effective and relevant programs.

### **2.1.1 Family support enhancements**

The Department of Community Services (DoCS) has led the Government's Family Support Services Enhancements project. This is funded by the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project with the aim of developing a model of family support service, which builds capacity within the existing family support service network. It focuses on the Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Women's Corporation which delivers the In-Home Support for Aboriginal Families project and the Centacare Family Support Counselling Service for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities that provides service in Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese. Both these initiatives are discussed in more detail in this chapter.

### **2.1.2 Youth services**

The Government has recognised that there is a lack of collaboration between youth services, combined with the lack of rigour in planning and targeting of services. These

factors were reported to have resulted in some young people falling between the gaps, for example because there were no services that met their needs.

An example of this was the lack of out of hours youth services especially over the weekends in both the 7-11 and 12-18 age groups. It is believed that this has been a significant contributing factor to incidents of anti-social behaviour and juvenile crime in and around Redfern and Waterloo.

As mentioned above, a Youth Taskforce made up of Government and non-government youth services was established to commence the process of reshaping services and to improve coordination, collaboration and integration amongst youth services.

The major areas of need identified were:

- initiatives which provide accommodation support for young people
- targeted programs for young people with complex needs (e.g. dual diagnosis, alcohol and drug issues, mental health needs). These programs could be provided during core business hours, after hours and/or weekends depending on the identified needs
- recreational and social activities and/or programs which addressed the lack of services during the school holidays, on the weekends and outside current core operating hours of service delivery.

As a result of this process, the Department of Community Services (DoCS) led the Government's non-government youth services enhancements project. This was funded by the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project with the aim of enhancing existing youth service provision in 2002-2003 by increasing the capacity and improving the continuum of service for young people in the area.

Following the establishment of other RWPP initiatives such as the Street Team and the Alexandria Park Sports Development program, in the 2003-2004 financial year, funding for this initiative was re-prioritised to brokerage funding. This was attached to the case coordination model which will target at risk young people and children in the area. This is discussed below in Section 14.5.

## **2.2 Family and child assistance**

Early intervention involves intervening at critical points in a person's development and attempting to ensure that they are given the maximum opportunity to lead productive lives.

The Government has a number of broad state wide prevention and early intervention strategies to provide assistance to help parents, families and children. These include Families First, Better Futures and the Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy. The Government has agreed that the implementation of these strategies in Redfern and

Waterloo will be considered in the context of the Human Services Review findings (see Chapter 25 for detail on the Review). Each of these strategies is outlined below.

In addition, this section provides detail on the various locally specific early intervention and prevention strategies in place to assist the children and families of Redfern and Waterloo.

## **2.2.1 Statewide initiatives**

### **2.2.1.1 Families First**

Families First helps families to give their children a good start in life by providing a support network to those families whose children are aged 0-8 years.

The program was announced in 1998 and is the first and largest program of its kind in Australia. The program aims to:

- help parents to build skills and confidence in parenting
- improve children's health and wellbeing
- support parents so they can respond to problems early
- build communities to support families and parenting.

Families First involves five Government agencies – Area Health, Community Services, Education and Training, Housing, and Ageing, Disability and Home Care. These agencies work in partnership with parents, community organisations and local government. Importantly, this approach is changing the way that services are delivered to families with young children.

The Cabinet Office has advised that Redfern and Waterloo has been identified as a priority for the Families First program in South East Sydney and its implementation will be explored on completion of the Human Services Review.

It should be noted that while Families First as a whole has not commenced in this area, other Government programs outlined in this chapter, including the Schools as Community Centres and Primary Connect, are consistent with the Families First policy framework.

The Central Sydney Area Health Service (CSAHS), which services Redfern and Waterloo, is already implementing policy and practice in line with Families First as part of its early intervention and support strategies for new mothers, such as home visiting. NSW Health report that the CSAHS has been involved in the development of strategies to address concerns about the health of children up to the age of five years including the period from conception. From January to December 2003, for example, the Redfern Early Childhood Health Centre saw 177 new babies with 1969 occasions of service and 209 home visits. These and other health strategies linked to Families First are outlined in Chapter 11.

CSAHS is also completing a plan for Children in the Early Years. In finalising this, it plans to engage with other government departments and non-government agencies to adopt a comprehensive approach for this age group.

### **2.2.1.2 Better Futures**

The Better Futures Framework was announced in 2002. It builds on Families First by focusing on the risk and protective factors for young people aged 9-18 years. The Framework links projects and services to strengthen key protective factors for young people and reduce risks.

The key themes for the strategy are:

- keeping young people connected to school, their families and communities
- maintaining their physical and mental health, and general wellbeing
- getting young people off drugs and persuading them not to experiment with drugs
- working with young people to improve community safety
- continuing to expand entertainment, sports and arts opportunities for young people – especially in rural and disadvantaged communities.

As with Families First, there are already a number of local strategies in place to assist young people in the 9-18 age group. For example, CSAHS report that Drug Health and Mental Health Services are working collaboratively to provide increased opportunities for youth to access core treatment and age appropriate services. Other initiatives such as the Redfern/Waterloo Street Team are outlined below.

### **2.2.1.3 Aboriginal child, youth and family strategy**

The Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy focuses on improving outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people, their families and communities. It is a \$13.4 million four-year project that builds on both Families First and Better Futures Frameworks.

Key issues in the Strategy include recognition:

- of the role Aboriginal leaders and Elders play in their communities
- that Aboriginal people want to take responsibility for their own lives
- of the partnership role of Aboriginal people in the planning, design and delivery of services to their communities
- of the need to strengthen community capacity, and economic and social capital, in addressing disadvantage.

As with the other broad strategies, the Government has agreed to consider its implementation in the context of the Human Services Review findings.

### **2.2.2 Kidspeak**

In partnership with local agencies, the Department of Housing established the Kidspeak Project to improve service delivery to disadvantaged children aged 5-12 years and their families in the Redfern and Waterloo area. The partnership involved the former City of Sydney Council, The Factory, Connect Redfern and the University of New South Wales. Kidspeak commenced in 2000.

Kidspeak provides structured and unstructured recreation each Friday afternoon on Waterloo Green. Activities include sports, arts and crafts and skill development as well as support to families. Barbeques are held regularly as part of the program.

Weekly attendance increased from an average of 36 children and 10 families in July 2003 to over 50 children and 21 families in December 2003. A total of 205 individual children attended Kidspeak activities in the period 1 July 2003 to 31 December 2003. During this period, 6% of the children were from Redfern and 76% were from Waterloo. The residence of 18% of the children was not known.

The Kidspeak program has highlighted the success of informal and accessible initiatives operating at the neighbourhood level. Kidspeak, whilst maintaining a separate identity, has been incorporated into the Barnardos Intensive Family Support Service, outlined below. This allowed the administrative overheads to be borne by the larger project which, in effect, made more funds available for direct service delivery.

### **2.2.3 Arts initiatives**

The Ministry for the Arts advises that there are several arts companies within the area of Redfern and Waterloo which receive regular funding, including PACT Youth Theatre and Company B at Belvoir Street Theatre.

The PACT Youth Theatre, which is based in Erskineville, aims to make innovative performances, with young people from diverse backgrounds as key creators. It targets young people aged 9-26 years of age.

In 2001, PACT Youth Theatre collaborated with a range of services in Redfern and Waterloo and a number of South Sydney partners to create Stand Your Ground (01) and (02), a performance event with young people in the local area. The project which targeted Indigenous young people from Redfern and Waterloo centred on developing a meaningful creative collaboration between the young people and their wider community.

Stand Your Ground (01) was developed by a team of professional artists working with 70 young people aged 12-18 years. The major partners were Cleveland Street High School, a public high school with over 90% Indigenous students, JJ Cahill Memorial High School, a

public school with a great diversity of cultures and The Waterloo Girls' Centre which is a unique after school service for girls and young women between 11–16 years of age.

The project had such a positive response that Stand Your Ground (02) was developed as a more ambitious and ongoing project offering the young people of Redfern and Waterloo a six month performance-making process. The collaborating partners in 2002 included Waterloo Girls Centre, Alexandra Park Community School, JJ Cahill Memorial High School, PACT Youth Theatre, South Sydney PCYC, FACT Tree Youth Services, South Sydney Youth Services and the Performance Space.

Stand Your Ground (01) and (02) are excellent examples of how arts initiated projects can provide the model for successful ongoing community based programs and the project will now have a life independent of PACT. In 2004 the young Indigenous participants from the previous two projects will continue their performance work in partnership with the local agencies and under the direction of acclaimed artist Aku Kadoga.

PACT's program for 2004 includes two major performance projects including a collaboration with the Sydney Conservatorium Song Of Ghosts, the imPACT scholarship program and Backyard Zing -a continuing program with local Indigenous youth developed from Stand Your Ground. It also includes two creative development projects, the residency and mentorship program Vacant Room 04, and the Kid's Workshop program. The company continues to increase its local commitment through its workshops for young people aged 9–14 years, technical workshops, small performance projects and the Open House program, Zing.

Company B offers free tickets to the unwaged to a matinee session of each play performed at Belvoir Street as part of its annual season. The company also has a reputation for a strong focus on telling Indigenous stories and has forged strong links with local Indigenous communities.

As part of its ongoing relationships with its community, Company B in partnership with Big hArt, commissioned a full length work that has been developed with the residents of the Northcott Housing estate across the road from the theatre. This will be shown as part of Company B's 2005 subscription program in the upstairs theatre.

## **2.2.4 Holiday program**

In the school holiday period from December 2002 to January 2003, the Government identified the lack of an adequate range of holiday activities for young people and children, and the lack of integration between services delivering these activities, as increasing the risk of anti-social behaviour over the period.

As a result, the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project (RWPP) brought together non-government youth services, the former South Sydney City Council (SSCC) and

Government agencies, including Police, Department of Community Services, Housing, Juvenile Justice and Department of Sport and Recreation to develop a comprehensive program for the school holiday period.

Additional funding was provided to implement the proposed program, with included the following activities:

- South Sydney PCYC excursions program
- Redfern Police Camp
- Fact Tree Youth Service's trip to Wonderland
- funding a driver so that services could take children and young people on the excursions and activities. SSCC provided the bus free of charge.

SSCC also waived pool fees to services who participated in the program.

The program was intended to:

- reduce involvement of children and youth in criminal activity
- enhance integrated responses by services for young people and children at-risk or in crisis
- provide additional support for families who are unable to supervise or provide recreational activities for children and young people
- reduce opportunities for drug and alcohol abuse amongst children and young people resulting from limited recreational opportunities
- enhance educational opportunities by linking programs to the Alexandria Park Community School.

## **2.2.5 Pathways to Prevention**

The Pathways to Prevention project is an early intervention crime prevention program aimed at addressing transition to school issues for pre-schoolers and providing supportive environments for children at risk of developing learning and behavioural difficulties which may lead to school failure and involvement in crime.

The Attorney General's Department is implementing the project in Redfern and Waterloo, in partnership with the Department of Education and Training and on behalf of the Commonwealth Government.

The initiative resulted in an interim issues paper titled Redfern-Waterloo Pathways to Prevention. The paper summarises information gleaned from interviewing 93 people as well as two groups of twenty five participants.

The consultations revealed that there was a need for:

- more, and more effective family support services
- more outreach work with children and young people who are most at-risk of anti-social or offending behaviour
- improved resources for existing services working with children, young people and families
- more attractive public spaces and physical environments including more free or low cost recreational opportunities for children and families
- better facilities and premises for community organisations and services.

As a result, the Attorney General's Department advises that the project involves the implementation of an educational brokerage model for the students and families of Alexandria Park Community School, Darlington Public School and Our Lady of Mt Carmel School in Waterloo. The model enables the schools to buy in special services, such as supported playgroups, which engage parents with the school and provide opportunities for parents to seek advice or assistance.

The project comprises:

- the Primary Connect program, which aims to link 5-14 year olds and their families with school
- the Parents as Teachers program, which aims to give support and advice on life-long learning to the parents of new-borns
- the Family Support program which will increase access to counselling services and other supports for students and families.

The project also provides for funds to develop or provide services for identified needs such as speech therapy, occupational therapy and family counselling for the students and families of the three school communities.

The program appointed two new staff members who began work in Redfern in February 2004. A coordinator has been appointed with responsibility for the Primary Connect component of the program and a Parenting Consultant has been appointed for the Parents as Teachers component. The newly appointed staff members are located at the new community centre in the Alexandria Park Community School but will also work at Darlington Public School and Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in Waterloo.

The Pathways to Prevention funding has also been used to extend the service of the school counsellor from Darlington Public School. The school counsellor has been providing these additional services since Term 4 in 2003.

## **2.2.6 Police work with families and children**

### **2.2.6.1 Police and Community Youth Clubs**

Police and Community Youth Clubs (PCYC) are a state wide partnership between young people, the community and NSW Police, to assist young people develop the qualities of responsible citizens and leaders, and to avoid becoming offenders or victims of crime.

There are more than 50 clubs across the State. PCYC is a charitable community organisation with close links to NSW Police. PCYC relies heavily on community, government and corporate support. NSW Police deploys officers to work in PCYCs.

The PCYC has more than 22,000 members. In addition, there are many thousands of young people who use its facilities and participate in its activities, but who are not members.

While each Club's activities and services vary according to local needs, they focus on:

- crime reduction and prevention programs which target high risk young people
- educational programs dealing with youth crime and other community issues
- sporting and recreational activities conducted outside school hours and during school holidays including martial arts, dancing, camps and basketball
- initiatives targeting truancy, unemployment, self esteem and boredom.

The South Sydney PCYC is in Phillips Street, Waterloo. It is located on Department of Housing land, in close proximity to the public housing estates in Waterloo.

NSW Police report that the majority of users of the PCYC are children from these estates. The PCYC programs currently cater for about 100 young people per week. It is also utilised by other local youth services and community agencies that work with children with learning and behavioural difficulties. The South Sydney PCYC provides a large range of recreational and sporting activities for young people, in addition to more specialised youth development and crime prevention services targeting young people at risk.

There is regular interaction between the Redfern Youth Liaison Officer, the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer who is not a sworn police officer, and the PCYC. In recent times Redfern LAC has referred five of its higher risk youth to the PCYC as priority one clients. Three come from The Block and two come from Waterloo. Two of these youths were involved in the February 2004 riot at The Block demonstrating the complexity of working with this high need group. Youth conferences also take place at the PCYC. These are outlined in Chapter 22.

The PCYC has constant interaction with the local youth in the area. There is proactive patrolling of the Waterloo skate park and the youth services that use that facility. There is also significant Youth Liaison Officer and proactive activity in the Waterloo area.

The PCYC is currently working with the Police Aboriginal Coordination Team to provide better services to the local community and to build better relationships.

### **2.2.6.2 Police and Redfern Kids Camp**

Police from Redfern Local Area Command ran two camps at Tea Gardens in January and July 2003, and a further camp at Broken Bay in January 2004. Twenty children aged from 7-12 years attended each camp. The children were selected on the basis of their risk for anti-social and criminal behaviour and anti-police sentiments.

The Camp provided a range of focussed activities including visits to sacred Aboriginal sites, team activities such as canoeing, high ropes and rock climbing. The aim was for the Redfern Police to engage with the children in a neutral, yet stimulating environment.

**Figure 5: Police camp group**



Building on the trust established through the camp, each of the children was allocated a particular Police officer who provides an on-going one to one mentoring role with that child. Both camps were well received by the community, particularly on The Block. Additional camps are proposed.

The camps are being funded through the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project and BP Connect. Recently the NRMA has also agreed to provide some funding for these camps.

## **2.2.7 Streetbeat bus project**

The Casino Community Benefit Fund (CCBF), administered by the Department of Gaming and Racing, provides funding for initiatives related to gambling and other initiatives that are determined to be of benefit to the community generally.

The CCBF provided \$49,533 over 12 months to the South Sydney Aboriginal Corporation Resource Centre from 19 November 2001. These funds were to assist with the employment of a full time Youth Outreach Worker to work with the driver of the Streetbeat Bus Project on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

The Youth Outreach Worker was employed to engage with young people aged nine to 18 years old who were at risk of harm on the streets, to identify issues affecting the young people and to make referrals to the Streetbeat Caseworker and other appropriate services.

The Department of Gaming and Racing report that the final report on this project indicated that the Department of Community Services funded the drivers of the bus, petrol and the youth case worker and the CCBF funded the youth outreach worker for the 12 month period of the grant. NSW Police supplied the bus leased through Redfern LAC.

All CCBF-funded final project reports must include an outline of any difficulties encountered in providing the service to the level outlined in the funding agreement. The Aboriginal Corporation Resource Centre indicated that one of the difficulties encountered by them was the difficult behaviour of service users.

The Corporation stated in its report that “for a short period beginning in September 2002 there was a dramatic rise in the number of aggressive and violent outbursts on the bus. Discussions with Redfern Police and the Resources and Education Program for Intravenous Drug Users in Redfern indicated that perhaps this pattern of antisocial behaviour was related to the unavailability of opioid drugs. This “drought” was compelling users to substitute amphetamines, which in turn caused more exaggerated and aggressive outbursts. The safety of workers became a major focus and strategies were put in place to ameliorate the impact of this situation.”

On the positive side, the Corporation was able to meet the performance indicators in the funding agreement, which included demonstrated effectiveness in referring young people to appropriate services for casework, such as drug and alcohol counselling, issues with school, family counselling and legal assistance.

The Corporation reported that it had provided support and intervention for 85 clients over the 12 month period of the grant. Of those clients, 20 had complex problems including drug use, family, domestic violence and cultural identity issues. Due to the nature of the Streetbeat program and the hours of operation, the majority of referrals were for immediate medical intervention. Other referrals made directly from the bus were to the

Domestic Violence Office at Mascot Police Station, Anglicare and South Sydney Youth Service.

## **2.2.8 Redfern/Waterloo Street Team**

The Redfern/Waterloo Street Team was established to work with children and young people who are at risk of harm or of getting involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour. The Team is managed by the Department of Community Services and funded by the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project.

The Team provides support and advice to young people, and links them with other programs such as counselling and recreational programs, and specialist advice and support for those with drug, alcohol and mental health issues.

It provides an outreach service which engages children and young people who are congregating in public spaces and engaging in anti-social and risk taking behaviour in Redfern, Waterloo and Darlington.

The development of a Redfern/Waterloo Street Team involved a new and innovative approach to addressing the issues of children and young people who congregate in public places within the area. The need for the Team was seen as a way to provide a seamless service to achieve benefits for children and young people.

The Street Team operates 7 days per week, at least 2 shifts per day. The Team usually includes a male and female worker, and Aboriginal worker on each shift. Shifts vary between 9am and 2am. The hours of operation increase over weekends.

The Team brings together Government and non-government agencies working as equal partners to provide services to this target group. In December 2003, the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, South Sydney Youth Services and the Redfern Aboriginal Resource Centre were selected to deliver this service.

This integrated service delivery approach ensures that children and young people are able to access advice and support as soon as they are engaged by the Team on the street. The key to the success of the Team is its selection i.e. it needs to provide a wide range of key skills that cross a number of disciplines.

Each shift of the Street Team has a Child Protection Caseworker to respond to serious concerns for the health and well being of a child or young person, a Drug and Alcohol Worker and at least one male, one female and one Aboriginal member. NSW Health, as an example, report that the Central Sydney Area Health Service has contributed three Health Education Officers to the Street Team.

The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) reports that it has worked jointly with a number of young people and the Redfern/Waterloo Street Team. This has included coordinated

case conferences involving a number of agencies in the Redfern and Waterloo area. To date, DJJ reports these conferences have included the Redfern/Waterloo Street Team, NSW Police, Department of Education and Training, South Sydney Youth Services and the Department of Juvenile Justice. The Street Team has in some cases visited young people in custody in order to maintain contact and facilitate community reintegration.

DoCS reports that the Team has an average of 375 contacts with children and young people each month. These are primarily Aboriginal kids, aged 11 to 16 years who are approaching the Team, mainly with issues relating to material needs.

Continual engagement with youth by the Street Team is reported to be the key to its success, with more than 40 percent of young people continuing to engage with the team. The Team may also refer these young people to other services when appropriate. The Street Team works in partnership with local services, such as medical and legal services, family support and youth services.

DoCS reports that on average, more than 43 percent of young people engaged by the Street Team last year were given assistance. This included housing, employment, and referrals for Centrelink benefits and family issues.

### **2.2.9 Aboriginal women's spiritual healing project**

The Casino Community Benefit Fund (CCBF), administered by the Department of Gaming and Racing, provides funding for initiatives related to gambling and other initiatives that are determined to be of benefit to the community generally.

The CCBF provided a grant of \$87,000 to the Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Corporation to assist over 12 months from 30 October 2001, with the conduct of workshops for victims of domestic violence, child abuse, and drug and alcohol abuse to build self-esteem in individuals.

The Corporation called the program the Aboriginal Women's Spiritual Healing Project and conducted two Domestic Violence workshops, two workshops on child abuse, two workshops on drugs and alcohol, one workshop on Grief and Loss, one workshop on Mental Health and one workshop on Sexual Assault and Sexual Health.

In its final report the Corporation reported that it had met the performance indicators in the agreement and that all clients indicated in evaluations of each workshop that the workshops had improved their spiritual well being as well as their physical and emotional well-being. In addition, evaluations indicated that the workshops had provided participants with a greater understanding of the issues that affect them and the services that are available to help them.

The Department of Gaming and Racing reports that the final report stated that a survey of Mudgin-Gal clients indicated that 82.5% of women surveyed experienced domestic violence, 45% of women surveyed experienced alcohol abuse, 47.5% of women surveyed experienced drug abuse and 62.5% of women have experienced sexual assault either as a child or an adult. There was no information in the final report on the actual number of women surveyed.

### **2.2.10 Gambling issues for Aboriginal women**

CCBF also provided a grant of \$71,111 to Streetwize Communications, located in Redfern, over 12 months from 10 June 2003, to assist with the provision of a credible resource highlighting the knock on effects of problem gambling for Aboriginal women and their communities in rural and metropolitan New South Wales.

Streetwize has produced an eight page comic called “Stop the Press” which tells a story about an Aboriginal woman who develops a gambling problem with “havin’ a press” (playing poker machines), what it does to her and her family and how she gets help. The comic is aimed specifically at Indigenous women with gambling problems.

The research conducted by Streetwize in developing the comic and the consultation with Aboriginal people (including people living in Redfern, some of whom had or have had a gambling problem) on the script, artwork and story provides a valuable insight into the impact of problem gambling on Aboriginal communities and how Aboriginal people view gambling.

There are no CCBF-funded problem gambling treatment and counselling services located in Redfern and Waterloo. However, the CCBF funds treatment services which are close by and would provide services to people in the Redfern and Waterloo area.

The Department of Gaming and Racing notes that none of these services are run by Indigenous organisations and the CCBF Branch is unaware of whether any of the funded services employ any Indigenous counsellors. The issue of Indigenous counsellors is referred to by Streetwize in its report on the research it undertook for the “Stop the Press” comic. This research revealed that although many of the Indigenous women who took part in the research “...felt that the help on offer was not culturally appropriate and would feel more at ease with an Indigenous counsellor or in an Indigenous run group...there were those who felt the anonymity of non Indigenous groups or counsellors was a far better option.”

## **2.3 Intensive and specialised family support**

Many of the families who currently use services in Redfern and Waterloo have complex needs, multiple problems and are experiencing severe disadvantage. Many adults have

experienced traumas in their own childhood with their children now experiencing similar problems:

- abuse of both legal and illegal drugs, including alcohol
- physical and psychological abuse
- family violence
- mental health problems
- sexual abuse
- poor parenting skills
- low self esteem.

In addition, there are high levels of poverty, a consequence of long-term high unemployment, high levels of incarceration and instability in housing. These issues are discussed further in Chapters 13, 19 and 22.

The consequences for children include:

- insecure attachments due to the lifestyle of their parents
- poor nutrition, which can result in developmental delays and long-term health problems
- difficult to manage behaviour, due to the inability of parents to set limits on their children's behaviour and respond to their children's needs
- erratic school attendance, due to the inability of parents to organise family life – cook meals, get children to bed or school on time
- lack of access to appropriate stimulation - physical, emotional, intellectual
- lack of supervision and nurturing.

A Family Support Service Project was established by the RWPP to establish a new type of family support service which would be:

- a new model of service delivery to meet the needs of families
- aimed at families who do not engage with traditional services
- provided by a non-government agency.

It was intended that the model would build the capacity within the existing family support service network and establish a new service model that targets high risk families who have significant parenting problems with children aged 0-18 years.

As a result of that project, three new services were funded to model new ways of working intensively with the most at-risk families in Redfern and Waterloo. These are discussed below – intensive family support service, in-home support for Aboriginal families and

counselling for culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Other Government run or funded services that provide specialised and concentrated support are outlined below.

### **2.3.1 Intensive Family Support Service**

The Barnardos Intensive Family Support Service is an assertive home visiting service targeting families who have children aged 0-7 years who are most at risk physically, emotionally or developmentally. Barnardos reports that it visits over 40 families per month and that the new service targets the most difficult to engage families and those who have the most complex needs. Traditionally these families do not engage with traditional services in Redfern and Waterloo.

The service will provide intensive support from practical help, to help with more sensitive areas such as domestic violence, drug abuse and truancy. This new service will increase families' ability to cope with problems and reduce the need for child protection intervention in their lives.

Barnardos reports that 72 families were assisted during the period from 1 July 2003 to 31 December 2003, comprising 43 ongoing client families. Twenty-nine families were assisted with brief intervention. One thousand and 300 plus home visits were made in the same period (approximately 55-60 per week). Of the client families, 51% resided in Redfern and 43% resided in Waterloo. The residence of six percent of the families was not known.

The service consists of six Family Support Workers, a Program Manager and a clerical assistant. Three of the eight staff are Aboriginal. DoCS report that funding of \$1,126,250 has been allocated to Barnardos Australia over two years.

### **2.3.2 Yallamundi Intensive Family Based Service**

Yallamundi is a new intensive family based Department of Community Services' (DoCS) service. It is designed to support Indigenous families where there is imminent risk of the children coming into care. It is staffed by two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander caseworkers who work for DoCS and provides home based support for Indigenous families in crisis, for up to three months. Referrals to Yallamundi are made through DoCS offices and Community Services Centres.

Yallamundi works with families in the home to:

- deal with a crisis
- care for children
- learn culturally appropriate life skills
- get help from other community services.

The Yallamundi service can also help parents reunite with their children if they have been placed in care or if they have been in an alternative placement for a period of up to three months.

DoCS reports that at June 2003, the rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care was nine times the rate of non-Indigenous children. It notes that the intensive family based service model improves the safety of children in the family by providing practical and hands on casework services which aim to keep children at home, improve parenting capacity and teach practical skills like budgeting, shopping and nutrition. The service focuses on teaching families about the impact and effect of violence and drug and alcohol on children.

The following case study is based on a real family and the details are confidential. This example shows how at the case conference stage, the various initiatives that work with families at crisis points work together to identify the most appropriate responses in the best interests of the family involved.

**CASE STUDY**

**The case study has been removed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.**

[Redacted content]

[Redacted]



### **2.3.3 In-Home Support for Aboriginal Families Service**

The aim of the In-Home Support for the Aboriginal Families Service is to meet the complex needs of Aboriginal families in Redfern and Waterloo. Many of the families that are currently known to services have multiple problems involving abuse of alcohol and illegal drugs, family violence, mental health problems, poor parenting skills and experience severe disadvantage. The service includes an aim to decrease the over representation of Aboriginal children in care and protection orders and increase generational family bonding and attachment in Aboriginal families through stronger Aboriginal family networks.

Children can experience developmental delays, poor nutrition, difficult to manage behaviour and erratic school attendance. In response, the In-Home Support for Aboriginal Families Service is assisting their families to nurture and care for their children in a manner that is responsive to their needs. This involves intensive case management and in-home support.

Services provided include counselling, in-home support, case management, life-skills training, parent education, skill development and relationship support.

This service works hand in hand with the Barnardos Intensive Family Support Service outlined above.

Following an expression of interest process, on 24 January 2003, the Minister for Community Services approved the Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Corporation to provide this service. The service has been allocated \$70,000 pa over two years. Barnardos, as the provider of the Intensive Family Support Service, works closely with and supports Mudgin-Gal in the delivery of the In-Home Support for Aboriginal Families Service.

### **2.3.4 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Family Counselling Service**

The CALD Counselling Service is located at the Factory Community Centre at Waterloo. The service provides support to families through the provision of counselling, support, information, advocacy and referral services for clients living in Redfern and Waterloo.

Services are provided in the Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese languages. With funding of \$70,000 over two years, the service provides specialised support which reduces the risk of harm for children from CALD families. It achieves this through intensive and integrated case management of at risk or in crisis young people and children and their families. The CALD Counselling Service also provides CALD families with the following:

- development of a Family Plan
- referrals to other agencies
- courses aimed at increasing parenting skills
- facilitation of a single women's group for Chinese and Vietnamese women
- interpreting at local schools for Chinese and Vietnamese speaking parents.

### **2.3.5 Child protection and out-of-home care**

The Department of Community Services core work focuses on child protection, starting with prevention and early intervention strategies to help build stronger families and communities as well as protecting children from risk of harm and providing care for children who are not able to live at home. DoCS provides these services directly and indirectly by funding a range of community partners to deliver services.

The Eastern Sydney Community Service Centre (CSC) is located in Redfern. The CSC services the local government areas of Sydney, Randwick, Botany, Woollahra, and Waverley.

In 2003, five per cent of all DoCS's staff were Aboriginal. This is three per cent higher than the required Equal Employment Opportunity benchmark. There are 13 Aboriginal staff positions in the area comprising:

- 1 caseworker in Eastern Sydney (Redfern)
- 1 OoHC caseworker for recruitment, assessment and training in Eastern Sydney (Redfern)
- 1 clerical officer in Eastern Sydney (Redfern)
- 1 community program officers in Redfern
- 1 caseworker, 1 senior customer service officer in the Redfern-Waterloo Street Team, 4 Aboriginal staff on the RWST by partners
- 1 coordinator, 2 caseworkers and 1 admin assistant in Yallamundi.

The CSC employs 34.6 caseworkers and DoCS reports that it receives the highest number of child at risk reports of any CSC in the metropolitan Central Region. Of the reports received, a higher than average number are level one reports requiring an immediate response.

DoCS reports that an unusually high number of cases require application to the Children's Court. At any one time the CSC would on average have 60 matters before the Children's Court.

### **2.3.5.1 Child protection reports**

Upon receipt of a child protection report, DoCS immediately gives it a rating at the Helpline. This is based on the immediate safety concerns and the level of risk assessed. A high level of risk to the child's immediate safety will receive a Level One rating, requiring an urgent response. Some cases are followed up at CSCs to complete the Initial Assessment. These usually involve cases where there is very little information provided to the Helpline (for example, a fax without much detail), or where there is a need for immediate action to ensure the safety of a child or young person.

The risk assessment work combines an examination of urgency and risk of harm. Each report is assigned a level. Level Ones require action within 24 hours of arriving at the CSC. Within Level One, there are degrees of urgency. Some require an immediate 'drop everything' response. For a call out with police, others require intensive investigative work in which the child or young person may not be sighted within the 24 hour period. Ten percent of all DoCS's work relates to situations categorised as Level Ones.

The following examples illustrate the cases that fall typically into the response levels:

**Level 1 Response:** A caller identifies a three-year old girl who has been left alone in a house and is currently home alone. A Level 1 response requires a response within 24 hours but may necessitate an immediate response if the safety concerns and risk levels are very high.

**Level 2 Response:** This level requires a rapid response within 72 hours for serious safety concerns. The Helpline develops a plan for a protective response by the CSC, joint investigation response team (JIRT) or after-hours team to start within 72 hours if there are serious safety concerns.

**Level 3 Response:** Response required from 5-10 days. If there are no current safety concerns, the Helpline develops a plan to be implemented by the CSC or JIRT within 5-10 days.

**Level 4 Response:** Response required at some stage after 10 days. A typical Level 4 response may be to provide information about appropriate services, often coded as Information Only.

Where Helpline staff members assess a case as requiring an urgent response, details are phoned through to the relevant CSC or JIRT and the report transferred on the Client Information System (CIS). Details of all less urgent cases are also transferred to CSCs via the CIS.



[REDACTED]

**CASE STUDY**

**The case study has been removed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.**

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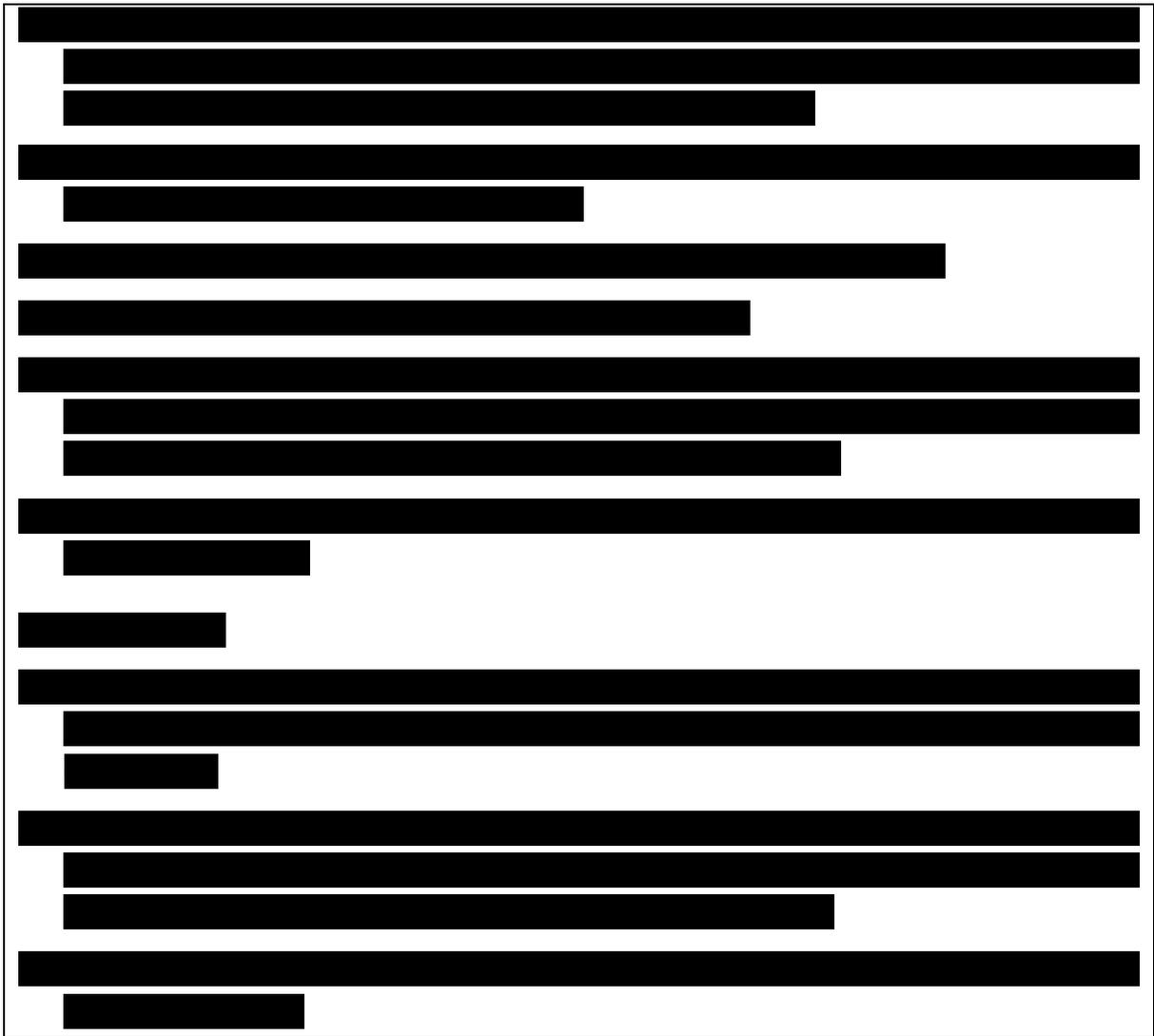
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#### **2.3.5.1.1 Level 3 reports**

A review of reports received by DoCS indicates that there are about four families in the Redfern and Waterloo area who have averaged about 40 child protection reports to DoCS each.

These families have multiple presenting issues, including domestic violence, neglect, physical and sexual abuse, criminal behaviour, drug and alcohol and mental health issues and are involved with a range of agencies at any one time.

The four case studies provided earlier in this section summarise the issues that DoCS is addressing with these families.

The vast majority of these reports have been assessed in terms of risk and safety as Level 3 reports. These are less urgent than Level 1 or 2 reports and are not a high priority for DoCS intervention. DoCS has a primary and secondary risk assessment process in place which

assigns a priority ranking of 1, 2 or 3 to all reports received based on a comprehensive range of factors impacting on the safety of the child.

DoCS, in common with every other child protection agency in Australia, needs to direct resources to the highest priority cases. Over the past ten years, the number of child protection reports has increased sevenfold. Reports are currently categorised by the level of risk and current safety, and are allocated to caseworkers in order of urgency.

The allocation of \$1.2 billion to DoCS over the next four years and the recruitment of an additional 875 caseworkers over a five year period will significantly improve DoCS' capacity to allocate reports of concern and enable appropriate intervention for families.

As part of the budget enhancement new staff and resources are being rolled out to Community Services Centres throughout the state.

Projects include high priority caseworkers, early intervention caseworkers and support to funded services, vulnerable families projects and out of home care projects.

Enhanced service delivery is being rolled out progressively to Community Services Centres. Redfern is due for this enhancement in 2005/2006.

In view of the impact that these four families are having in the Redfern and Waterloo area on DoCS as well as other agencies, the region has taken the step of quarantining specific resources at the CSC to work intensively to address issues of long term abuse and neglect and to effectively function as an Early Intervention Team.

#### **2.3.5.1.2 Kinship care**

In accordance with the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) aims to ensure an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or young person in need of out-of-home care is placed with a member of the extended family or kinship group.

A number of factors are considered in determining where an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or young person is placed. A copy of the Department's Aboriginal Child Placement Principles is attached at Appendix 6.

DoCS notes that a state-wide shortage of foster carers from different cultural backgrounds does sometimes make it difficult for the Department to place children from Aboriginal backgrounds with Aboriginal carers.

Eighty-six per cent of the Indigenous children and young people in care as at 30 June 2003 had been placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle. This percentage has remained generally consistent over the past three years. NSW has been the

best performing jurisdiction in the country in this regard since the principle was formulated and adopted by all states and territories.

DoCS is committed to improving support for foster carers and is looking at ways it can do this in consultation with Aboriginal communities.

At all times, DoCS is primarily focused on the safety, welfare and well-being of the child and/or young person however there are and will continue to be issues in redressing many of the challenges facing this client group.

A funding boost of \$3.5 million last year will be used to:

- develop Aboriginal foster care services
- improve support services to Aboriginal children and young people in out-of-home care and their families
- improve support services to the Aboriginal carers of children and young people in out-of-home care
- enhance infrastructure to provide support, training and resources to services managing foster care
- promote ongoing development with local communities to meet local needs.

DoCS' aim is to use the increased funding to provide an estimated 100 – 150 extra Aboriginal foster care places, throughout New South Wales. DoCS is constantly looking for ways to develop stronger partnerships to provide better outcomes for families in Aboriginal communities.

**Table 30: Out of Home Care – Redfern and Waterloo**

Custody Orders	26
Parental Responsibility to Minister	4

DoCS notes that the Kings Cross Adolescent Service and the Metro Central Out of Home Care Specialist Support Team are both located at Redfern although their geographic targets do not relate directly to their locations.

### **2.3.5.2 Additional services provided by non-government organisations**

DoCS employs staff to work in Partnerships and Planning teams based within each of the seven regions. It is their role to monitor service delivery and work with services that the Department funds to help ensure they provide effective and relevant programs.

DoCS' Metro Central Partnerships and Planning, South East Sydney Network purchases 36 projects from 17 non-government organisations through the Community Services Grants

Program, the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program and the Out of Home Care Program. A summary of purchased services with a brief description is at Appendix 4.

DoCS licences eight Child Care Services in Redfern and Waterloo providing 293 places of which 235 are funded through the Children's Service Program. A Schedule of Children's Services in Redfern and Waterloo is provided at Appendix 5.

DoCS reports that monitoring of services and programs is undertaken through regular contact with the organisations, including on-the-ground visits, as well analysis of reports and financial statements which every service must provide annually as part of its individual funding agreement with DoCS.

Where there are concerns about the provision of services or management of the DoCS funded organisations, the Department works closely with the group to ensure improvements are made.

## **2.4 Young offenders**

In 1996, the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) developed a sessional supervision program for young offenders who were ordered by the court to undertake community service. The program is based at Sydney Park, Alexandria and has strong links with local government, community groups, sporting organisations and welfare agencies in the Redfern area.

DJJ advises that it has referred a number of young people to various recreational activities and school holiday programs. The Department also refers to and works closely with South Sydney Youth Services, Waterloo Girls Services and The Fact Tree Youth Services, which work with young people who offend. The agencies provide various after-school and school holiday programs. It is noted that a number of the school holiday programs also target children under the age of 10 years, who are not clients of the Department.

These approaches to working with young offenders and other justice and corrections strategies to assist children and their families are outlined in Chapter 22.

## **2.5 Case coordination and brokerage of services**

A number of Government agencies, including the Departments of Community Services and Housing, and NSW Police, report that the children and young people involved in most ongoing anti-social behaviour in Redfern and Waterloo are well known to them. Often they and their families have had a long history with many, if not all, of the major agencies and services in the area.

The lack of a formal protocol between agencies and the limited availability of appropriate programs have, in the past, contributed to the lack of the effectiveness of an intensive case management approach to these families.

A new model of case coordination and brokerage of service to address this issue is outlined in greater detail in Chapter 20.

## **2.6 Aboriginal family violence**

### **2.6.1 Research on violence**

National Crime Prevention (NCP) in its report on *Violence in Indigenous Communities* (2001) notes that factors which exacerbate violence include family problems, financial problems, loss of close family members or other relations, unemployment, psychological problems, anger, alcohol intoxication, other persons who are encouraging a perpetrator to act, and conflicting social differences between the antagonists.

The same report refers to the social complacency that can be related to family violence, and quotes Atkinson:

*women cannot see any options but to accept the violence, for it is their own kin involved. The future looks bleak for many of these women and in talking to them, it is apparent they feel a sense of real powerlessness and hopelessness.*

NCP established that learned violence within both the family and community creates a culture and expectation of violence as acceptable behaviour. Violent behaviour is learned behaviour, acquired within a social context which shapes and legitimates its usage.

The report also notes that support programs primarily provide forms of personal support for those adversely affected by violence and are generally used after an episode of violence has occurred. Such services usually try to assist the victims of family violence (most often women), rather than the perpetrator, and can take the form of formal or informal counselling, legal aid leading to intervention of various kinds, and advocacy. Some support programs provide advice to enable a longer-term response to violence, whereby they provide the victim with information regarding their legal rights and places where they might seek refuge, or, alternatively suggest strategies in which local action might be taken against violence. Therefore Indigenous people may be given the opportunity to decide to remove themselves from the violence settings (eg. home or community) or take other courses of action to prevent or reduce the likelihood of it recurring.

From an examination of the literature on violence in Indigenous communities, the availability of counselling services which are targeted specifically at both victims and perpetrators of violence is reported to be minimal. In addition, the authors uncovered few counselling support programs aimed specifically at child victims of violence.

The report notes from its literature review that there are numerous case studies of violence programs that emphasise the advantages of being community-driven. NCP affirms that the push for community driven programs in Indigenous communities is not a directive to minimise the role of governments but rather that these require redefining. It states that government can demonstrate that it is genuine in its intention to address Indigenous violence by providing funding in the areas it is most needed.

## **2.6.2 Aboriginal family violence initiative**

The Redfern/Waterloo Aboriginal Family Violence Steering Committee was established in response to the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence Project. This is a Commonwealth initiative, working with the States and Territories and the community to prevent domestic violence. It was launched by Heads of Government at the [National Domestic Violence Summit](#) convened by the Prime Minister in 1997.

The Steering Committee requested the support of the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project in facilitating solutions to address family violence and sexual assault amongst the Aboriginal community in Redfern and Waterloo.

The Committee stated that Redfern and Waterloo requires significant cross agency coordination to build and strengthen the capacity of the Aboriginal community to address family violence and particularly the more hidden issue of sexual assault amongst Aboriginal communities in the area. A range of approaches has been proposed by the Committee including a more coordinated approach to addressing family violence across existing related programs.

This is likely to involve an integrated response to addressing family violence amongst the Aboriginal community through the involvement of a number of Government and non-government agencies

The initiatives that are already in place and which have been described in this submission go some way towards trying to address this complex and difficult issue. However, long term solutions will need to come out of multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approaches which are culturally appropriate.

Consequently, the Human Services Review has been asked to look at family violence and in particular Aboriginal family violence and to make specific recommendations about responses in Redfern and Waterloo.

## **3 Older People and People with a Disability**

### **3.1 Statistical profile**

Waterloo has an older age profile than both Redfern and Sydney as a whole. The median age for Waterloo is 45 years while Redfern's median age is 35 years. This reflects Sydney as a whole, which has a median age of 34 years.

Thirty-seven percent of Waterloo residents are aged 55 and over. In comparison, 22% of residents in Redfern are in this age group. Sydney as a whole similarly has around 20% of its population in this age group.

In the higher support age range of 75 years and over, Redfern has 5.7% of its total population and Waterloo has 9.9% of its total population aged 75 years and over. Redfern again mirrors Sydney as a whole with 5.6% of its total population in this age range.

There are a far lower proportion of older people in the Indigenous population in Redfern and Waterloo than in the broader population in these locations, and in Sydney as a whole. People aged over 65 make up only 5% of the Redfern Indigenous population compared to 13.3% of the total Redfern population. People aged over 65 make up only 5% of the Waterloo Indigenous population, compared to 23.4% of the total Waterloo population. Both compare to a figure of 11.9% for the whole of Sydney population. The lower proportions of older people in the Indigenous population are consistent with the pattern of lower life expectancy well documented in health data for all Australian Indigenous communities.

### **3.2 Overview of Government service provision**

The provision of human services to people with disabilities and ageing people is coordinated by the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC). DADHC engages in an annual planning process to identify priorities for future service provision. The process involves consultation with service providers, consumers and other government agencies and the analysis of service utilisation and population data on older people, people with a disability and their carers who require services within their local area. Any additional funding that may become available through the Department's budgetary processes is allocated in accordance with this planning process.

DADHC has had regular involvement with the Redfern/Waterloo Partnerships Project through the Redfern/Waterloo Human Services Senior Officers' Groups. This involvement has been enhanced following implementation of the new DADHC Regional Structure and appointment of a Regional Director and Regional

Management Team in Metro South East Region in February 2003. The new regional structure has established dedicated teams of staff to facilitate the management of services for people with a disability, older people and their carers across funded non government and government provided services.

DADHC has confirmed support of the Redfern/Waterloo Human Services Review through the Human Services CEOs' Group. As a partner agency DADHC staff have attended forums and provided all required information to the review on funded services, grants and DADHC direct services. DADHC fully supports the aims of the Review to improve service planning, build service capacity and restructure the service network to better meet the needs of the community.

People with disabilities and their carers in Redfern and Waterloo have access to a range of services funded and provided by DADHC, including support for living in the community and supported accommodation, and Home and Community Care (HACC) services. Older people and their carers also access HACC services. Through the HACC and Disability Services Grants, DADHC funds in excess of \$14 million to non-government organisations in the Eastern Sydney area. Some of these organisations provide services to the residents of Redfern and Waterloo. However it is important to note that only a small number of these services are physically located in the Redfern and Waterloo area.

Data specific to Redfern and Waterloo clients is not available for all services, but the Eastern Sydney Branch of Home Care, which provides domestic assistance, personal care and respite services to older people, people with a disability and their carers, provides 890 hours of service per month to 165 clients living in Redfern and Waterloo. 137 of these clients are frail aged, 23 are younger people with a disability and 5 are carers.

This does not include Aboriginal clients, whose needs are usually met by the Alleena Home Care Service or the Eastern Sydney Branch. The Alleena Home Care Service provides 26 hours of service each fortnight to 6 clients in Redfern and 7 clients in Waterloo. This represents 8.3% of the total Alleena client base. In addition Alleena provides Food Services to 3 clients and in home respite for 1 clients and their carer.

A list of DADHC provided services are at Appendix 7.

### **3.3 Programs for Aboriginal people**

DADHC's Alleena Aboriginal Home Care Branch is the key provider of HACC services for the Indigenous community in Redfern and Waterloo. In addition to providing home care services (domestic assistance, personal care and respite), Alleena has Disability and HACC Access workers to support Indigenous clients in using mainstream services.

While Alleena is funded to support Indigenous clients in nine local government areas across Eastern Sydney, the Indigenous community in La Perouse prefers to use service providers within their own community and there is some resistance to service provision from a service provider who is located within the Redfern area.

DADHC funds the Aboriginal Medical Services Co-operative to provide respite care and the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to provide home visiting services to local Aboriginal people including residents of Redfern and Waterloo.

### **3.4 Programs for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds**

DADHC funds the following culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) specific services in the eastern Sydney area that covers Redfern and Waterloo:

- Australian Chinese Community Association of NSW – aged care worker, respite care and food services (HACC)
- Ethnic Child Care – Eastern Sydney Multicultural Access Project for support services (HACC)
- Greek Welfare Centre – center based day care (HACC)
- Jewish Care – respite and accommodation services (HACC and Disability Services Program).

Home Care data identifies that CALD clients make up 19% of clients receiving a service from the Eastern Sydney Branch. Anecdotal information suggests that there is an emerging need for services to support a growing ageing Russian community in the area. This community is not connected and does not relate to the Russian Jewish community in the Eastern Suburbs. At this stage, DADHC is not able to quantify this need through any existing data. Home Care is however providing a service to a small and growing number of Russian people and use local Russian speaking workers to support them in this work. Home Care staff also use interpreter services to support their work with these clients.

### **3.5 Programs for homeless people**

In the 2002/2003 HACC State Plan, funds were allocated to develop interagency strategies for the management of homeless people and people living in severe squalor in the Redfern and Waterloo area. DADHC funds two projects that cover the Redfern and Waterloo area. These projects are:

- the Mercy Arms Brokerage Project for people living in squalor
- the creation of guidelines to assist HACC providers to deliver services to people living in squalor.

DADHC also contributes funds for HACC Services for homeless people as part of the Partnership Against Homelessness Inner City Homelessness Action Plan. These funds are for the use of the Homeless Action Team Support and Outreach Service.

DADHC's Eastern Sydney Home Care Branch is involved in the first two projects as a direct service provider. All three projects were developed in response to needs identified in DADHC's local planning and through local interagency forums regarding high numbers of homeless people who, due to their unstable living arrangements, were not able to access HACC services for which they were eligible. A further HACC project has gone to tender to support HACC clients who are isolated and living in high rise public housing in Waterloo, Redfern and Surry Hills.