

Youth Policy SNAPSHOT ALICE SPRINGS

NT Government's initiatives and activities for youth

This snapshot should be read in conjunction with the TERRITORY WIDE snapshot

Health and wellbeing

Funding to NGOs (DHF) Funds are provided through the Alcohol and Other Drugs Program of DHF to non-government agencies to provide rehabilitation programs for people who misuse volatile substances. Such treatment service agencies are able to cater to the needs of children and youth who are using volatile substances including petrol, paint and solvents.

A service funded in 2008-09, Bushmob in Alice Springs, provides residential rehabilitation services, case management, family support and interventions for young people aged between 12 and 25.

Red Dust Role Models Program (DHF) The Red Dust Role Models Program is funded to work with Indigenous communities across the Northern Territory on alcohol and other drug issues. The program uses the profile and influence of positive role models from the fields of sport, business, music, film and entertainment.

The program runs in Daly River and Tiwi communities in the Top End as well as communities in Central Australia. In 2008-09 a permanent office was established in Alice Springs.

DHF supports the Red Dust Role Models with in-kind support and an annual grant of \$30,000. In 2008-9 an additional one-off grant was provided to enable the purchase of a vehicle.

Child Abuse Task Force (PFES and DHF) The Child Abuse Taskforce (CAT), a combined initiative between the NT Police and NTFC continues to achieve positive results in urban and remote communities. The Taskforce initiative is in line with the vision 'A Safe and Secure Northern Territory' and the NT Caring for Our Children Reform Agenda which recognises the need to develop a strategic approach towards the investigation of serious and systematic abuse of children.

Whilst the protection of children and young people is a major responsibility of both Police and NTFC, the Child Abuse Taskforce focuses on allegations of organised or multiple abuse, involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related maltreated children and young people. Other relevant agencies such as DET are also engaged where relevant to contribute in a complex abuse investigation.

*Family
Responsibility
Program*

*(DHF, PFES,
DET, DoJ, DLGH)*

Family Support Centres have been established in Darwin and Alice Springs. The Centres have responsibility for the administrative services being established to coordinate the new Family Responsibility Program (FRP) and the Youth Community Corrections functions. Families attend the centres to receive assistance when experiencing difficulties with their child, parenting skills, or other family issues. The centres provide information about the support services available to young people and their families.

Interagency Collaboration Panels (ICPs) have been formed in Darwin and Alice Springs to ensure all available information is gathered and shared about a family of concern, and to ensure that both government and community services work in partnership to meet the needs of parents and young people. The ICPs are chaired by the Family Support Centre Manager and members are Authorised Officers from each of the Appropriate Agencies.

The Minister for Children and Families has decided that Appropriate Agencies from the Northern Territory Government are NT Police, DoJ, DHF, DET and the Department of Local Government and Housing (DLGH). These Appropriate Agencies were chosen as they have the most regular contact with families and children, due to their core business.

After information is shared, panel members may decide that it is worth making a Family Responsibility Agreement or a Family Responsibility Order with a family of concern if it is in the best interests of the child. At 30 June 2009, two Family Responsibility Agreements had been entered into by Police. No Family Responsibility Orders had been given.

One of the major benefits of the combined effort of the ICP is that there are few gaps for youth to fall through who are considered by the panel. As the appropriate identified agencies share their knowledge of families a picture is assembled that details their individual needs and this leads to robust case plans being compiled.

During the 2008-09 year the Darwin ICP considered 27 families and the Alice Springs ICP considered 11. The ICPs have also undertaken a range of stakeholder meetings to ensure the key organisations working with young offenders have been kept informed.

The FRP has implemented a number of accountability and management systems including:

- development of policies and protocols
- data collection and reporting
- establishment and monitoring of contracts with non government organisations
- development of an evaluation framework.

*Secure care
facilities*

(DHF)

Funding has been committed for new secure care facilities to be established in Darwin and Alice Springs which will enhance the capacity of mental health inpatient units to provide care in a more appropriate environment for young people with a mental illness. They will also provide for treatment of young people who may not be mentally ill but are exhibiting very high risk behaviour.

<p>headspace (DHF)</p>	<p><i>headspace</i> Top End and <i>headspace</i> Central Australia are two of 30 Community of Youth Services (CYS) sites established across Australia with funding from the Australian Government. DHF is a consortium member in each of the NT sites.</p> <p>The aim of CYSS is to improve access to health and wellbeing services for young people aged 12 to 15 years, by bringing together local youth mental health, drug and alcohol, primary care and education, training and support agencies. Each <i>headspace</i> service is being implemented by a consortium of local agencies, working in partnership to facilitate more coordinated, integrated and holistic care for young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>headspace</i> Central Australia: Central Australian Aboriginal Congress is the lead agency of the local consortium of organisations including DHF, the Mental Health Association of Central Australia, GPNNT and Alice Springs Youth Accommodation and Support Services. <p>DHF and <i>headspace</i> Top End have now established shared intake assessment processes whereby young people in the <i>headspace</i> target age group will undergo an initial assessment at <i>headspace</i> before a decision is made regarding any need for specialist treatment and care through Top End Mental Health Services (TEMHS).</p> <p>A consultant psychiatrist from TEMHS is also now attending fortnightly clinical case review meetings to provide consultation liaison advice to staff at <i>headspace</i> Top End.</p> <p>A similar arrangement has been established in Central Australia, with a DHF visiting child and adolescent psychiatrist and a visiting child and adolescent psychologist providing consultation and liaison on a regular basis.</p>
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<p><i>Suicide Prevention Action Plan</i> (DHF)</p>	<p>A three year Action Plan for Suicide Prevention has been developed by the Cross Government Co-ordinating Committee for Suicide Prevention.</p> <p>The Action Plan was launched in Alice Springs in March 2009 and is a whole-of-government response, including commitments to the specific actions and initiatives aimed at reducing suicide and fostering individual and community resilience and capacity.</p> <p>DHF has committed additional funding of \$330,000 over the next 18 months to progress a range of new initiatives under the Action Plan. These include a range of suicide intervention training initiatives that target both Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations and young people over the age of 15.</p> <p>Other initiatives include the provision of training workshops to address non-fatal self-harming behaviour amongst young people, the development of appropriate resources providing information on suicide and self harm prevention and bereavement support for use by a wide range of service providers and members of the community, the facilitation of a range of short term bereavement support groups and a forum focusing on mental health in the workplace.</p>
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Education

Alice Springs Indigenous Education Strategy

(DET)

The Alice Springs Indigenous Education Strategy was introduced during 2007-08 to engage Indigenous students and improve their education and employment prospects. Under the strategy a number of initiatives have grown or been implemented during 2008-09 including the Alice Springs Football Academy Program (Clontarf Foundation), the Alice Springs Partnership for Success Program (Polly Farmer Foundation) and the Girls at the Centre Project. The Australian and Northern Territory Governments and private sponsors including The Smith Family fund the following initiatives:

- Clontarf academies have been expanded and now include seven government schools across the Territory. Clontarf programs in the Territory are jointly funded by the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government and the Clontarf Foundation. The Clontarf Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to improve the education, health, life skills, self-esteem and employment outcomes of young Indigenous men through the establishment of football academies. The foundation engages and supports participants in mainstream education until they complete Year 12 and then assists them to find employment.
- The Polly Farmer Foundation Program is an academic program for Indigenous students who have the capacity, interest and potential to go on and complete their secondary education. It provides assistance and support for students with homework by tutors to improve educational achievement and generate positive aspirations for higher education. Approximately 30 students participated in the program in 2008-09.
- The Girls at the Centre project targets Indigenous girls in government middle schools from years 7 to 9 and provides an individualised approach to engaging the students through programs designed to tap into their areas of interest. It aims to improve literacy and numeracy skills and support them to complete their senior years education. The project commenced in April 2008 and approximately 35 girls participated in 2008-09.

Student Support Coordination Pilot Projects

(DET)

The Student Support Coordination positions were established at Bradshaw and Sadadeen Primary Schools in mid-2008. This initiative was implemented in response to the DET priority of improving school attendance and also to local issues relating to children living in town camps, including enrolment and attendance, poor educational outcomes and poor engagement by families and valuing of schooling.

The Student Support Coordinators provide support to staff, students and families in the management of students' health and wellbeing issues in order to enhance their capacity to engage effectively in school.

Bush Tucker Garden

(NRETAS)

The Alice Springs Desert Park assisted in the planning and establishment a bush tucker garden at Yipirinya School.

<p><i>Youth Action Plan – Alice Springs</i> (DCM, PFES and DHF)</p>	<p>The Northern Territory Government launched the Alice Springs Youth Action Plan on 19 February 2009 to tackle youth crime and support children and families throughout the community.</p> <p>As a result, a Police-based Youth Services Coordinator was recruited to oversee the implementation of the plan and ensure government and non-government services are coordinated and delivered effectively.</p> <p>A key element of the plan is the creation of a new middle school in Alice Springs which will operate across two campuses at Gillen and Anzac Hill.</p> <p>The school will be open for the start of the 2010 school year and will provide students with wider subject choices, programs tailored to meet individual needs and improved access to resources and infrastructure.</p> <p>A new voluntary ‘No school, No service’ initiative was implemented with local businesses to ensure that children attend school. Local businesses involved who see a school-aged child not accompanied by an adult or without a leave pass will not serve the child during school hours.</p>
<hr/> <p><i>Enterprise Grants</i> (DET)</p>	<p>Enterprise Grants offer students the opportunity to participate in projects aligned with VET, vocational and enterprise learning outcomes in the senior and middle years of schooling. Enterprise Grant funding may support ‘real’ or simulated projects that foster livelihood activities, small enterprise or work opportunities for students in co-operation and partnership with their communities to develop enterprising attitudes and attributes, including creativity, self-reliance, a capacity to respond to change, and an ability to generate, recognise and seize opportunities.</p> <p>These skills are particularly relevant to enhancing the education of boys, addressing issues for Indigenous students and those in rural and remote communities. In 2008-09, provincial, remote and very remote schools received grants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In 2008, 34 Enterprise projects were funded. ▪ In 2009, 29 Enterprise projects are funded. <p>An example of how these grants were used is at Soapy Bore Homeland Centre where the students conducted a seed jewellery enterprise. As part of their enterprise, they collected seeds in the local area and made them into modern, attractive jewellery. The students worked with an Alice Springs-based jeweller. Students created a range of jewellery pieces including earrings, bracelets and necklaces and sold these at a night market in Alice Springs.</p>
<hr/> <p><i>The annual Careers Expo</i> (DET)</p>	<p>The annual Careers Expo is an opportunity for students, teachers, parents, and the general public in the Territory to explore career opportunities and identify future career pathways.</p> <p>Expos were run in August 2008 in Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Darwin, Nhulunbuy and Katherine, with over 3300 students and participants attending.</p> <p>2008 Expos had 250 exhibitors from a broad range of industries and higher education institutions. This impacted positively on the students and participants.</p>

Overall exhibitor satisfaction with the 2008 Careers Expo in all regions was high due to the introduction of the Careers Passport along with the Careers Trail questionnaire. These tools were distributed to schools prior to the Expo which dramatically increased student preparation. This resulted in a noticeable increase in exhibitor/student interaction.

*Alice Springs
Desert Park guest
speakers
(NRETAS)*

Tourism NT organise monthly guest speakers at the Alice Springs Desert Park for the local tourism industry. These speakers, often NRETAS staff, provide some vocational training, generally within the natural history sphere.

*Try'a Trade
(DET)*

Try'a Trade is a Worldskills Australia initiative. In the NT the program is aimed at encouraging Year 9 students to consider a career in the trades and take on VET subjects in their senior years of school. The event is interactive and provides students with an opportunity to "have-a-go" at various skill and trade occupations.

2008 Alice Springs Try'a Trade was held over two days in September with 99 students from six high schools in Alice Springs, and 77 students from remote schools attending. Trades included childcare, automotive, cookery, construction, health care, media, horticulture, welding, electrical, and conservation and land management.

Training and employment

*Training for
remote youth
(DET)*

Training for Remote Youth program is aimed at bringing youth disengaged from school, registered training organisations and local communities/schools together to provide structured training and learning experiences that prepares youth for employment in the community or re-engages them in further learning.

Examples of current programs include: basic mechanics, welding, hospitality and automotive training.

*School-to-Work
Transition
Strategic Plan
2007-2009*

School-to-work transition programs and activities aim to assist Year 11 and 12 school students in their transition from school to work through school retention to Year 12, completion of the NTCET or an equivalent qualification and ultimately, into further training or full-time employment.

(DET)

All senior schools work with Local Community Partnership providers to work with students who are seeking vocational education and training and liaise with local industry to organise a range of livelihood activities, including:

- VET in Schools courses
 - work Experience
 - Structured Workplace Learning
 - industry tours and information sessions
 - school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.
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The School-to-Work Transition Strategic Plan 2007-2009 was developed to assist young people who complete secondary school to make a successful transition from school to employment, further education or training.

Key action areas in the Plan continued to be implemented throughout 2008-09.

Initiatives under Jobs Plan 3 aim to facilitate the transition of school students into employment, further education or training. These initiatives continued to be implemented throughout 2008-09.

The Alice Springs Youth Employment Strategy (YES) was launched by Minister Karl Hampton MLA in December 2008. The Strategy was developed in consultation with local Alice Springs stakeholders including youth, businesses and employment support agencies. The Strategy identifies six key projects to be progressed to enhance young people's opportunity to engage and remain in local employment. The Alice Springs YES has now moved into the second phase and implementation of the strategy priorities has commenced. The "Understanding Us" report has been released and youth consultation mechanisms have been established.

*Trainee Program
Civil Construction
(DPI)*

In late 2008 and early 2009, DPI's Construction Division advertised for various Technical Trainee Positions in Civil Construction Supervision and Civil Construction Design. As a result of the campaign, 12 school leavers and others under the age of 25 were given the opportunity to participate in the program. The trainees are located across all regions in the NT:

Darwin-6, Nhulunbuy-1, Katherine-2, Tennant Creek-1, Alice Springs-2.

Six of the current intake are Indigenous trainees.

It is anticipated all will take up full time employment at the end of their 12 month traineeship. The trainees will participate in formal studies at CDU, for a Certificate IV in Civil Construction Supervision and Certificate IV in Civil Construction Design. In addition, they will rotate to various disciplines within DPI Road Projects to gain valuable work experience.

*Araluen Cultural
Precinct
(NRETAS)*

NRETAS has worked with the Arrernte Custodians Reference Group to encourage young Arrernte people to become involved in sacred site management and arts and cultural programs.

*The Tour Guide
Training Program
(Tourism NT)*

In 2008-09 Tourism NT secured funding from the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) for a second phase of a tour guide training program with Indigenous participants in Alice Springs. In 2008 a pilot of the program was run cooperatively with the Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation and the Alice Springs Desert Park. The training resulted in four guides being placed in employment in the Central Australia region.

The Tour Guide Training program better places Indigenous people for employment in the tourism industry. Through the program each student attained a St John first aid certificate, a 4WD awareness course and an H-endorsement licence permitting the Aboriginal tour guides to transport passengers.

National Youth Week and associated programs
(OCPE)

Over 2008-09 OCPE has managed a variety of development and career programs for NTPS employees. A total of 71 young employees (15 to 25 years of age) attended these workshops as outlined in the table below.

Workshop	Region	No. Attendees (15 to 25 years)
Creating Career Success	Alice Springs	6
Activate Your Career	Alice Springs	1
Make Your Move – National Youth Week	Alice Springs	6
Australian Women and Leadership Forum – Remote Workforce Development Sponsorship	Alice Springs	1

Alice Springs Desert Park training and employment
(NRETAS)

- Tahlia Peckham, a young Aboriginal woman and traditional owner of the Desert Park won Most Outstanding Tourism Apprentice with CDU in June 2009.
- Ashlee Porter, a young Aboriginal woman who is training to be a zookeeper won Group Training Northern Territory's Southern Region Award for Indigenous Apprentice of the Year in March 2009.
- Jochem Van Der Reijden, Specialist Zookeeper, won Group Training Northern Territory's Southern Region Award for Supervisor of the Year in March 2009.

Fun, entertainment and skills development

Youth Engagement Grants Program
(DHF)

The Youth Engagement Grants Program engages young Territorians aged 12 to 25 years through a variety of drug and alcohol free recreational events and youth development and leadership programs. The funding rounds for the grants coincide with National Youth Week and the major school holidays (June/July and December/January). In 2008-09, 105 grants totalling \$136,400 were awarded to young people and community organisations through the program.

Sponsorship of regional events
(Tourism NT)

Tourism NT has a grant program providing marketing support sponsorship for regional events in the NT. Sponsorship of these events benefits young people and others in the community. Events sponsored in 2008-09 included:

- \$20,000 in sponsorship for the Alice Springs Festival
- \$3500 in sponsorship for the Beanie Festival
- \$5000 in sponsorship for the Camel Cup
- \$5000 in sponsorship for the Henley on Todd.

Festivals/concerts
(DCM)

The 2008 BASSINTHEDUST music festival in Alice Springs attracted around 1200 people.

<p><i>Araluen Arts Centre</i> (NRETAS)</p>	<p>In 2008-09, the Araluen Arts Centre provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ support for the Centralian Eisteddfod ▪ support for school concerts and presentation events ▪ support for presentation of the Wearable Arts Acquisition Awards and the Alice Springs Beanie Festival ▪ support for the presentation of the 15/15 Film Festival. <p>The Araluen Arts Centre supports the community by providing professional staff in a professional venue, to mentor and assist with the development, production and promotion of activities that allow community organisations and local artists to deliver events that are of a high quality, aesthetically and technically, while maximising audience potential.</p>
<p><i>Alice Springs Desert Park events</i> (NRETAS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Desert Park provided opportunities for youth to work with zookeepers and the animals in the Park's Mulga Walk during National Youth Week 2009. ▪ The Desert Park runs regular school holiday programs for young people in Alice Springs.
<p><i>Arts Grants Program</i> (NRETAS)</p>	<p>The Arts Grants Program provides funding to the two major youth arts organisations: Incite Youth Arts in Alice Springs and Corrugated Iron Youth Arts in the Top End. Funding is also provided to key organisations that provide opportunities for youth or have specific programs for youth, such as Red Dust Theatre, Music NT and Artback NT, to name a few.</p>
<p><i>Junior Ranger Program</i> (NRETAS)</p>	<p>The long running, NRETAS Parks and Wildlife, Junior Ranger Program affords Territory youth with the opportunity to participate in a range of team building, community leadership, volunteer and environmental education activities. The Program is free for Territorians aged 9-14 years and includes members in Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and some remote communities.</p>
<p><i>Consumer Affairs</i> (DoJ)</p>	<p>Consumer Affairs is committed to getting the message out to young Territorians that they need to be aware of their rights as consumers. In 2008-09, Consumer Affairs staff gave presentations specifically directed at youth. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a presentation at the NT Youth Housing Forum that provided information and advice on what youth need to be aware of when being a tenant for the first time. ▪ a presentation at the Sanderson High School asking students to participate in an online survey relating to the Consumer Affairs Cool Consumer Newsletter. The survey assisted Consumer Affairs to tailor its services to youth. Real life stories, scams, and warnings, money, banking, careers and shopping are some of the topics Territory youth say they want information about. Sessions at schools, displays at markets, fun free stuff, TV adverts, FaceBook pages and radio talks were suggested as ways the Consumer Affairs message can be spread.

Consumer Affairs material was available at major 2009 Youth Week events including the BIG GIG, Making in Malak, Go Bowling, Leadership Camps, and the Alice Springs Public Library. Consumer Affairs linked in with organisations such as the YWCA, The Shak, local councils to connect with younger consumers.

Araluen Arts Centre
(NRETAS)

The Arts Centre is exploring Facebook as a means of promoting events and programs.

Delivering training opportunities
(NRETAS)

A Disability forum was held in June for organisations which provide disability services.

Two programs were delivered in conjunction with the Active After School Communities, the Jingili BMX Club and the Alice Springs Golf Club to encourage more young Territorians to participate in sport.

Safety and security

Youth Justice Strategy
(DHF)

On 1 July 2008 the Northern Territory Government's Youth Justice Strategy was introduced. The strategy includes amendments to the *Youth Justice Act* which incorporates the introduction of Family Responsibility Agreements and Orders, and the transfer of the youth clients of Community Corrections from the DoJ to DHF.

The strategy aims to bring all programs and services for young people together under one department so that youth anti-social and criminal behaviour can be addressed more effectively.

Youth Community Corrections is a way to manage, monitor and assess community based young offenders (aged 10 to 18 years) who have been given an order by the Court or Parole Board.

Youth Community Corrections is currently the responsibility of the DoJ, however the function will transfer to DHF from December 2009. As of this date, Youth Justice Officers will be based in the Family Support Centres in Alice Springs and Darwin and one position will be located in Katherine.

DHF is aiming to move towards a more holistic case management approach to young offenders to reflect a more holistic, therapeutic-based approach to youth services which underpins the intent of the Youth Justice Strategy.

DHF is focussed on involving families and improving access to diversionary pathways and other support services for young people and their families.

Bullying, behaviour and wellbeing
(DET)

- The DaPSAP provides opportunities to assist young people to deal with bullying behaviour and assertiveness skills.
- \$700,000 was allocated to support schools with strategies determined at the local school level that would assist with the management of students demonstrating extreme behaviours.
- An additional two School Counsellor positions were created to support remote schools.

*Alice Springs
Desert Park –
staff housing
(NRETAS)*

The Desert Park occasionally recruits young zookeepers from interstate. The Park has a house in which they can temporarily live as they get themselves established securely and comfortably in Alice Springs.

*Alice Springs
Youth Action Plan
(DCM, PFES and
DHF)*

The Alice Springs Youth Action Plan includes the establishment of a Youth Hub, which will be a precinct for young people and families to access services such as additional emergency accommodation facilities, a Family Support Centre, counselling and other recreational activities.

As part of the Youth Action Plan, the government will establish a 30-bed residential facility at the Youth Hub to accommodate young people in Alice Springs who cannot live at home. In addition, safe houses and emergency beds will also be made available.

Other elements include the expansion of recreational facilities at the Gap Youth Centre, opening a Police Beat Shopfront in the Todd Mall and reviewing and strengthening patrol services.
