This report provides an overview of the Centre’s activities in 2005. The year was characterised by significant research and development activity, including the management of 30 separate projects, the publication of nine refereed journal articles and book chapters, fifteen monographs, reports or articles in professional journals and two Centre Research Reports. Four new national competitive research grants were established (two Australian Research Council [ARC] projects, one National Centre for Vocational Education Research [NCVER] project and one Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada [SSHRC] project). The Centre continues to offer strong research training, working with 18 research students.

Across each of the Centre’s interrelated research and development programs: Youth Transitions, Youth Health and Wellbeing and Youth Engagement and Participation in Education, this activity was underpinned by the advancement of our research partnerships. In the Youth Transitions program we implemented the new ARC funded longitudinal project Pathways Then and Now, which received five-year funding, and the SSHRC project Life courses in a comparative context. These projects represent an ongoing partnership between Assistant Professor
Lesley Andres at the University of British Columbia and the Youth Research Centre. The award of an Edward Clarence Dyason Universitas 21 Fellowship, in conjunction with Study Leave during second semester 2005 enabled me to foster this partnership and to further develop a partnership with Professor Andy Furlong at the University of Glasgow, focusing on the comparative analysis of labour market experiences of young people in the UK and Australia. The Centre was involved in a significant international project in Bhutan, through *The Situation of Bhutanese Youth* project, auspiced by the Youth Development Fund and funded by Save the Children.

Within the many projects that constitute the *Youth Health and Wellbeing* program, partnership was a key component. Examples include the *Realising Human Potential* project, which involves a partnership between Australia 21 and the Australian Youth Research Centre, funded by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, and the *Narrative Evaluation Action Research* project, funded by the Victorian Department of Human Services, involving a partnership between the Australian Youth Research Centre and Swinburne and LaTrobe Universities.

In the *Youth Engagement and Participation in Education* program, partnerships were fostered through the *Drama at the heart of interactive learning partnerships* project, with colleagues in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, and through a partnership with Dr. Anita Harris at Monash University, *Youth Civic Engagement and Social Connection*, funded by the ARC. Research partners Kathleen Stacey from South Australia and Murray Lake from Western Australia also provided support for a range of projects.
I owe a debt of gratitude to all members of the Centre, including honorary fellows who supported research projects and assisted with supervision of research students during my absence on the Fellowship. On behalf of the Centre and the Life-Patterns team I thank Peter Dwyer for his support for the Life Patterns program, including the new Pathways Then and Now project. His ongoing contribution reaches all areas of this program, ensuring that it has a high national and international profile. We are grateful for the generous support provided by Roger Holdsworth to so many of the Centre’s activities. I would also like to thank Helen Stokes for her contributions to the Centre’s functioning through her role as Centre Manager.

I am especially grateful for Helen Cahill’s generosity in agreeing to be acting Director during my absence. In addition to the normal duties involving management of research and development projects, Helen made a significant contribution by steering the Centre through the early states of a restructure of the Faculty of Education, which takes effect in January 2006.

From 2006 the Youth Research Centre will be located within the Melbourne Education Research Institute (MERI). Its research will contribute to MERI’s four research themes: Education Systems (led by Professor Richard Teese), Language, Literacy and Globalisation (led by Professor Joe Lo Bianco), Curriculum, Pedagogy and Change (led by Professor Kaye Stacey) and especially to the Health and Education Interface (led by Professor Johanna Wyn). With the new structure in place in 2006 I look forward to new opportunities to enhance the Centre’s research, its contribution to innovation in learning and teaching and to continuing to making its findings available to the public and academic communities through a wide range of strategies.

Johanna Wyn

Director, Australian Youth Research Centre
Project Summary 2005

Challenge Ya! Program: Evaluation
The Foundation for Young Australians

Discrimination or Discretion: Discrimination, hepatitis C in health care settings
NHMRC

Drama at the Heart of Interactive Learning Partnerships
The University of Melbourne

‘Earn To Learn’: Feasibility study
Rumbalara Football Netball Club and DOXA Youth Foundation

Generations: A Perspective on Gen Y
Victorian Office for Youth

Global Connections Pilot: Evaluation
Plan International

Impact of the Modification of Volatile Substance Products on the Behaviour of Inhalant Users
Victorian Department of Human Services for the National Inhalant Abuse Taskforce

LEAD! Student Participatory Approaches to Leading Education About Drugs
Australian Department of Education, Science and Training

Life Courses in Comparative Perspective: A 15 year portrayal of Australian and Canadian young adults
Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Committee

Literature for Life: Teaching about loss, change and grief through the English Curriculum
GoodGrief

Making a Life
Australian Youth Research Centre

Music VCAL Program: Evaluation
Crime Prevention Victoria

Narrative Evaluation Action Research (NEAR)
Victorian Department of Human Services, Western Metropolitan Region

NEAR Workforce Development
Department of Human Services, North and West Metropolitan Region
Outcomes for Participants in Youth Development Programs: A three-year longitudinal study
Youth Bureau, Australian Department of Family and Community Services

Pathways Then and Now: New student transitions to adulthood in a comparative context
Australian Research Council

Preventing Drug-Related Harm: A manual for the student welfare coordinator
Victorian Department of Education and Training

Promising Programs
Tobacco, Drug Prevention and Youth Policy Section, Australian Department of Health and Ageing

Realising Human Potential: Seeking pathways to success and well being for Australia’s young people
Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)

Reconnecting Young People to Supportive Learning Environments
Crime Prevention Victoria

Restorative Practices
Victorian Department of Education and Training and Catholic Education Commission of Victoria

Safety, Engagement, Education and Recreation (SEER): Project evaluation
Youth Substance Abuse Service

Schools, VET and Partnerships: Capacity building in rural and regional areas
National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)

Situation of Bhutanese Youth in Bhutan
Youth Development Fund, Bhutan and Save the Children

Solution Focused Approaches for GPs: Training Video
Live Eat and Play (LEAP), Royal Children’s Hospital

Springboard Evaluations
The Foundation for Young Australians

Taking Risks and Taking Care: Young people, preventative health discourses and self care
Australian Research Council Discovery Project

Using Drama Techniques in Drug Education Forums: Demonstration Video
National Drug Strategy, Australian Department of Health and Aged Care

Young People, Wellbeing and Communication Technologies
Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)

Youth Civic Engagement and Social Connection in Post-industrial Society: A comparative study
Australian Research Council
CHALLENGE YA!: PROGRAM EVALUATION

Challenge Ya! is a competitive grants program of The Foundation for Young Australians. It aims to provide small grants to groups of young people for ideas that are initiated and developed by young people.

In 2004-5, the Australian Youth Research Centre was commissioned to carry out a small evaluation of the Challenge Ya! grants program, looking particularly at the degree to which the program operates within the broader youth participation principles of the Foundation, the accessibility of the grant application and assessment process, and the impact of the grant processes and projects for agencies and young people.

The evaluation report provided the Foundation with an overview of understandings of youth participation, a summary of Challenge Ya! over the past three years and responses from a sample of successful and unsuccessful grants applicants (both young people and workers) from different areas of Australia. The final report presented some recommendations for improved processes.

Contact: Roger Holdsworth

DISCRIMINATION OR DISCRETION

‘Discrimination, hepatitis C in health care settings’ is an on-going project based at Latrobe University, looking at the factors affecting the experiences of discrimination reported by people living with hepatitis C within a range of health care settings. It is funded through a NHMRC Project Grant for the period 2003-2006 and is being carried out by S.M. Gifford, M.L. O’Brien, and J. Browne.

Contact: Mary O’Brien
DRAMA AT THE HEART OF INTERACTIVE LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN SCHOOL STUDENTS AND TERTIARY STUDENTS OF EDUCATION AND MEDICINE

The Learning Partnerships project involves collaborations between school students and tertiary students of Medicine and Education. The tertiary students participate in a curriculum of shared drama workshops designed to assist teachers and doctors to communicate effectively with adolescents about social and emotional issues which impact on learning and wellbeing. The teachers-to-be explore the impact of social problems on student engagement in learning. The medical students learn to take a psychosocial screening of a teenage patient. The school students develop their leadership and drama skills and contribute through their roles as actors and co-teachers.

In 2005, the project expanded to include the provision of eight seminars for final year medical students and eight seminars delivered into four Education Policy Schools and Society classes in the Diploma of Education/Bachelor of Teaching courses. The school partnerships were extended to involve four schools (Princes Hill Secondary College, University High School, Eltham High School, and Erroll Street Primary School). Glen Pearsall, Bern Murphy, Prue Wales and Helen Cahill led workshops in the project.

Contact: Helen Cahill

‘EARN TO LEARN’: A FEASIBILITY STUDY

‘Earn To Learn’ is a proposed school retention scheme aimed at improving the participation of Koori youth in the Shepparton-Mooroopna area in secondary school education. It provides a financial incentive for young people to go to school, and is based on an international model, the UK-based ‘Earn as You Learn Scheme’. The scheme would be auspiced by the Rumbalara Football Netball Club in conjunction with local schools and other relevant organisations. The proposal included a full time Project Officer who would be based at the Club and liaise with the schools and oversee the project.

A feasibility study of the proposal was funded by the DOXA Youth Foundation. The purpose of the study was to outline the proposal for the ‘Earn To Learn’ scheme and to report on its feasibility study. The report presented a case for a three year pilot to
be undertaken at the Rumbalara Football Netball Club in Shepparton with secondary schools in the Shepparton region. The study found the proposal of supporting young Koori students to stay at school was a feasible option if the potential community concerns and perceptions could be well managed.

Contact: Bern Murphy

GENERATIONS: A PERSPECTIVE ON GEN Y

This report was commissioned by the Victorian Office for Youth as a scoping exercise to provide an insight into the characteristics of today’s young people (referred to as Gen Y) and to inform planning within Government.

The term Gen Y has been coined in recognition of distinctive generational change in attitudes, life outlook and values that are held by the current generation of 15 to 25 year olds. It was felt that the nature of these changes and what they mean need to be brought into sharper focus for purposes of policy and program development relating to this generation of young people in Victoria. Beyond the popular stereotypes, and keeping in mind that Gen Y is diverse and unequal, the research identified several distinctive dimensions that set Gen Y apart from previous generations in terms of their attitudes and behaviours. These are:

• responsibility and choice;
• relationships and balance in life; and
• ‘a space to be’.

The report identifies key areas of change across a wide range of areas of life, including education, work, family life, and leisure. It found that inequalities amongst young people remain a significant issue.

Contact: Johanna Wyn and Dan Woodman

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS PILOT: EVALUATION

As part of its youth participation strategy, Plan International Australia piloted the Global Connections project in 2005. The project aims to create opportunities for communication and understanding between young people in developed and developing countries. In 2005 the project aimed to foster links between young people in Australia and Indonesia, in order to build leadership, communication and team skills, as well as to provide opportunities for joint problem-solving and community actions between groups. Three groups in Indonesia, with whom Plan
International Indonesia already works in a community development capacity, and three schools in Australia have been involved. Young adults from RMIT’s International Studies Program have been centrally involved as facilitators of children’s groups in Australia, and have been key players in the design of the project and its evaluation.

All groups are seen as learners in this exercise. A particular highlight has been the personal challenges and changes created by links between Australian high school students and a group of young people in prison in Indonesia.

The AYRC has been supporting and evaluating this project. Together with facilitators and Plan staff, the AYRC has been gathering input from the different groups involved (including children, teachers, facilitators, their university teachers, and Plan staff in both countries). The evaluation revealed that the Global Connections model provided exciting possibilities for furthering global or development education, youth participation, and informal education for young people in both developed and developing countries.

**Contact:** Ani Wierenga

**IMPACT OF THE MODIFICATION OF VOLATILE SUBSTANCE PRODUCTS ON THE BEHAVIOUR OF INHALANT USERS**

This research was commissioned by the Victorian Department of Human Services (acting as the National Inhalant Abuse Taskforce secretariat) to explore the likely impact of product modification on the behaviour of inhalant users.

The research was designed to answer the following questions:

- What is the international and national experience of inhalant misuse (IM) product modification?
- What are the relative harms of other drugs that may be substituted for modified products?
- What is the likely impact of product modification on IM and associated harm?
- How would product modification differentially affect initiating users, regular users of other drugs who also use inhalants and chronic users, Indigenous and non-Indigenous users or those in urban, rural and remote locations?

Research findings in the report provided to the National Inhalant Abuse Taskforce were based on:
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2005

a review of the national and international literature considering IM product modification and the relative harms of other drugs which may be substituted;

• interviews conducted with 33 users and ex-users of IM products at four research sites in Victoria and Queensland including two urban areas, one rural centre and a remote Indigenous community; and

• research consultations with 26 expert workers across Australia.

The project was carried out by Sarah MacLean, Peter d’Abbs and Jan Robertson-McMahon and completed in August 2005.

Contact: Sarah MacLean

LEAD! STUDENT PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES TO LEADING EDUCATION ABOUT DRUGS

The Centre developed a resource manual for the Australian Department of Education, Science and Training to provide guidance to schools to assist them in preparing students for peer leadership roles in the conduct of drug education forums in both primary and secondary school settings. The manual includes extensive agendas and activities for use in the running of drug education forums for peers, for younger students or for multi-age groups or public forums involving parents, agencies and community members. The materials can also be used to inform those designing creative approaches to health promotion involving arts or cultural activities. It will be published and distributed to all Australian schools in 2006.

The project was carried out by Helen Cahill, Bern Murphy and Cheryle Kane.

Contact: Helen Cahill

LIFE COURSES IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE: A 15 YEAR PORTRAYAL OF AUSTRALIAN AND CANADIAN YOUNG ADULTS

A grant was awarded by the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Committee 2005–2007 to undertake a comparative analysis of the data sets from the Paths on Life’s Way project, based in British Columbia, and that of the Australian Youth Research Centre’s Victorian Life-Patterns project. The two projects each involved longitudinal cohorts that were originally of around 2000 young people and have had roughly similar rates of attrition over time, but are still ongoing. The Canadian data set was originated two years before the Victorian study, but
subsequently both studies have included a core of identical or similar questions, enabling a comparison of their findings. The analysis will contribute to a new book by Lesley and Johanna, published by The University of Toronto Press, providing a 15-year overview of the experiences of the post-1970 generation in Australia and Canada.

Assistant Professor Lesley Andres and Johanna Wyn are Chief Investigators on this project.

**Contact:** Johanna Wyn

**LITERATURE FOR LIFE: TEACHING ABOUT LOSS, CHANGE AND GRIEF THROUGH THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM**

*Literature for Life* is a middle years English curriculum resource commissioned by *GoodGrief* to complement the *Seasons For Growth* program provided to support students dealing with grief. The resources provide background information, support material and a detailed curriculum for middle school English classes. The materials are designed to enhance the student’s emotional, social and verbal literacy whilst developing an understanding of strategies that can be used to cope with change, stress and grief.

Two teacher manuals are provided, one for upper primary and one for lower secondary students. The learning activities, employing the multiple intelligences, challenge students to engage with a range of deep thinking tasks in both cognitive and affective domains. The interactive classroom program assists students to develop shared concepts and language for discussing emotional or behavioural reactions to grief, loss, and change. Learning through fiction offers both a protective frame and a means by which to learn more about one’s self and one’s world through imagined and empathetic connection with others.

The resource was developed by Helen Cahill, Glen Pearsall and Carol Guthrie.

**Contact:** Helen Cahill
MAKING A LIFE

As they grow up, what helps young people to establish livelihood, social connectedness, and meaning? This longitudinal research follows 32 rural young people ‘making a life’, who have been interviewed every two years as they negotiated out of high school and into other lives. Starting in 1995 as a PhD project through the University of Tasmania, the study spans ten years, and the young people are now 20+. This work highlights the significance of trust relationships in the way that resources and options become available to young people (or not). It also highlights the role of ‘storying’ both in the ways that young people creatively construct lives, and also as a research tool.

Contact: Ani Wierenga

MUSIC VCAL PROGRAM: EVALUATION

In 2004 the AYRC was engaged by Crime Prevention Victoria as part of the Reconnecting Young People to Supportive Learning Environments package to conduct an evaluation of the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) Music program at Laverton Secondary College.

It was found that the VCAL Music program had a significant positive impact on the young people who participated as well as on the teachers and broader school community. For a pilot program, it managed to achieve a substantial shift in participants’ perceptions of their school lives, their future and themselves. However, the degree to which these changes will be sustained beyond a supportive school environment was uncertain.

As the program attracted a high proportion of ‘at risk’ young people, it required adequate ongoing funding to be able to support their personal as well as educational needs. Laverton Secondary College has a nurturing school culture and a senior management team that is supportive of the Music VCAL program and committed to innovative strategies that will retain their students. It is an ideal context to provide this program in an ongoing manner and to develop a model that other schools can replicate.

The project was carried out by Alex Hughes and Helen Stokes.

Contact: Helen Stokes
NARRATIVE EVALUATION ACTION RESEARCH (NEAR)

The Narrative Evaluation Action Research (NEAR) project was initiated by the Victorian Department of Human Services, Western Metropolitan Region as a workforce development project with a strong emphasis on reflective practice and story writing. Alongside lead agencies and staff in health services, it has involved three university collaborators: the Action Research Program, Institute for Social Research at Swinburne University of Technology; the Centre for Development and Innovation in Health, Australian Institute for Primary Care at LaTrobe University; and the Australian Youth Research Centre at The University of Melbourne.

The aim of this project is to build the capacity of Community Health agencies to evaluate and report on their Health Promotion programming. It is primarily designed to draw upon and develop practitioner knowledge, and to design and pilot a process that might enable practitioners and management to have an increased opportunity to reflect upon their work as part of annual reporting cycles. Since 2003, the University collaborators have worked alongside lead practitioners and management from selected Community Health agencies to develop two sets of evaluation case-study narratives. The narratives range in scope and focus from whole-of-organisation issues (eg community consultation) to the learnings from health promotion work within particular projects.

The collaborators have developed Guidelines and a Resource Kit for Producing Narrative Documentation that were trialed in other agencies during 2005 (NEAR2). In 2005, a train-the-trainer model was also developed in partnership with agency staff. The Guidelines and Resource Kit are available online at: www.health.vic.gov.au/healthpromotion/downloads/near.pdf

Contact: Ani Wierenga

NEAR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

As part of the NEAR (Narrative Evaluation Action Research) Project, a series of agency-focused workshops and agency-based consultations were conducted for the Department of Human Services and Community and Women's Health agencies. These have explored the application of narrative evaluation and action research methodologies for the purpose of evaluating Integrated Health Promotion programs. In 2005 the collaborators provided mentoring consultancy and/or tools to support
the participating staff in ten agencies who chose to write narratives as a central part of their organisational planning, evaluation and reporting cycles for the year.

This project was carried out by University collaborators Yoland Wadsworth from Swinburne University, Gai Wilson from Latrobe University and Ani Wierenga from the AYRC.

Contact: Ani Wierenga

OUTCOMES FOR PARTICIPANTS IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS: A THREE-YEAR LONGITUDINAL STUDY

The Centre carried out a major three-year research project for the Commonwealth Youth Bureau (Department of Family and Community Services) around the outcomes for participants in State Government Sponsored Youth Development Programs between 2001 and 2004.

In 2005, the research concluded with the writing and publication of the final report. It is available in two forms – a shorter report: *Doing Positive Things: You have to go and do it* and a more detailed ‘Technical Report’, both on the Department’s website at: [www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/content/development_programs.htm](http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/content/development_programs.htm)

This project was carried out by the Centre in collaboration with Kathleen Stacey (South Australia), Murray Lake (Western Australia) and John Stafford (Victoria).

Contact: Roger Holdsworth

PATHWAYS THEN AND NOW: NEW STUDENT TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD IN A COMPARATIVE CONTEXT

This study, funded by the ARC for five years (2005 to 2009) represents the next phase of the Centre’s longitudinal research program that was initiated with the *Life-Patterns* study. In this phase, a new cohort of young people in Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory who were aged 16 years in 2005 has been established. In the final years of their schooling, many are already making significant decisions about education and seeking a balance with other aspects of their lives. The study will document their trajectories, decisions and choices to the age of 20 years.
This project follows a similar design to the *Life-Patterns* study: a mixed method involving annual surveys with a representative sample (3,000 people) and interviews with a sub-sample (50 people). The project also includes a continuation of the original *Life-Patterns* study with a more qualitative focus. This means that the original *Life-Patterns* study will be extended to cover a period of 19 years after the participants left secondary school.

Lesley Andres from the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia is a co-investigator with Johanna Wyn on this phase of the project, enabling the project to incorporate a comparative element with Andres’ *Paths on Life’s Way* study of young people in Ontario, Canada. The project team includes Peter Dwyer, Debra Tyler, Dan Woodman, Graeme Smith and Helen Stokes.


**Contact:** Johanna Wyn and Debra Tyler

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**PREVENTING DRUG-RELATED HARM: A MANUAL FOR THE STUDENT WELFARE COORDINATOR**

The Centre developed this for the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DE&T), with contributions from the Youth Substance Abuse Service (YSAS), the Centre for Adolescent Health (CAH), and the Centre for Youth Drug Studies (CYDS). It provides Student Welfare Coordinators with a set of evidence-based guidelines to assist schools and their communities to address issues relating to truancy and the associated risk of problematic substance use.

The manual provides a summary of the research evidence that can usefully inform the school’s prevention, early identification, intervention and referral strategies. It gives an overview of the prevalence of these issues and of the risk and protective factors associated with truancy and problematic substance use. It also provides a set of guidelines and tools to assist student welfare coordinators in the design and use of strategies to assist in the early identification and management of students at risk of truancy and drug-related harm. This manual is to be published by DE&T in 2006.

The project was carried out by Helen Cahill and Bern Murphy in collaboration with Helen Butler from the Centre for Adolescent Health.

**Contact:** Helen Cahill
PROMISING PROGRAMS: A REVIEW OF INTERVENTIONS TO ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE AND REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF PARTICIPATION IN RISKY DRUG-USE

This research was undertaken for the Tobacco, Drug Prevention and Youth Policy Section, Department of Health and Ageing to inform the work of the Interdepartmental Government Committee on Drugs (IGCD) in its efforts to produce practical advice for drug prevention efforts in the field.

A key task of this research was to develop a set of evidence-based descriptors against which to review the programs from all states and territories, targeting key portfolio areas of mental health, school education, family and community development, health, welfare, and law enforcement (community policing). The descriptors developed provided a basis for analysis of promise and the likely effectiveness of a range of prevention and early intervention programs. Prevention efforts that were particularly relevant to this research were those that addressed the needs of young people in transitional life periods, from primary to secondary school and from secondary school to adult life.

This project encompassed:

- The development of evidenced-based criteria to identify promising interventions;
- The collection of national data and identification of promising programs; and
- The production of a report describing promising interventions to assist the development of practical and grounded prevention activity that has the potential to contribute to national best practice under the National Drug Strategy Prevention Agenda.

The research was carried out by Helen Cahill, Bernadette Murphy and Alex Hughes. Their report is to be published by the Department of Health and Aged Care in early 2006.

Contact: Helen Cahill
REALISING HUMAN POTENTIAL: SEEKING PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS AND WELL BEING FOR AUSTRALIA’S YOUNG PEOPLE

This collaborative project aimed to help young Australians to optimise their wellbeing and to realise their full potential. It was an exercise in interdisciplinary synthesis, recognising that discipline-based empirical studies are limited in their capacity to capture the subtlety of the effects of social change on young people or the complexity of their responses. The project’s unique approach was to bring together research findings across disciplines, including medicine and the social sciences, to form an integrated picture of young people’s situation and to make recommendations for policy. Two project workshops in 2004 involved a small group of researchers and drew particularly on longitudinal studies of young Australians, with commentary from experts in other disciplines (including health promotion, history, theology, neuropsychology and economics). In 2005, a further project workshop involved youth sector policy makers and practitioners, and reviewed the practical and policy implications of the project’s findings.

A 50 page project report explores what has been learned and suggests future directions. It is available online at: www.australia21.org.au

A shorter journal article is also available online at: www.mja.com.au/public/issues/183_08_171005/eck10551_fm.html

This project was a collaboration between Australia 21 and the Australian Youth Research Centre. It was led by Richard Eckersley from Australian National University, Johanna Wyn and Ani Wierenga from the AYRC, and funded by VicHealth.

Contact: Johanna Wyn and Ani Wierenga

RECONNECTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

In October 2003, Crime Prevention Victoria commissioned the AYRC to undertake an evaluation of the Early School Leavers (ESL) and Truancy Reduction (TR) programs within the Reconnecting Young People to Supportive Learning Environments package during 2004.

The Early School Leavers (ESL) Pilot Program was designed to reduce offending behaviour by providing a co-ordinated, multi-agency approach for a number of ‘at risk’ early school leavers in order to reconnect them to schools, alternative settings
or training and employment pathways. It targeted young people who were aged 12 to 15 years and subject to non-custodial Juvenile Justice orders and was established in three sites in the Northern, Western and Southern Metropolitan Department of Human Services (DHS) Regions.

The ESL Program provided unique and effective outreach support to this client group. It was the only program that existed in the three pilot regions that worked comprehensively with the target cohort across all service boundaries. A particular strength of the program was its capacity to simultaneously target four main areas in a coordinated way:

- Support for individual young people;
- Involvement with families and care-givers;
- Support and facilitation for change to school systems and structures; and
- Capacity to address service gaps over the longer term.

The **Truancy Reduction (TR) Pilot Program** aimed to reduce possible offending and violent behaviour by developing prevention, early intervention and intervention programs targeting school attendance within school communities. The Program targeted young people aged between 10 and 14 years who exhibited patterns of infrequent or irregular school attendance and was established in three Department of Education and Training (DE&T) sites in the Western Metropolitan, Loddon Campaspe Mallee and Gippsland Regions.

The success of the program depended on policy, procedures and practice factors within the projects. Key factors included:

- The ability of the worker to build relationships with young people, families and schools;
- The existence of a team approach to truancy reduction, including structural support and commitment from the schools to support the needs of the worker and the program; and
- The clear distinction of the truancy project worker ‘welfare’ role from that of a teacher or other educational ‘authority’ figure.

The final report of the evaluation was completed in early 2005.

**Contact:** Helen Stokes
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

An evaluation of the experiences of Victorian schools involved in piloting Restorative Practices was commissioned by the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DE&T) in collaboration with Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV). It was carried out by the Australian Youth Research Centre in 2004-2005.

Restorative Practices thematically describes a range of approaches used to reduce harms and repair damage caused by incidents. In a school situation it is about teaching and modeling ways in which young people can be effective citizens and about relationships between the people who make up the community.

Restorative Practices have been taken up in schools in Victoria as a way of addressing behaviour management issues that can arise in school settings, including conflicts between students and bullying. The notions of relationship repair and accountability have particular appeal in schools where issues of order, justice and punishment are closely linked to social relationships and educational inclusion. One of the key focuses of Restorative Practices has been the development and enhancement of relationships in schools and the teaching of conflict resolution and other problem-solving skills. Restorative Practices have been used across the whole school and have provided a means to question what is happening in the curriculum, the school environment, in policy and in community partnerships.

Schools implemented Restorative Practices for many reasons. It was possible to place the reasons for initiation along a continuum from prevention through early intervention to intervention. While some schools implemented Restorative Practices for particular reasons such as behaviour management, this changed over time as schools began to see the benefits of a whole school approach using Restorative Practices. The restorative approach was underpinned by a shift in emphasis from managing behaviour toward the building, nurturing and repair of relationships across the whole school. This brought about the use of restorative strategies in teaching, learning and the curriculum and the use of restorative language or language of choice (using affective statement and questions) throughout the school.

The schools that reported most evidence of implementation of Restorative Practices were those that had been involved in developing such approaches since 2002. This suggests that at least three years may be required to establish widespread support and relevant structural reform.

The final report of the review was submitted to DE&T and CEOM in 2005.

Contact: Helen Stokes
SAFETY, ENGAGEMENT, EDUCATION AND RECREATION (SEER): PROJECT EVALUATION

The SEER Project is based at the Youth Substance Abuse Service (YSAS) in Morwell in the Latrobe Valley. This project is targeted at young people between the ages of 12 and 21 years who use drugs (particularly inhalants) and who are not engaged in school. The project aims to provide a crisis response to young people affected by inhaling volatile substances.

The SEER Project creates pathways and options for young people in two ways. When young people using inhalants in public places are encountered by the police, SEER provides a ‘safe place’ to recover from episodes of chroming. Secondly, the project provides an ongoing treatment option for young people who are engaged with YSAS Outreach and have been identified by the staff as ‘at risk’ of chroming. These young people are linked to appropriate treatment options as part of the initial assessment and treatment planning process. The Day Program offers a range of activities for young people to participate in and provides the opportunity for workers to engage with the participants at a therapeutic level.

The evaluation found that initiatives aimed at improving the lives of young people in their community need to be a shared responsibility if they are to be effective. The SEER Project operating at YSAS is an example of such a collaborative response to the issue of high risk young people and use of volatile inhalants in the community.

Contact: Bern Murphy

SCHOOLS, VET AND PARTNERSHIPS: CAPACITY BUILDING IN RURAL AND REGIONAL AREAS

In 2004, NCVER commissioned the AYRC to investigate partnerships with schools and their communities in seven rural and regional areas. These seven partnerships were located in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.

It was found that three different models were used to organise school-VET partnerships in the rural and regional communities included in the research. A regional cluster or specialised program model was found in regional communities, while a whole of community model was characteristic of rural communities.

Regardless of the model adopted, both rural and regional communities needed to respond to common community issues, such as retaining young people in the school and the local area, responding to local skill shortages, encouraging local businesses
to support young people, improving young people’s work networks and creating opportunities for young people to contribute positively to the community.

This project was carried out in partnership with Kathleen Stacey from beyond… in South Australia and Murray Lake from Western Australia. The final report will be available on the NCVER website in 2006.

Contact: Helen Stokes

SITUATION OF BHUTANESE YOUTH IN BHUTAN

Bhutan is a small Himalayan Kingdom between China and India. In mid 2004, the AYRC was approached by the Youth Development Fund in Bhutan to become their external partner for a project studying the characteristics of Bhutanese young people.

As a developing nation, Bhutan has not had a youth policy before, and is seeking to gather the background information on which to build one. Social change has also brought many new challenges that parallel those faced by young people and their communities in other countries. As the research brief explained, many programs in Bhutan are targeted at young people (particularly with aid money), but the Government and local agencies are now seeking some baseline data and some local indicators with which to evaluate these programs and make informed decisions.

Bhutanese counterparts worked alongside AYRC staff throughout the 18-month project. The first fieldwork visit to Bhutan occurred in November 2004 at which project staff met the Project Steering Committee and their Bhutanese counterparts, and conducted consultations with key stakeholders in Thimpu, the national capital. In 2005, AYRC staff trained a group of Bhutanese young people to conduct research with their peers, which they then did in six languages across the country. The AYRC research team also conducted focus group interviews with selected groups, and visited young people and their families in the more remote villages. During the team’s final visit in November 2005, the project findings were presented to a forum of 28 stakeholders and recommendations were workshopped by community leaders.

The completed project report has now been forwarded to the Youth Development Fund in Bhutan.

Contact: Ani Wierenga and Helen Stokes
SOLUTION FOCUSED APPROACHES FOR GPs: A TRAINING VIDEO TO GUIDE CONSULTATIONS ABOUT DIET AND EXERCISE WITH CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS

The AYRC worked with members of the Live Eat and Play (LEAP) childhood obesity prevention research project at the Royal Children’s Hospital to produce a training video designed to teach GPs working within the project how to use solution-focused approaches to discussing diet and exercise with parents and children.

Contact: Helen Cahill

SPRINGBOARD EVALUATIONS

The Centre provided external evaluations of the initiatives funded as ‘Springboard’ Grants by The Foundation for Young Australians. Nine initiatives from across Australia have been seed-funded by the Foundation over two to three years, to develop sustainable initiatives that benefit and involve young people aged 12 to 25 years. These grants reflect The Foundation’s desire to become an effective social venture philanthropist, to champion youth participation and decision-making, and support initiatives that innovatively and positively have an impact on young people and their communities.

This overall project managed individual evaluations of five of these initiatives and tracked the outcomes at the initiatives as a group. Two of the five projects are in Victoria and are being evaluated by staff at the Australian Youth Research Centre:

- **Joy Melbourne 94.9: Generation Next (Melbourne)** has established an accredited training program in broadcasting for same-sex attracted young people (SSAY) in order for them to take up roles as community radio volunteer broadcasters and run regular radio programs focused on key issues to SSAY and strengthen their community connections; and

- **10MMM: Multi-Media Mayhem** (Hamilton and towns across the Southern Grampians District) uses multi media (print, radio, voice, writing, web page, forums and newsletters) to give young people a voice, and provide opportunities for young people’s social connection and community involvement.
Project evaluation reports that track progress, outcomes, implications for policy, learnings to date and future directions has been completed for each project. A cluster report (to be written by Kathleen Stacey) will bring together the outcomes and learning gained from all five initiatives.

This project was led by one of the Centre’s Research Associates, beyond… (Kathleen Stacey and Associates) Pty Ltd.

**Contact:** Helen Stokes, Ani Wierenga, Dan Woodman

**TAKING RISKS AND TAKING CARE:**

**YOUNG PEOPLE, PREVENTATIVE HEALTH DISCOURSES AND SELF CARE**

This project, an Australian Research Council Discovery Project (2004-2008), investigates the ways in which young adults aged 18 to 26 years engage in self-care practices in relation to their own health. Three cohorts of young adults will be followed:

- young injectors at risk of hepatitis C infection;
- young women who smoke while pregnant or parenting; and
- young men who are not physically active or are at risk of obesity.

The project will provide a critical analysis of the deployment of health promotion strategies and their effects in shaping the subjectivity of young adults by drawing on these three case studies. As each of these three arenas are structured differently in terms of illegality, social acceptance, gender and class location, the study will provide important insights into the contribution of these factors to health and subjectivity. The lay title of the project is “Taking risks and taking care” and it concludes in 2008.

**Contact:** Mary O’Brien
USING DRAMA TECHNIQUES IN DRUG EDUCATION FORUMS: DEMONSTRATION VIDEO

The AYRC worked with students from Princes Hill Secondary College and Erroll Street Primary School to create a demonstration video modelling the use of drama techniques in drug education forums. The video will be released as part of a larger resource promoting parent engagement in drug education as part of the REDI resilience and drug education suite of materials commissioned by the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care under the National Drug Strategy.

Contact: Helen Cahill and Bern Murphy

YOUNG PEOPLE, WELLBEING AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) play an increasingly significant role in the key social and economic determinants of young people’s mental health. ICTs create new processes of social inclusion, can contribute to ensuring freedom from discrimination and violence, and facilitate access to economic resources. ‘Cyberspace’ represents an increasingly significant sphere for health promotion.

The report: Young People, Wellbeing and Communication Technologies was commissioned by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) to provide an overview of the role of ICTs on young people’s social relations, in order to provide a framework for understanding the ways in which ICTs impact on their health and wellbeing and to recommend possible initiatives within the Foundations’ Mental Health Promotion Framework. It found that both young people’s identities and their civic engagement are profoundly affected by information technologies. Despite this, much of the available research tends to focus on only one type of ICT and to take up a position at one point on a continuum from ‘cyber optimism’ to ‘cyber pessimism’. The report was written by Johanna Wyn and Hernán Cuervo, with support from Helen Stokes and Dan Woodman. It is available on the web at: www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Content.aspx?topicID=325

Contact: Johanna Wyn
YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL CONNECTION IN POST-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

This project analyses young Australians’ perceptions and practices of civic engagement, and compares this with similarly generated data from linked research projects in Italy, Germany, the UK and the Netherlands. It is an Australian contribution to an ongoing program of research within the international consortium.

The project focuses on an exploration of the range of reasons young people are turning away from traditional forms of civic participation and includes an identification of the distinctive and new features and indicators of civic participation amongst youth. During 2005, with the benefit of research assistance from Paula Geldens, the project conducted focus group interviews with a youth advisory group and established a sample of Victorian young people who will form the basis of a three-year longitudinal study.

The project is funded by the ARC (2005 to 2007) and is based at Monash University’s School of Social Inquiry, with Chief Investigator Anita Harris. Johanna Wyn is also a Chief Investigator.

Contact: Johanna Wyn
Teaching

The Australian Youth Research Centre contributes to teaching programs in the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences.

MASTERS IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: LEARNING AND INDIVIDUAL PATHWAYS

This subject addresses the resurgence of interest in pedagogy, drawing on the research findings of Australian Youth Research Centre programs including the Life-Patterns project and the evaluation of the professional education partnership between the Faculty of Education at the University of Melbourne and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria. Implications of pedagogy are drawn at all levels: the school, the classroom and in relation to individual students, focusing on transformation. Successful leaders work with their colleagues to take account of the diverse educational and cultural backgrounds of their students in shaping relevant curricula. This may include the development of diverse educational pathways and approaches to learning and teaching.

Coordination, seminars and lectures: Johanna Wyn, Helen Cahill
Masters in Youth Health and Education Management

The Masters in Youth Health and Education Management offers professional development to leaders and managers from across the youth sector. It explores ways of working effectively with young people, and particularly the role of cross-sectoral practice in effective work. This course was offered for the first time in 2003. In 2004 the first cohort of students completed the course. In 2005 the second cohort completed the course, the third cohort started, and the course hosted its first international students.

During the year, the AYRC, with the Centre for Adolescent Health and the Student Welfare staff in the Department of Learning and Educational Development continued to collaboratively teach and explore the core subjects.

Subjects:
- Youth Policy and Theory in Practice;
- Cross Sectoral Practice;
- Research and Evaluation in Communities;
- Community Focused Youth Research Project 1;
- Community Focused Youth Research Project 2; and
- Leadership in Youth, Health and Education.

Course Academic Coordination:
Ani Wierenga

Course Administrative Coordination:
Julie Marr

Subject Coordination, seminars and lectures:
Helen Cahill, Johanna Wyn and Ani Wierenga
BACHELOR OF TEACHING

Australian Youth Culture

This subject is offered within the Bachelor of Teaching program, and is popular with study abroad students. The subject explores contemporary meanings of Australian youth, focusing on educational implications.

The subject is coordinated by Johanna Wyn, with support from Centre staff and post-graduate students. It was not offered in 2005.

Research Projects

Supervision of student Research Projects by Sue Wilks.

DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION

Education Policy, Schools and Society

Coordinated by Debra Tyler; seminars and lectures by Roger Holdsworth, Debra Tyler, Helen Cahill and Bern Murphy.

Problem-Based Learning

Seminars and lectures Debra Tyler.

FACULTY OF ARTS

SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM

The Sociology of Youth and Youth Policy

A core subject in the inter-departmental sociology program, offered through the Department of Political Science. This subject introduces major sociological approaches to youth, and explores ways youth experience interacts with the state through examining youth policy. The subject locates youth experience with reference to school, family, gender and sexual identities. It examines ways youth is constructed as a category of policy, discussing contemporary issues such as youth homelessness, health and legal issues. It focuses on young people’s responses, exploring ways young people can be understood as social actors.

This subject was coordinated by Ani Wierenga with lecturing support from Centre staff and post-graduate students Sarah McLean and Ian Fyfe. The tutorials were conducted by Ian Fyfe and Hernán Cuervo.

FACULTY OF MEDICINE

A series of seminars on ‘Communicating with Adolescents’: presented by Helen Cahill.
SUPERVISION
OF
POSTGRADUATE
STUDENTS

Academic staff at the Australian Youth Research Centre supervise postgraduate students towards Master and Doctorate Degrees in a range of youth and health related topics:

Masters
Gary Shaw: Restorative justice and education (co-supervisors: Professor Johanna Wyn and Dr Pam St Leger)
Jane Touzeau: East Timorese students and learning identities (supervisor: Professor Johanna Wyn)
Margaret McPhee: School Connectedness: factors that further students’ engagement with school (supervisor: Debra Tyler)

PhD
Nicholas Abbey: Pedagogic leadership (supervisor: Professor Johanna Wyn)
Helen Cahill: Role and learning (supervisor: Professor Johanna Wyn)
Tim Corney: An exploratory analysis of the role, practice paradigms and underpinning methodologies, of youth workers in schools (co-supervisors: Professor Johanna Wyn and Professor Jack Keating)
Hernán Cuervo: Social justice and rural education in Australia (supervisor: Professor Johanna Wyn)
Bruce Drummond: Skate parks beyond construction: Local Government and skateboarders (supervisor: Professor Johanna Wyn)
Ian Fyfe: Measuring the impact of formal and informal education on the political literacy of young people (supervisor: Professor Johanna Wyn)
Julie Green: Investigating health promotion and the role of literacy, language, education and culture (co-supervisors: Professor Johanna Wyn and Professor Joe Lo Bianco)
Jacquie Hodder: An examination of spiritual beliefs upon the resilience and optimism of young people in a high school setting (co-supervisors: Professor Johanna Wyn and Dr Ani Wierenga)
Sarah McLean: Social meanings of inhalant misuse in Victoria: Implications for the development of policy and intervention (co-supervisors: Professor Johanna Wyn and Associate Professor John Fitzgerald)
Maree Sidey: An exploration of wellbeing within a Victorian youth mental health service (supervisor: Professor Johanna Wyn)
Helen Stokes: Young people negotiating change: What difference does education make? (supervisor: Professor Johanna Wyn)
Debra Tyler: Can Bourdieu and Beck be bedfellows? (supervisor: Professor Johanna Wyn)
Prue Wales: Drama teachers and professional identity (co-supervisors: Professor Johanna Wyn and Dr Kate Donelan)
Kaaren Yap: Student workers (supervisor: Professor Johanna Wyn)
CENTRE PUBLICATIONS

The Australian Youth Research Centre continues to publish Research Reports, Working Papers and conference proceedings of interest to the field, on an occasional basis. The Centre Newsletter is sent to around 400 individuals and organisations and provides information about Centre projects and happening. During 2005, the Centre redeveloped the design of its reports and newsletter, and produced the following reports:

Research Report 27:
Immigrants in Time: Life-Patterns 2004
Dwyer, P., Smith, G., Tyler, D. and Wyn, J.
April 2005; ISBN 0 7340 3078 9

Working Paper 25:
Real Learning
Real Futures
Revisited
Holdsworth, R.
June 2005; ISBN 0 7340 3092 4

Youth Research News
(Newsletter of the Youth Research Centre)
Vol 15 No 1: January 2005;
Vol 15 No 2: June 2005
EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS


Holdsworth, R. (ed) Student Councils and Beyond. Melbourne: Connect


MONOGRAPHS

Holdsworth, R., Lake, M., Stacey, K. and Stafford, J. Doing Positive Things: “You have to go out and do it” – Outcomes for participants in Youth Development Programs: A Report of a Three Year Longitudinal Study. Canberra: Australian Government Youth Bureau, Department of Family and Community Service: June


RESEARCH REPORTS

Holdsworth, R. Challenge Ya!: An Evaluation. For The Foundation for Young Australians, Melbourne: April

MacLean, S. and d’Abbs, P. with Robertson, J. Impact of the Modification of Volatile Substance Products on the Behaviour of Inhalant Users: a report to the National Inhalant Abuse Taskforce, University of Melbourne

Stokes, H., Shaw, G. and Tyler, D. Reconnecting Young People to Supportive Learning Environments: Evaluation of the Early School Leavers Pilot Program and the Truancy Reduction Program. For Crime Prevention Victoria

OTHER PUBLICATIONS BY CENTRE STAFF

Book Chapters

Wyn, J.
‘Youth Research in Australia and New Zealand’, in H. Helve & G. Holm (eds)
Contemporary Youth Research: Local Expressions and Global Connections. London: Ashgate

Wyn, J.

Wyn, J.
‘Adult stereotypes of young people’s communications’, in A. Williams & C. Thurlow (eds)
Talking Adolescence: Perspectives on Communication in the Teenage Years. New York: Peter Lang

Journals

Holdsworth, R.: Editor and publisher of Connect, the newsletter supporting student participation. Melbourne: Issues 151 to 156

Articles (Peer Reviewed Journals)

Banwell, C., Bammer, G., Main, N., Gifford, S. M. and O’Brien, M. L.

Eckersley, R., Wierenga, A. and Wyn, J.
‘Life in a time of uncertainty: optimising the health and wellbeing of young Australians’ in Medical Journal of Australia, 183 (8): 3-6

‘Australian men’s experiences of living with hepatitis C virus: Results from a cross-sectional survey’ in J Gastroenterol Hepatol. 20: 79-86

MacLean, S.
“It might be a scummy-arsed drug but its a sick buzz”: chroming and pleasure’ in Contemporary Drug Problems 32 (Summer): 295-318

Wierenga, A.
‘Practitioner learning for inter-agency collaboration’ in Journal of Community Work and Community Development, 6, Spring

Wright, J., MacDonald, D., Wyn, J. and Kriflik, L.
‘Becoming somebody: Changing priorities and physical activity’ in Youth Studies Australia, 24(1): 16–21
Articles (Professional Journals)

Cahill, H.
‘Profound Learning: Drama Partnerships between Adolescents and Tertiary Students of Medicine and Education’ in Drama Australia Journal, 29 (2): 59-72

Cahill, H.
‘Learning Partnerships: School Students as Tertiary Teachers’ in Connect, 154-155

MacLean, S.
‘International Youth Solvent Addictions Conference: a delegate’s report’ in Of Substance, 3 (3): 7

MacLean, S.
‘Inhalants and Social Stigma’ in Of Substance, 3 (1): 9

O’Brien, M. L.
‘Interventions for blood borne viruses and drug using risks for Juvenile Justice clients’ in Hepatitis SEE, Issue 17: 9-10

Stokes, H.
‘How drama can engage young people at risk of leaving school early’ in The International Journal of School Disaffection, 3 (2)

Wyn, J.
‘Education and Gender: are the boys losing?’ in Seeing Red, 3: 12 – 14
STUDY CIRCLE
During 2005, the Centre hosted a regular postgraduate seminar series on a range of topics of interest to postgraduate students, including seminars by students on their research topics. During Johanna’s absence in the second half of the year, the seminar program was hosted by Dr Mary O’Brien and coordinated by Hernán Cuervo.

CONFERENCES AND ADDRESSES
During 2005, Australian Youth Research Centre staff members attended and presented addresses and workshops at various conferences.

**Helen Cahill:**
Workshops: *Promoting Social Health in the Drama Class, Drama Methods Studies, Diploma of Education,* University of Melbourne

Keynote address: *Evidence-based Approaches to Drug Education,* Life Education Queensland, Gold Coast: January

Workshop: *Using Drama Techniques in Drug Education,* Life Education Queensland, Gold Coast: January

Keynote address: *Help-seeking and Young People,* MindMatters National Conference, Sydney: March

Workshop: *Strategies to Build Connectedness,* MindMatters National Conference, Sydney: March

Training day: *Using drama techniques to promote mental health,* Healthy Living Festival, Healesville: May

Keynote address: *Evidence-based approaches to drug education,* Department of Education, Science and Training, National Schools Drug Education Strategy seminar, Melbourne: May
Presentation: Drug Education that Makes a Difference (with Here and Now Theatre students from Princes Hill Secondary College), Department of Education, Science and Training, National Schools Drug Education Strategy seminar, Melbourne: May

Keynote address: Grief and Resilience: Using the Seasons for Growth Program, Notre Dame Centre Seasons for Growth Project, Scotland: May

Training Day: Enhancing Resilience: Curriculum Approaches, Notre Dame Centre Seasons for Growth Project, Scotland: May

Workshop: Using Drama Techniques to Promote Positive Relationships, Notre Dame Centre Seasons for Growth Project, Scotland: May

Workshop: Young people and Help-seeking, Notre Dame Centre Seasons for Growth Project, Scotland: May

Training day: Preparing Actors to Work as Simulated Patients for the LEAP Project, Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne: June

Paper presentation: From fiction-maker to philosopher: examining the thinking stance invited through the framing of the dramatic form, Drama Australia National Conference, Launceston: July

Workshop: Co-investigators and Co-creators – the use of drama techniques to open the big questions, Drama Australia National Conference, Launceston: July

Training day: Using drama techniques in peer leadership programs, Seymour: August

Training day: Enhancing Resilience, Avila College, Melbourne: August

Training day: Evidence-based approaches to drug education, ACT Department of Education, Canberra: August

Keynote Address: Understanding Bullying, Parents Victoria Annual Conference, Melbourne: August

Presentation: Healthy Relationships make Healthy Schools (with Here and Now Theatre students from University High School), Parents Victoria Annual Conference, Melbourne: August

Training day: Using Here and Now Theatre techniques to promote student voice, Inclusive Student Voice Expo, Adelaide: October

Paper presentation: *Resisting Risk and Rescue as the Raison d’etre of Arts Interventions*, *Risky Business Symposium*, Melbourne: October

Workshop: *Using the HEADSS approach to involve teenagers in educating doctors to communicate effectively with young people*, *Adolescent Health Conference*, Melbourne: November

Training day: *Resilience and Youth at Risk*, *Good Grief*, Sydney: November

Training Day: *Using the Literature for Life Program*, *Good Grief*, Sydney: November

**Sarah MacLean:**

Workshop: *Inhalants policy and intervention*, *YSAS*, Frankston: February

Paper presentation: *‘Chrome world’ and ‘chrome magic’; inhalants and policy*, *Canadian and International Conference on Solvent Abuse*, Canmore, Canada: March

Workshop: *Is product modification the way to go?*, *Canadian and International Conference on Solvent Abuse*, Canmore, Canada: March

Workshop: *Homelessness and inhalants interventions*, *Hope Street Youth and Family Services Annual General Meeting*, Brunswick: October

**Mary O’Brien:**

Paper presentation: *Consuming health promotion: Bad for your health?*, *Dangerous Consumptions III*, Melbourne: November

Invited workshop speaker: *Partners not participants: strategies towards meaningful consumer involvement in research*, *Australian Professional Society on Alcohol and Drugs (APSAD) Conference, Science, Practice, Experience*: November

**Helen Stokes:**

Invited speaker: *Youth economic participation*, *Victorian Safety Network*, Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne: February

Workshop (with Ani Wierenga): Survey Training, and Survey Supervisor Training, Thimphu, Bhutan: April

Invited speaker (with Ani Wierenga): Young People’s Voices, Youth Development Fund, Drugyel Monastry, Paro, Bhutan: May

Invited speaker: Addressing attendance problems in school, Outer Eastern LLEN, Swinburne TAFE, Croydon: August

Invited speaker (with Ani Wierenga): The Situation of Bhutanese Youth in Bhutan, Key Stakeholders in the Youth Sector forum, hosted by the Youth Development Fund and the Ministry of Education, Thimphu, Bhutan: November

Debra Tyler:

Guest speaker: How to be successful in today’s workplace, career seminar, Haileybury College: May

Keynote speaker: Post 1970 Youth and the Emergence of a New Adulthood, Group Training Association of Victoria, State Conference, Kilsyth: July

Keynote speaker: Challenges for Catholic Schools in Contemporary Times, Catholic Secondary Deputy Principals Conference, Ballarat, September

Guest speaker: New adulthood?, Australian Institute of Management, St Kilda: September

Keynote speaker: How can we understand the youth of today?, Group Training Association of Victoria, Field Officers Conference, Shepparton: October

Ani Wierenga:

Workshop (with Miles Morgan Australia): Australian Career Development Studies, February

Keynote address (with Andy Simpson, University of Birmingham): Young people in decision making: using action research, ‘Engine Innovate’ Conference, Port Fairy: April

Invited speaker (with Helen Stokes): Stakeholder Voices: The Situation of Bhutanese Youth in Bhutan, Ministry of Education, Thimphu, Bhutan: April

Workshop (with Helen Stokes): Survey Training, and Survey Supervisor Training, Thimphu, Bhutan: April

Invited speaker (with Helen Stokes): Young People’s Voices, Youth Development Fund, Drugyel Monastry, Paro, Bhutan: May
Workshop (with Richard Eckersley and Johanna Wyn): *Pathways to success and wellbeing for Australia’s young people*, VicHealth: June


Keynote address: *Youth Participation in Local Government*, Forum of Local Government staff, Tasmanian Government Office for Youth Affairs, Launceston: September

Invited speaker (with Helen Stokes): *The Situation of Bhutanese Youth in Bhutan*, Key Stakeholders in the Youth Sector forum, hosted by the Youth Development Fund and the Ministry of Education, Thimphu, Bhutan: November

Johanna Wyn:


Keynote speaker: *Findings from the Life-Patterns study*, Vocational Education and Training Planning and Research Network Conference, Victoria University City Campus, Melbourne: April

Keynote Speaker: *Young people’s participation in education*, Education Forum, Braybrook: April

Keynote Speaker: *Young people’s transitions through education and work*, Central City Local Learning and Employment Network, Melbourne: April
Keynote Speaker:
*Generation Y, Catholic Counsellors and Student Welfare Conference,* Geelong: June

Invited presentation: *Life-Patterns Study, Centre for Equity and Social Change,* University of Western Sydney: May

Occasional Address:
*University of Melbourne Graduation Ceremony,* May

Invited Paper presentation (with Ian Fyfe): *Young Activists Making the News,* *Youth Electoral Study Conference,* Canberra: June

Keynote Speaker (with Ani Wierenga and Richard Eckersley): *Young people’s wellbeing,* *Human Potential Project workshop,* VicHealth: June

Invited Presentation:
*Human Potential Project, Social Policy Research Unit,* University of Glasgow: August

Invited presentation: *Young Australians’ Life-Patterns, Dean’s Lecture Series,* University of British Columbia: December
INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Through its work, the Centre has links and partnerships with related youth and research programs in various areas of the world.

Through the Situation of Bhutanese Youth in Bhutan project, AYRC staff have formed links with the Youth Development Fund in Bhutan. During the project Helen Stokes and Ani Wierenga were involved in three visits to the small Himalayan Kingdom where they spent time in consultation with Government officials, educationists, young people and parents. The project has involved the AYRC’s continuing engagement with the Royal Government of Bhutan, the Youth Development Fund, Save the Children US, Bhutanese Research Counterparts and a survey team of young people in different regions of Bhutan.

Johanna Wyn was awarded an Edward Clarence Dyason Universitas 21 Fellowship by the University of Melbourne to conduct an integrated program of research called "Networks And Partnerships related youth and research programs in various areas of the world".
‘Youth Transitions in a comparative context: Australian, UK and North America’. The program was undertaken from September to December 2005 and consisted of two separate research partnerships, both of which involved the development and extension of the Australian Youth Research Centre’s Life-Patterns study. The Fellowship enabled Johanna to further the existing collaboration with Lesley Andres who is a Chief Investigator on the Centre’s new ARC project Pathways Then and Now: New student transitions to adulthood in a comparative context. Johanna is a Chief Investigator on Andres’ Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grant, Life courses in comparative perspective: a 15 year portrayal of Australian and Canadian young adults. It also enabled Johanna to develop a new partnership with Andy Furlong based on the development of a project comparing labour market experiences of young people in Scotland and Australia. This collaboration has been extended to include a comparison with British Columbia. Outcomes from the Fellowship include the generation of a new research grant proposal through the ESRC, a book by Andres and Wyn, called The Making of a Generation: a comparison of young Canadians and Australians to be published by the University of Toronto Press and a book by Johanna called Young People’s Wellbeing: The cultural politics of health and education to be published by Oxford University Press, as well as journal articles and reports.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Australian Youth Research Centre places an emphasis on working in partnership with colleagues and organisations through local, national and international networks and linkages.

During 2005 the Centre participated in partnerships with the following organisations:

• The Centre is associated with Richard Eckersley (Australian National University) and other Australian researchers and scholars through the Australia 21: Realising Human Potential program;
Through the NEAR project, the Centre continued its collaboration with Yoland Wadsworth, (Action Research Program, Institute for Social Research, Swinburne University) and Gai Wilson (Centre for Development and Innovation in Health, Australian Institute for Primary Care, LaTrobe University), the management and staff of Community and Women’s Health Agencies and the Department of Human Services;

Partnerships continued with the Centre for Adolescent Health and the Student Welfare Unit (The University of Melbourne) on the Masters in Youth Health and Education Management;

A partnership developed with Dr Anita Harris, School of Social Inquiry, Monash University who is Chief Investigator (with Johanna Wyn) of the ARC funded project *Youth Civic Engagement and Social Connection in Post-industrial Society: A comparative study*, which is based at Monash University;

The Centre continued its collaboration with research associates: John Stafford (JLS and Associates), Kathleen Stacey (beyond...) and Murray Lake (Murray Lake and Associates) on the Longitudinal Youth Development Research and with Kathleen Stacey and Murray Lake on the SpringBoard Evaluations and on the NCVER project Schools, VET and Partnerships;

Professor Bronwyn Davies, University of Western Sydney. Professor Davies holds an honorary Professorial appointment in the Faculty of Education, which supports a partnership between her research team focusing on Equity and Social Change at the University of Western Sydney and the Australian Youth Research Centre. Professor Johanna Wyn holds an honorary Professorial appointment at the University of Western Sydney. The partnership involves mutual support for research students and advice on research programs.

Links continued with the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) and the ARC Research Network: Future Generation; in 2004-5, AYRC staff were among the 200 core members listed on a successful Australian Research Council grant application for 2004-2009 Network funding; and

Professor Lesley Andres is a partner investigator in the Flexible Career Patterns: Graduate redefinitions of outcomes in the new labour market project, providing comparative data from her Canadian ‘Paths on Life’s Way’ project and assisting with the analysis of the Australian data.
YOUTH AFFAIRS RESEARCH NETWORK (YARN)

The Centre continued to maintain the Youth Affairs Research Network (YARN) - a national and international electronic network linking those conducting and interested in youth-related research. Established in 1994, the Network continues to provide a valuable service, and also provides an electronic ‘doorway’ to the Australian Youth Research Centre as part of an international community of researchers.

The YARN e-mail list continued to grow, and now connects over 550 researchers. (To subscribe to the YARN list, simply e-mail to <mailserv@unimelb.edu.au> saying, in the body of the message: SUBSCRIBE YARN).

The YARN website (http://yarn.edfac.unimelb.edu.au) provides a stable and relatively static gateway to a range of relevant groups and resources both in Australia and internationally. YARN also provides a link to the Australian Directory of Youth Researchers that was developed by the Centre. It is growing steadily and lists over 100 active ‘youth researchers’ in Australia. It can be found at: http://ythresearcher-db.utas.edu.au/

During 2005, the Centre also continued work with the Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies on the creation of the Australian Youth Information Network – an on-line portal to existing information resources in the sector. The AYIN e-mail list replaced the previously existing youth.comm list.

The Centre maintained support for electronic networking and communication amongst researchers and practitioners in several projects and areas including the International Sociological Association Youth Forum.
Centre Personnel

Staff

PROFESSOR JOHANNA WYN

Johanna Wyn is Director of the Australian Youth Research Centre. She leads the Life-Patterns Then and Now project and is involved in many of the Centre’s research projects. She supervises research students on a range of topics related to youth, equity, health and education and teaches in the Master in Youth Health and Education Management and the Master of School Leadership courses. She is author of many articles and books on youth, including Rethinking Youth, 1997 (with Rob White), Youth, Education and Risk, 2001 (with Peter Dwyer) and Youth and Society, 2004 (with Rob White).

HELEN CAHILL

Helen Cahill is a Senior Research Fellow, who also has the role of Deputy-Director of the Australian Youth Research Centre. Helen has worked within teams conducting several research and consultancy projects in 2005, including the Literature for Life resource, the Toolkit of Promising Programs in Drug Prevention and the Truancy and Drug Use Welfare Teachers’ Manual. Helen also taught within the Education Policy, Schools and Society subject within the Diploma of Education and in the Masters in Youth Health and Education Management and the Masters in School Leadership courses. Helen has a strong and continuing interest in the use of drama techniques and interactive pedagogies to conduct research with young people and to involve them as co-teachers in the training of educators and health professionals in the Education and Medical and Health Sciences Faculties at The University of Melbourne.
**HERNÁN CUERVO**

Hernán Cuervo is a doctoral candidate in the Faculty of Education at The University of Melbourne. He is the co-author with Professor Johanna Wyn of the report on *Young People, Wellbeing and Communication Technologies* for the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation. Hernán comes from Argentina where he has just published a book about rural education: *Misiones Rurales Argentinas: medio siglo de historias*.

**SARAH MACLEAN**

Sarah MacLean was employed as a Research Fellow at the Centre during 2005 to manage a research project for the National Inhalant Abuse Taskforce investigating the likely impact of addition of deterrent chemicals to commonly used inhalants on the behaviour of inhalant users. Sarah is also a PhD student at the Centre where her thesis topic is: *Social meanings of inhalant misuse in Victoria; implications for the development of policy and intervention*. She has been awarded a VicHealth Public Health PhD Research Scholarship and an additional grant from the Alcohol, Education and Rehabilitation Foundation to undertake this research. In 2005 Sarah was awarded a grant from the Canadian Youth Solvent Addiction Committee to present her research at an international conference, and The University of Melbourne’s 2005 *Velma Stanley Award* for an essay on a subject relating to addiction.
JULIE MARR

Julie Marr is the full-time Administrator within the Centre, providing support to both research and teaching staff. Her responsibilities include financial administration, and maintenance of the membership and publications databases, as well as publication of Youth Research News and the maintenance of the Centre’s website. Julie is also the Administrative Coordinator of the Masters in Youth Health and Education Management program.

MARY O’BRIEN

Mary O’Brien is the chief investigator on the 2004 ARC Discovery Project Young people, preventive health discourses and self care. She has also received a three-year ARC postdoctoral fellowship to undertake the study. Mary’s previous postdoctoral appointment was as a Research Fellow for five years at the Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society (LaTrobe University) where she was researching the social and cultural aspects of risk and blood borne viruses. Mary is also a member of the Education, Policy & Management Departmental Human Ethics Advisory Group (DHEAG).

GRAEME SMITH

Graeme Smith is a Research Fellow who is the Statistical Analyst for Centre projects. Graeme continued in a part-time position at the Centre in 2005 and worked as part of teams on several research projects at the Centre including the Flexible Career Patterns (Life Patterns) and Reconnecting Young People to Supportive Learning Environments projects.
HELEN STOKES

Helen Stokes is a Research Fellow and Centre Manager at the Australian Youth Research Centre. In 2005 Helen has been involved in research projects in several different areas including *Retention, attendance and reengagement at school* for Crime Prevention Victoria, *Schools, VET and partnerships: Capacity building in rural and regional areas* for NCVER, the *Situation of Young People in Bhutan* for the Youth Development Fund in Bhutan and *Restorative Practices* for the Victorian Department of Education and Training and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria.

DEBRA TYLER

Debra Tyler is a Lecturer in the Department of Education, Policy and Management and a Research Fellow at the Australian Youth Research Centre. She lectures in the *Graduate Diploma of Education* and the *Bachelor of Teaching* program and coordinates the subject *Education, Policy, Schools and Society*. In 2005 Debra continued her work on the *Life Patterns* longitudinal study and began work on the new five-year ARC project *Pathways Then and Now: new student transitions to adulthood in a comparative context*. 
ANI WIERENGA

Ani Wierenga is a Lecturer and Researcher at the Centre. She coordinates The University of Melbourne’s cross-disciplinary Masters in Youth Health and Education Management. In 2005 Ani focused on co-writing project findings for Realising Human Potential: Seeking pathways to success and wellbeing for Australia’s young people; collaborating on the innovative Narrative Evaluation Action Research pilot among Victoria’s Community and Women’s Health Centres for the Victorian Department of Human Services; and jointly leading an international team researching the Situation of Young People in Bhutan. She is evaluating the Global Connections Pilot for Plan International Australia, which aimed to create links and understandings between young people in Australia and Indonesia. Ani’s own (ongoing) longitudinal research follows 32 Australian rural young people Making a Life.

DAN WOODMAN

Dan Woodman is a Research Fellow in the Australian Youth Research Centre. Dan studied sociology at The University of Melbourne and in his previous life worked as an intellectual disability support worker and spent a brief period at the Victorian Office for Youth. During 2005, Dan worked on the on the Pathways Then and Now project, the follow-up to the Centre’s very successful Life Patterns project. He also worked on an evaluation of a project funded by The Foundation for Young Australians’ Springboard Grants and a report entitled Generations: A Perspective on Gen Y for the Victorian Office for Youth.
Research Associates

Associate Professor Peter Dwyer is a Principal Fellow with the Australian Youth Research Centre, providing significant support to the Centre through his work on all aspects of the *Life-Patterns* research program.

Roger Holdsworth retired from The University of Melbourne at the end of 2004, but continues his association with the Centre as a Senior Research Associate. During 2005, he worked with the Centre on the evaluation of the *Challenge Ya!* project, as well as contributing to the writing of several Centre reports.

Dr Sue Wilks is an Honorary Fellow of the Centre. During 2005 she played an important role in supervising several PhD students during Johanna Wyn’s absence on a Universitas 21 Fellowship.

Visitors

The Australian Youth Research Centre welcomes visitors for brief or extended stays at the Centre. Where possible, opportunities are provided for visitors to share their work formally through seminar presentations, and informally through on-going discussions. In 2005, the following visitors came to the Centre:

- **Professor Andy Furlong** and **Dr Gerda Reith** from the University of Glasgow;
- **Dr Georgina Tsolidis** from Monash University;
- **Dr Sue Heath** from the University of Southampton;
- **Rinzin Namgay** from the Ministry of Education, Bhutan; Rinzin Namgay visited a number of schools in Victoria and completed a research report on professional learning in schools; and
- **Rinzin Wangmo** from the Department of Youth Sport and Culture, Ministry of Education, Bhutan; Rinzin worked alongside Centre staff on the *Situational Analysis of Bhutan’s Young People* and concurrently completed the *Masters in Youth Health and Education Management*. 

Cost of subscriptions per annum (including GST) remained at:

- Organisational $60.00
- Individual $40.00
- Student/Unemployed $15.00

The Australian Youth Research Centre always welcomes interest from its members and others on current Australian Youth Research Centre projects and activities.

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The Australian Youth Research Centre is located within the Faculty of Education at The University of Melbourne. It was established in 1988 in response to a recognised need by the youth affairs sector for relevant and up to date research on the issues facing young people today.

The aims of the AYRC are to:
- conduct relevant, coherent and reliable research on young people in Australia, with a state, national and international focus;
- assist with the development of policy and the implementation of initiatives based on research findings;
- develop strong links with the youth affairs sector, with particular attention to helping to identify and address the sector’s research needs;
- facilitate communication between educators, researchers, policy makers and youth workers;
- support the research activities of university staff and post-graduate students who have a specific interest in youth affairs; and,
- enhance the professional development of staff and students by assisting them to be informed about the broader context of young people’s lives.