



Annual Report 2012

Defending Young
People's Rights



YOUTH LEGAL SERVICE inc
western australia

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**Youth Legal Service
1st Floor 138 Murray St
Perth WA 6000
Tel 08 9202 1688
www.youthlegalserviceinc.com.au**

OVERVIEW

Youth Legal Service (YLS) is a not-for-profit organisation providing a continuous, accessible and free youth legal service and financial counselling, across Western Australia.

YLS is also recognised across Australia as an authority on youth law reform. The organisation has developed key partnerships with organisations across the globe and uses international best practice to provide recommendations and solutions for politicians, government departments and key legal decision makers.

YLS is also a recognised authority on all youth legal issues with, and 'go to' organisation for, all media providing regular proactive public comment.

Our Vision

Every young person in Western Australia is able to exercise their legal rights and responsibilities.

Our Values

Dignity

- respecting and valuing the uniqueness and rights of every young person

Compassion

- caring, serving and empathising

Integrity

- being professional and true to your principles

Justice

- being represented and heard

Clients

Youth Legal Service focuses service delivery on meeting the legal needs of young people (up to 25 years of age), families and carers of young people in need of legal assistance, and those working directly with children and youth who are important to the needs of young people.

Strategic Intentions

Youth Legal Service seeks to fulfil its vision, service charter and strategic direction by offering:

1. Legal services to all young people in Western Australia;
2. Financial counselling services to young people in metropolitan Western Australia;
3. Community legal education on youth issues; and
4. Policy and law reform activities.

Acknowledgements

Youth Legal Service depends on the support of our funders and sponsors to ensure that we can achieve our strategic intentions of providing legal services, community legal education, financial counselling and law and policy reform for the young people of Western Australia.

Our special thanks go to:

Sponsors

- Anglicare WA
- YMCA Perth
- Christian Brothers Oceania Province

Funders

- Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Attorney-General
- Public Purposes Trust
- Department of the Attorney-General, Western Australia
- Department for Child Protection, Western Australia
- Lotterywest

Office Hours

Monday – Friday 9-00am to 5-00pm

State Wide Legal Advice Line

Monday – Friday 9-00am to 5-00pm

Board Members as at 30 June 2012

Kate O'Brien	(Chairperson)
Richard Price	(Deputy Chairperson)
Marc Spradbury	(Treasurer)
Philippa Boldy	
Keshan Sureshan	
Rob Marando	

Staff members as at 30 June 2012

Cheryl Cassidy-Vernon	Director
Gerald Xavier	Senior Solicitor
Sally Dechow	Solicitor
John Collier	Solicitor
Angela Devitt	Solicitor
Vina Godrei	Solicitor
Michael Ford	Solicitor
Hadassah Crossley	Financial Counsellor
Sharon Newman	Senior Administration Officer
Tayla Crellin	Administration Assistant

Grant Income 2011/12

Recurrent Commonwealth CLC Funding (Legal operations)	\$ 83952
Recurrent State CLC Funding (Legal operations)	\$227681
Recurrent Dept Child Protection (Financial counselling)	\$184893
Legal Contribution Trust (Education operations)	\$71000
Public Purposes Trust (Outreach operations)	\$170000
Lotterywest (Branding)	\$19950

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

I am very pleased to return to the Board of Youth Legal Service, this time as the Chairperson.

The year has been a real challenge for Youth Legal Service. YLS runs on a shoestring budget and with a small band of staff. Under Director, Cheryl Cassidy-Vernon's dynamic leadership, and inspired by the core values of YLS - justice, truth, integrity and compassion - the dedicated and enthusiastic team has pulled together and achieved their performance targets.

Take a moment to read the stories of some of YLS clients in this report. Those stories illustrate the legal, social, financial and health issues confronting many young people. Qualities of respect, patience and commitment are needed to help young people deal with these problems. On behalf of the Board, I congratulate all staff who have delivered excellent service to troubled young people.

The Board is pleased with the strategic direction of YLS which is tracking well according to the current strategic plan. The marketing and branding project, the development of the website and strong steps towards accreditation are not only strategically important for the organisation but have given staff and Board members the opportunity to reflect on why and how YLS does its work and by that have re-energised their resolve to help young people in need.

The Board has continued with its governance reforms. Board members have continued a substantial rewrite and simplification of the Rules of YLS to embed good governance principles which will guide our work as a Board. I am very grateful to the Deputy Chair, Richard Price, and new Board member, Rob Marando who have spent a great deal of time redrafting the Rules. Consultation with our sponsors has continued. The Board is hopeful to achieve these important governance reforms in early 2013.

I thank all Board members for their work during the year. Mark Spradbury returned to the Board this year for his second stint, this time as the elected Treasurer. Derek Fagan left the Board and I thank him for his contribution over the years.

I pay particular tribute to Richard Price who has been a member of the YLS Board since his election in 2003 although he had previously been a Board member before working interstate for a time. Richard was elected Deputy Chair in 2010. His wise counsel to previous Chairpersons and to me, his forensic approach to Board business and commitment to the YLS has been exemplary. After so many years of dedicated service, Richard Price is leaving the Board. I thank him very much for his generous and unstinting support.

I am confident that all of us at YLS face the on-coming year with renewed optimism and energy.

Kate O'Brien

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The 2011/12 Financial Year is perhaps best described as a year of self assessment for Youth Legal Service. In addition to the daily business of running a busy and vibrant service, we grappled with what we are doing, why we are doing it and how we can improve our future performance? We undertook this review on the basis of preparing for our next strategic planning cycle in 2014, but more particularly, to determine how will we manage our profile and demand for our services into the future to ensure we remain financially viable and able to undertake the role required by the youth of our State?

Taking such a hard look at ourselves was not about proving the success or failure of our programs but rather about determining our success by remaining open to feedback and adjusting our services accordingly. To further this review in 2012/13, we will be undertaking a substantive research project, entitled, ***Access to Justice for Young People in Western Australia: Identifying legal needs, pathways and factors that enable or disable young people to exercise their legal rights and responsibilities***, which will provide important information for the future directions of Youth Legal Service.

As determined by our current Strategic Plan- Growing the Future- we have beavered away at addressing the following important tasks:

- Increasing the visibility of Youth Legal Service to its stakeholders and target group through a well developed marketing strategy/plan.
- Developing a way forward to engage in strategic partnerships to progress the vision and profile of Youth Legal Service.
- Realising the potential of the Youth Legal Service website and other communication technologies.

At year's end I am pleased to say that we now have a clear path to move these tasks forward into the new financial year. Nonetheless, external factors, over which we have little control, continue to impact on the Service:

We find that we are dealing with more complex legal matters and clients with multiple needs, yet, the legal services available to children are very limited. The vast majority of children and young people cannot afford legal representation and those appearing in the Children's Court usually come from families which cannot afford it either.

Alternative sources of assistance through the Legal Aid Commission and the Aboriginal Legal Service still leave significant gaps, and the lack of alternative options is exacerbated by the tightening up of eligibility criteria for grants of aid from Legal Aid WA and the withdrawal of duty lawyer and other services previously provided by the Aboriginal Legal Service. Legal Aid WA has referred many children to Youth Legal Service and only limited funds are made available for representation of children in criminal matters by the Commonwealth and other Services.

Of ongoing concern for Youth Legal Service, is the absence of joined up services for young people in the youth justice arena. Harry Blagg has previously described this as "...the critical disconnect between the justice and welfare systems where children from families in crisis are concerned. The division of responsibilities between justice and child protection services, has meant that the most vulnerable children are falling between the gaps and are not being adequately supported." The reality is that young people with unmet welfare needs are at extreme risk of becoming involved in offending. (Take a look at our case story of Adam, which demonstrates the lack of service coordination)

Despite a 15% increase in state government funding, we still do not have the resources to remunerate our staff at the going market rate. This is a concern for our future sustainability and for our goal of recruiting, developing and retaining quality staff.

Financially it has been a challenging year with a small surplus being returned. I take this opportunity to thank our Accountant, Gavan Wood and our Treasurer, Marc Spradbury for their financial services throughout the year.

To the Board I extend my gratitude for your hard work and commitment to Youth Legal Service, especially, Kate O'Brien who stepped into the Chairperson role for the year. Her wise counsel and guidance is greatly appreciated.

To the staff of Youth Legal Service I express my thanks for your continued work and endeavour that ensures our clients receive a quality service experience.

We approach the new financial year with great optimism as we bed down our plans for increasing our visibility, and work toward establishing beneficial strategic partnerships and updating our website and other social media.

Cheryl Cassidy-Vernon

PROVIDING LEGAL SERVICES TO YOUNG IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Youth Legal Service (YLS) provides free legal advice to young people, up to 25 years of age residing in Western Australia, with the intention that the assistance we provide improves the capacity of our legal clients to manage their futures.

Young people living in rural, regional and remote areas can access legal advice via our state wide legal advice line – 1800 199 006- for the cost of a local telephone call, during office hours. The state wide legal advice line is funded by the State Community Legal Service Program.

Youth Legal Service provides a legal advice and casework service to young people living in the Perth Metropolitan Area funded via the Commonwealth and State Community Legal Service Programs.

Additionally, outreach court representation services to the Joondalup Children's Court, Midland Children's Court, Fremantle Children's Court and the Armadale Children's Court are funded via the Public Purposes Trust.

Youth Legal Service provides advice and casework as follows:

- Criminal Matters
- Credit, Debt Matters
- Civil Law Matters (minor claims only up to \$10000)
- Motor Vehicle Accidents
- Contract Law
- Criminal Injuries Compensation
- Violence and Misconduct Restraining Orders
- Leaving Home
- Spent Convictions
- Appealing Criminal Convictions.

At year's end we can report some rather alarming statistics:

- 57% increase in sexual assault matters
- 132% increase in criminal damage matters
- 75% increase in robbery matters

In seeking to explain these changes to the types of matters we have previously dealt with, the only plausible explanation appears to be a tightening of the criteria for which grants of aid are made available, whereby, more young people are being denied aid and therefore are seeking our legal services. If such a trend continues, it will put undue pressure on us, to assist young people, and we will have to resort to service delivery based on the merits of each case, a situation we wish to avoid, as we believe every young person should be given the right to face their accusers and have legal representation. Nonetheless, we achieved our legal service strategic intention of providing legal services to the young people of Western Australia as follows:

Strategic Action	Measure	Target	Outcome
Legal representation in metro courts	Number of court appearances	250	264 court appearances. Nb. Reflects closed files only at year's end there were a significant number of ongoing files with court appearances yet to be recorded.
State wide legal advice	The number of legal advice sessions	500	612 legal casework clients serviced during 2011/12. 612 initial advice session + 351 additional legal advice sessions.
	The number of legal advice sessions conducted via 1800 199 006	150	121 legal advice sessions. Whilst a little short of the target, it is representative of the fact that we were unable to provide any regional clinics during the year due to resource constraints.
	The number of telephone advice sessions (metro)	200	306 metro telephone advice sessions conducted,
Providing legal casework services	The number of case files opened.	350	394 legal files opened.
	The number of case files closed.	350	253 case files closed, however, at year end there are a number of files with trial dates in Jul –Sept 2012.

LEGAL CLIENT CASEWORK DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Number of clients for which casework was undertaken: 612

Sex		Ethnicity	
Male	373	ATSI	28
Female	239	NESB	31
Total	612	Other	553
		Total	612
Age		Geographic Indicators	
<18	184	Perth Metropolitan Area	563
18+	428	Regional, Rural or Remote Area	49
Total	612	Total	612
Income			
Low	100%		
Medium			
High			

SHARING ADAM'S JOURNEY...

Adam is 16 years of age. He has been in constant trouble with the Police since 2009.

As a six year old he was taken into the care of the state because of severe neglect. Soon after, physical and sexual abuse allegations against his step parent were substantiated. Additionally, child protection authorities report that Adam's parents were heavy drinkers and misused illicit drugs and that the children in the family were subjected to severe violence, including the use of weapons.

Adam has had a succession of problematic foster placements and more recently has been housed in child protection hostels. He is reported to have severe behavioural difficulties and anger management issues. He has been a regular truant and has been unsuccessful at school. He first smoked cannabis as a 10 year old and by 13 years of age was a heavy drinker. He still drinks and regularly smokes 9 cones of cannabis a day and self medicates with illicit 'pills'.

Adam is described as having disrupted attachment, impeded literacy skills and numeracy development, and is generally difficult to get along with. He presents with a great deal of bravado but is very guarded about his family history.

Adam has absconded from various care placements, and refuses to engage with child protection authorities and corrective services personnel. His defiance of authority has been reported as a coping strategy; however, Adam never received a psychiatric assessment, despite being in the care of government departments. Yet, many studies indicate that the effect of childhood sexual abuse correlates strongly with adverse psychological outcomes including depression, anxiety disorders, anti-social behaviour, substance abuse, suicidal behaviour and post-traumatic stress disorder (Dinwiddie et al:2000, Fergusson, Lynskey & Horwood:1996, Mullen, Martin, Anderson, Romans,& Herbison:1994). It is also important to note that males that have been abused are more commonly seen in the criminal justice setting than in the mental health setting.

Perhaps if Adam's self destructive behaviour was adequately addressed earlier in his care, Adam would not have such a colourful offending history including, stealing, burglary, motor vehicle theft, assault, aggravated robbery and various bail breaches. The sad reality is that there are many young people like Adam, who are not getting their mental health needs addressed, and consequently end up in the criminal justice system, yet, our current youth justice system appears not to address mental health issues, despite the strong correlation between mental health issues and offending.

SHARING LISA'S JOURNEY...

Lisa is 13 year of age. Three years earlier when she was 10 years of age she was sexually assaulted by a family friend. Her initial report of the assault was disbelieved. Her assailant was eventually charged and convicted on 2 counts of sexual penetration of a child under 13 years.

Youth Legal Service assisted Lisa to apply for Criminal Injuries Compensation. In this process we were able to establish that the assaults had a significant impact on her education, evidenced by a marked drop in performance, and that the assaults impeded her social development.

In working with Lisa to compile her Victim Impact Statement, we were able to uncover her sense of abandonment and confusion as to why she was assaulted.

Lisa was awarded \$87500 for pain and suffering, loss in future income, future psychological counselling fees and for expenses incurred in establishing her case for compensation.

Whilst the effects of the assault still haunt Lisa, the value of having the assault acknowledged and provision made for her future, has done wonders for her self confidence.

STATE AND COMMONWEALTH COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE PROGRAMS COMPLIANCE REPORT

Strategy	Mandatory Performance Indicators
Information	
Provide Information	Information occurrences (55) 60
Legal Advice	
Provide Face to Face Advice (One-off)	No. of face to face advices (150) 401
Provide Telephone Advices	by telephone (250) 546
Casework	
Provide Casework	No of clients by : clients with cases opened (400) 394 clients with cases closed (400) 253
Court Appearances	Cases involving court appearances (100-150) 264
Meet Professional Standards	Compliance with Professional Indemnity Insurance requirements. Satisfactory completion of annual cross check
Non Casework	
Other Activities	Community Legal Education Workshops(47) 48 workshops conducted Law Reform Campaign Projects (2) 7 campaigns completed 6 campaigns ongoing
Accountability	Reporting requirements met. Services provided within budget. Audit requirements met. Satisfactorily completed.

PROVIDING FINANCIAL COUNSELLING SERVICES TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Youth Legal Service provides a metropolitan financial counselling service undertaking; assessments of financial position, budget planning, advocacy and referral. The service extends to representation in negotiations and hearings with utilities and tribunals, and, checking clients' contracts and situations to ascertain if there is a need for legal advice or action.

Financial Counselling is designed to assist young people, less than 25 years of age, in the Perth Metropolitan Area, to manage their financial difficulties, to make informed choices in respect to financial problems by providing information and options, by advocating with creditors and by representing clients in primary dispute resolution.

We expect that clients, exiting the financial counselling service, are better informed and resourced with personal skills that avert the risk of financial crisis, or, are supported to recover from financial crisis and resourced to enable them to better manage their future financial situations.

Specifically we strive for the following outcomes:

- Improved knowledge and skills to manage current financial situation.
- Reduction in creditor pressure.
- Accessed all financial entitlements.
- Avoidance of eviction and or homelessness.
- Referred to appropriate social support services.
- Continuation of essential services (utilities etc)
- Retention of personal goods.
- Avoidance of legal action.
- Improved knowledge

Youth Legal Service recognises that clients with financial difficulties may also be experiencing other personal or social problems. The Service contributes to addressing the holistic needs of clients that may arise as part of the Financial Counselling process by actively referring them to other relevant community resources and networks as deemed appropriate.

From time to time as resources permit, Youth Legal Service also undertakes community education for young people around preventing financial difficulties or empowering members of the community on finance issues. We also seek to identify trends or issues relating to youth debt matters and will advocate for systemic change where appropriate.

Financial Counselling Outcomes 2011/12

Our strategic intention of providing Financial Counselling services to young people in Western Australia was achieved by:

A metropolitan financial counselling service providing assessments, budget planning, advocacy and referral for 85 Financial Counselling Cases in 2011/12.

Casework Client Demographics

Gender		Casework Referral Sources	
Male	36	Self Referrals	24
Female	49	Community Housing	08
Total Clients	85	Corrective Services	01
Ethnicity		Centrelink	
ATSI	09	Utility Provider	18
CALD	10	Legal Services	06
Other	66	Youth Services	22
Total Client	85	Creditors	04
		Total	85
Age		Cases Finalised	
<18	03	Minor Cases	50
18-24 Years	80	Medium Cases	0<5 hours 0
25	02	Major cases	5>20 hours 32
Total Clients	85	Total closed cases	20+ hours 18

We experienced a significant increase in the number of clients opting for bankruptcy during 2011/12; previously most young people have not considered this as an option. Such a trend is worrying, however, it does provide relief to clients buckling under the pressure of creditors relentlessly pursuing outstanding debts.

The number of hours of casework per file has increased due to an increase in the complexity of individual cases. This is possibly attributable to the large number of clients presenting with mental health issues. Clients with mental health issues take longer to get through the process as psychotic episodes disrupt their plans. It is also difficult for such clients to be trustful from first contact and we often find that the extent of their debts is greater than first mentioned at intake. Once such clients trust us, they willingly disclose the full extent of their financial woes.

SHARING OUR CLIENTS' JOURNEY...

Story One

Our client is a 21 year old man from Africa with a history of mental illness as a result of exposure to extreme violence during a long term civil war. He lives on a Disability Pension due to his incapacity to cope with day to day life, and frequent hospitalisations due to psychotic episodes.

He has had 8 motor vehicles accidents in recent years where he has been at fault. He was being relentlessly pursued by various insurance companies to recover monies owing as a result of the accidents. The pressure from the various creditors was impacting on his mental state.

Additionally, he also had a personal loan and a number of credit cards which had been sent to collection agencies for debt recovery.

Youth Legal Service attempted to have all the motor vehicle accident debts waived on the grounds of mental impairment. We were successful for most of the debts; however, there was still an amount of \$30000-00 outstanding that a waiver was declined for.

Given the long standing mental health concerns and frequent hospitalisation, we discussed options at length. He was reluctant to go bankrupt for fear of getting a negative credit rating. As the client's mental state further deteriorated, plans to proceed with bankruptcy were shelved for some time.

However, after recently being discharged from hospital and with the client now living in supported stable accommodation he revisited this decision and has since filed for bankruptcy.

Once this decision was made the client then engaged further with the Service to develop and maintain a budget for his living expenses. We are pleased to advise that now that the creditor pressure has been removed, he is coping much better with life and has not been re-hospitalised.

Story Two

Our client is a 24 year old woman from Afghanistan with limited English. She is married with no children and lives with her parents. Her husband has not been able to find work as he has recently arrived in Australia from Iran.

Our client had a motor vehicle accident in December 2010. Following the accident, the other party filed a claim against our client for \$9739.37 for damages. Our client entered a default judgment however until she made contact with us, she had not received any legal advice in relation to the accident. We assisted her in establishing the level of her liability for the accident by referral to our in house counsel. She was found to be liable for the full amount of the claim.

Our client's sole source of income is a Centrelink Youth Allowance payment. Her entire payment is paid to her parents to cover her living expenses and those of her husband. Her mother provides her \$20 per fortnight for the purpose of loading her Smart Rider Card so that she can attend TAFE. She has no assets or savings. The other party's insurance company had commenced recovery action against her.

Our Financial Counsellor interceded on behalf of our client, as she had no capacity to repay the debt and was unable to advocate for herself due to the language barrier. Our Financial Counsellor negotiated with the insurance company, on the basis that the client could not afford a payment plan, and was successful in halting the recovery of the debt and also in achieving a written notice of debt discontinuance.

PROVIDING QUALITY COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION ABOUT YOUTH LEGAL ISSUES

Community legal education (CLE) is an integral component of our service delivery premised on our belief that by educating our clients, they are informed and supported to make better choices.

Our goal is to provide and produce clear, accurate and practical community legal education resources and workshops to help young people to understand and exercise their legal rights.

We work with community partners across the State to refine and deliver our workshops and to ensure that they are relevant to the needs of young people. Given our commitment to a holistic approach to service delivery, we include an educative component for clients focussing on life skills, that is enabling clients to develop skills to negotiate with authorities and organizations in regard to their legal issues, personal debts, tenancy matters, increasing clients' understandings of contractual rights and obligations, increasing clients' understandings of their legal rights and responsibilities with regard to incurring and managing personal debts and tenancies and increasing clients' knowledge of the range of youth agencies and support services available to assist them with social problems that may be contributing to or exacerbating their legal issues.

CLE priorities for 2011/12 were focused on developing education resources, revamping existing resources and incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into workshop resources. We have great plans for CLE initiatives which will be launched in the coming year and are discussed under the Branding Special Project later in this report.

KEY CLE OUTCOMES

Strategic Action	Performance Measure	Actions
Develop education resources	Review of CLE materials for currency and relevance	New materials are being developed for youth agencies around fines, graffiti, and dealing with police, cyber-bullying. And sex offender reporting.
Provide law education workshops of young people.	35 per annum	48 workshops conducted.
Provide continuing professional development workshops for the legal profession and those that work with young people.	Number of workshops delivered.	9 workshops provided.

SWAN VIEW SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT

For the 2011/12 year we made the decision to target specific secondary schools in our PPT funded areas. The pilot for this approach was Swan View Senior High School. Within the school is a specific program for indigenous students – the Access Program. Each week, Youth Legal Service presented workshops with students within the Access Program on various topics including;

- Legal Rights & Responsibilities
- Youth Justice System
- Public Space
- Employment Law (in conjunction with Employment Law Centre)
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Fines enforcement processes
- Cyber bullying

This has been a very successful project and we intend to expand it to other schools in the coming year. In addition to the workshops we also hosted one of the students- Alleisha- for work experience, and she is now getting ready to study law when she leaves school.

We take this opportunity to thank Anne DeSouza from Swan View Senior High School for her efforts and those of her support staff.



Youth Legal Service Solicitors, Michael Ford and Sally Dechow, with Alleisha Mogridge in the Yarning Place at Swan View Senior High School. The Yarning Place was created by students as a place for community gathering and law.

A LETTER FROM ANNE DESOUZA

I wish to acknowledge the work of Youth Legal Service Inc. to partner with our education programs at Swan View Senior High School. In 2011, the personal efforts of Mr Mike Ford enabled me to engage YLS services for our secondary students in the ACCESS Program at our school. I thank you for this wonderful opportunity for our students to work with your staff on a weekly basis to learn a range of relevant legal issues. This program directly linked the personal and communal experiences of our young people and the law to create a highly relevant curriculum. Ultimately, this program has been successful to enable the students to learn, understand and value the many facets of the law, justice, self determination, aspirations and active citizenship. This has supported the vision of our school community, Together We Dream Believe and Achieve.

The ACCESS Program at our school is an award winning alternative education opportunity dedicated to young people who require support for attendance, engagement and success in their secondary years of school. In 2012, the curriculum was designed to integrate Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies, a Certificate I in Engineering and the Certificate II in Visual Arts to facilitate the study of culture, spirituality, beliefs and values with the legal system. The weekly visit of Barrister Ms Sally Dechow has developed positive relationships, students' self-esteem, participation, success, learning outcomes and aspirations. As a result, two students Alleisha and Michael in Year 12 are now preparing for further education and training in law and the West Australian Police. Over the July school holidays, Alleisha accepted your offer to complete work experience in order to learn about the many facets of life and work at Youth Legal Service in the city. She comments:

Not only did I have my own personal experience but the workshops gave me greater knowledge of all aspects of law. It made me stronger about wanting to graduate and enter law after I finished Year 12. I think it is important for teenagers in high school and even younger kids to learn what the law is about and how to deal with situations. They can make better choices. It opens your eyes to the law and consequences. I found work experience at Youth Legal Service very interesting. I loved working there and was able to learn about the many aspects of work in law.

Ms Mona Yarran, the Aboriginal and Thursday Islander Education Officer placed in the ACCESS Program states:

It is interesting in discussions. The kids had a lot to say, you have to tell them to be quiet. They find it's interesting because they probably know people in those situations. It is important for the community. They can learn that way or the hard way.

As the primary teacher in ACCESS Program, I believe that it is evident that the implementation of this innovative partnership with the school does demonstrate success in enabling young people to be dynamic and self-confident about their life choices, education and future aspirations. These are valued qualities and will have long term positive implications for each student, their families and the wider community. This partnership with the school life of young people is investment in the welfare of the whole community.

I thank you once again and hope that the work of Youth Legal Service will be sustained for our students and their families in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Anne DeSouza

Teacher
ACCESS Program
Swan View Senior

YOUTH JUSTICE THINK TANK

Youth Legal Service has formed collaboration with WACOSS and YACWA tentatively called the Youth Justice Think Tank. The intention of this collaboration is to present a three part seminar series and a final written paper on youth justice during the lead up to the State Election. Briefly this will manifest as follows:

19 September 2012 – a seminar examining the principles and objectives of the Young Offenders Act (YOA) . This focus on legislation will look at alternatives to framing key concepts such as parental responsibility, and strengthening families.

25 October 2012 – a seminar which will endeavour to translate key concepts into programs and services. I.e. What is needed to enact the principles and objectives of YOA?

29 November 2012 – a seminar examining best practice in youth justice. What is currently being provided and what can be improved.

31 December 2012 – release of a written report to politicians showcasing the findings from the seminar series.

West Kimberley Youth Sector Conference

28-30 November 2012, Youth Legal Service has been invited to present a number of sessions on legal rights and responsibilities, young people and public space and the youth justice system.

STIMULATING AND CONTRIBUTING TO PUBLIC POLICY DISCUSSION AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Participation in Law Reform

Area of law	Activities
Inspectorate of Custodial Services	The Director is a serving member of the Community Advisory Group.
Corrective Services	The Director is a serving member of the Corrective Services Consultative Group.
Youth Services Hub	The Director is still actively involved in the establishment of a youth lotteries house.
DCP Partnership & Leadership Forum	The Director participated in the forum on 9 November 2011.
Homelessness Connect	The Service was a participant in the Homelessness Connect Project 2011.
Children in Police Lock Ups	The Service has recently opened a campaign to address this pressing issue.
Defence for Children International UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	The Director is the WA representative to the Australian Chapter.
Western Australian Council of Social Services (WACOSS)	The Director was elected to the Board of WACOSS for a two year term commencing November 2011.
Election 13	The Director will be writing regular briefings for all state MPs in the lead up to the state election in March 2013.

Media Activity

Date	Topic	Media Outlet
13 Oct 2011	Aboriginal Youth Offending	Koori Mail (interview and news article)
9 Nov 2011	Graffiti Case	Channel 7 News (News item/interview)
9 Feb 2012	Juvenile Detention Population AIHW Report	Sky News (Recorded Interview)
9 Feb 2012	Juvenile Detention Population AIHW Report	National Indigenous TV News (News item/interview)
11 May 2012	Luke Elliott Better mental health services for young offenders	The West Australian
16 May 2012	Callum Dennis Following up my presentation at WACOSS conference on youth justice	Western Independent Newspaper
29 May 2012	ABC Darwin Criminal Injuries Limitation Dates	Kate O'Toole

ENSURING THE ONGOING VIABILITY, INFLUENCE AND PROFILE OF YOUTH LEGAL SERVICE

YLS Branding and Website

This purpose of this project was the identification of appropriate strategies to enhance the profile and accessibility of Youth Legal Service to its target population. This project is a strategic initiative identified by the YLS 2009-2014 Strategic Plan – Growing the Future, which seeks to fulfil the vision of every young person in Western Australia being able to exercise their legal rights and responsibilities.

This project concentrated on:

- Increasing the visibility of Youth Legal Service to its stakeholders and target group through a well developed marketing strategy/plan.
- Developing a way forward to engage in strategic partnerships to progress the vision and profile of Youth Legal Service.
- Realising the potential of the Youth Legal Service website and other communication technologies.

In this context the website development and design is taken to encompass the content that we will deliver to our end users via the World Wide Web. This will include a website that has text, images, and other content and may include interaction, and delivery to end users of information through other means as defined by our marketing plan, such as social networking, and blogs.

On 18 July 2011, YLS received notification from Lotterywest that our grant application to upgrade the website and prepare a marketing strategy had been approved, albeit at a lesser amount than what we proposed. Accordingly, we are currently engaged in a process of mapping the content for our new website, in preparation for inclusion of branding etc as informed by our marketing plan.

Legal Needs Project

Project Title: *Access to Justice for Young People in Western Australia: Identifying legal needs, pathways and factors that enable or disable young people to exercise their legal rights and responsibilities*

This research project intends to investigate the particular needs of young people exercising their legal rights and responsibilities in Western Australia. The research intends to identify the ability of young people in Western Australia to:

- Obtain legal assistance (legal information; basic legal advice; initial legal assistance; legal representation)
- Participate effectively in the legal system (including courts and tribunals)
- Obtain assistance from non legal advocacy and support (including non legal early intervention)
- Participate effectively in law reform processes

We are currently awaiting the outcome of our funding application for this project.

Governance Review

The governance review was charged with a number of tasks including the reviewing of the Rules of Youth Legal Service to reflect:

- A change to the governance structure, from the Board of Management to the Board.
- Redefining the membership of YLS.
- The composition of the Board.
- Revised Board Meeting processes.

Revised Board Meeting Processes and policies have been adopted by the Board. Various discussions have been progressed regarding the membership of YLS, the composition of the Board and lastly, changing the Rules of Association to fit both the Model Rules for Incorporated Associations, and the proposed membership structure. It is envisaged that the important changes to membership will be implemented in the first half of 2013.

The National Association of Community Legal Centres Accreditation

The NACLC Accreditation Scheme has been developed to provide an industry based certification process for Community Legal Centres (CLCs) that will support and give recognition to good practice in the delivery of community legal services. Full members of State and Territory Associations of CLCS must comply with the NACLC Accreditation Criteria.

The NACLC Accreditation Criteria and the evidence requirements by which Community Legal Centres will be assessed for certification incorporate the current Community Legal Centres Program Service Standards and the requirements of the NACLC Risk Management Guide (RMG).

A national timeline has been developed, with the aim for all CLCs to have been assessed and certified by the end of 2012. As you can see there are a number of tasks for us to undertake. The main one being a complete review of our current policies and procedures to ensure that they are compliant with the Accreditation requirements, whilst maintaining our service delivery.

Extent of Pro Bono Work and Volunteers

Youth Legal Service chose not to use volunteers during 2011/12 Financial Year as we formed the opinion that we were supporting a staff member through Restricted Practice, additionally we had a new Administration Assistant Trainee commence in March 2012 for a one year period, thus, our capacity to train and supervise volunteers was somewhat diminished. Both of these scenarios impacted on the ability of existing staff to adequately supervise volunteers in the workplace, thereby, resulting in the business decision of only utilising volunteers when we can be certain that we have the right level of staffing to provide the supervision and training that is necessary to ensure that our service delivery is not compromised in any way through the use of volunteers.

We did however, in partnership with the Swan View Senior High School Access Program, accept a student for work experience placement during the year.

However, pro bono was as always, accessed through the 2011/12 Financial Year. We made a request for assistance with a case through the Bar Association of WA.

Additionally, we were able to access pro bono assistance for our Board via Jackson MacDonald.

Jackson MacDonald also approved the appointment of its partner, Rob Marando, to the Board of Youth Legal Service.

Richard Price, Barrister, Francis Burt Chambers, and Kate O'Brien (retired District Court Judge) provide their services to the Board on a pro bono basis.

We are grateful to Child Australia, who allow their Chief Financial Officer, Marc Spradbury to serve as our Treasurer, and also to Anglicare WA, for allowing its Youth Services, General Manager, Philippa Boldy to serve as a board member, and also to Woodside for allowing Keshan Sureshan to continue to serve as a board member.

As discussed under the heading YLS Branding and Website, significant progress has been made toward re-branding Youth Legal Service and developing a new website and other media offerings. Much of this progress has been made possible through the hard work of Cath Sutherland from Conscious Business, who was contracted to assist us to develop a marketing strategy. Since completing the strategy for us, Cath has accessed pro bono from Groves and Groves and GettinHectic to bring the strategy to fruition.



YOUTH LEGAL SERVICE inc
western australia

2012 FINANCIAL REPORTS

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2011/12 FINANCIAL YEAR

INCOME STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Revenue		
Funding and grants	758,326	730,035
Profit on sale of asset	9,383	-
Other Income	12,028	28,002
Capital grant transfer	7,725	70,708
Interest earned	17,472	24,509
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	804,934	853,254
Expenditure		
Audit	2,120	1,730
Bank charges	459	241
Consultancy	-	75,198
Depreciation	25,102	29,944
Disbursements	507	136
Equipment	4,196	569
Grant Expenses	10,800	-
Insurance	11,073	11,541
Library & Memberships	20,694	14,071
Motor Vehicles	21,203	21,033
Postage	1,436	1,770
Printing and Stationery	8,989	8,414
Recruitment	-	225
Rent	64,194	60,645
Repairs and Maintenance	11,419	16,832
Salaries	556,328	560,577
Staff Amenities	10,393	10,794
Telephone	20,232	17,011
Training	7,445	12,694
Travel and Accommodation	15,804	19,404
Total Expenditure	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net (Deficit) / Surplus or the year	<hr/>	<hr/>
	12,540	(9,575)

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30 JUNE 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	285,661	260,450
Trade and other receivables	2,874	4,495
Prepayments	7,097	8,668
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	295,632	273,613
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	81,180	88,043
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	81,180	88,043
TOTAL ASSETS	376,812	361,656
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	33,368	30,470
Provisions	52,062	41,265
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	85,430	71,735
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provisions	21,020	24,376
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	21,020	24,376
TOTAL LIABILITIES	106,450	96,111
NET ASSETS	270,362	265,545
EQUITY		
Capital Grants	21,137	28,861
Accumulated funds	249,225	236,684
TOTAL EQUITY	270,362	265,545

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Cash flows from operating activities		
Receipts from grants and funding agreements	771,976	736,220
Payments to suppliers and employees	(755,381)	(874,124)
Net cash flows (used in) / from operating activities	<u>16,595</u>	<u>(137,904)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest received	17,472	24,509
Acquisition of property, plant and equipment	(8,856)	(20,656)
Net cash flows used in investing activities	<u>8,616</u>	<u>(13,057)</u>
Net (decrease) / increase in cash and cash equivalents	25,211	(150,961)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	260,450	411,411
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	285,661	260,450

