SUMMARY REPORT

Northern Territory
Youth Camp Intervention Strategy

Including Evaluation Material Relating to the Brahminy, Tangentyere and Balunu Youth Camp Programs

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TERMINOLOGY

In this report we use the term **"Aboriginal"** to refer to people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. Where reference in this report is made to published material in which the term "Indigenous" is used, the same terminology will be adopted.

The term "**youth camps"** refers to the collective services as provided Brahminy, Balunu and Tangentyere under the current 2008/11 Service Agreements with the NT Government. The authors acknowledge the heterogeneity of all three services, and wherever possible, individual services are delineated throughout this report.

The term "**authors"** collectively refer to Ivan Raymond and Sean Lappin.

The term "**research team"** collectively refers to Ivan Raymond, Sean Lappin, Tracey Jane and David Richardson.

NAVIGATING THIS REPORT

This report has been designed to assist the reader to access the information that they require without having to absorb what is a significant amount of information. The authors have striven to undertake an evaluation process in an open and transparent manner, where the conclusions and recommendations are drawn from the evidence contained with this report (apart from where confidentiality restricts the release of that evidence). To support the navigation process:

- The majority of the chapters are reasonably "stand alone" and, where necessary, directs readers to reference other related chapters;
- Important themes and recommendations are consolidated within marked boxes;
- Each main section includes a summary that provides a synopsis of key points;
- The appendices provide the tools that have been employed in the evaluation process as well as some of the more detailed process evaluation information.

The authors have made a deliberate decision to provide all relevant information associated with the evaluation as part of this report; with the explicit intention of meeting the needs of diverse audiences. To this end, the *Content*s provides a detailed list of chapter headings, with the *Executive Summary* designed to draw the reader to the key themes.

Chapters 7 to 10 are designed to be read as a complete set, with pertinent recommendations embedded across the chapters.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The youth camps were implemented by the Northern Territory Government in response to perceptions associated with the escalation of youth crime in Darwin and Alice Springs; as well as to reduce the rate of unsuccessful diversions from the formal youth justice system. Two years later, the Department of Health and Families commissioned this evaluation which is summarised as follows:

- There are distinct challenges within the NT in relation to the engagement of Aboriginal young people with complex needs, most notably young people at high risk of future offending where diversionary services appear to lack utility.
- The NT Government has made a significant investment into the youth camp strategy. Considering, at the time of initial investment, both the conceptual model underpinning the intervention and individual service providers' programs were underdeveloped, significant progress has been made.
- Youth camps, as delineated within the broader literature as outdoor-adventure programs, residential programs and healing based interventions (see Chapter 2: Literature Review), are largely within their infancy within Australia. While they offer intuitive appeal and preliminary supporting evidence, there is a paucity of research to guide their understanding and application, notably for complex client groups. On this basis, "youth camps" (per se) do not represent an evidence-based intervention for youth-at-risk.
- Youth camp programs are notably heterogeneous. The evaluation of such interventions needs to occur on a case-by-case basis that considers the relationship between individual program model, participant profile and purported outcomes.
- This evaluation applies the best-practice forensic paradigm of *risk, need* and *responsivity* to guide the evaluation of the three service providers (Chapter 4, 5 & 6), and to inform the broader recommendations that follow in Chapters 7 to 10 (designed to be read in total).
- This evaluation found that the Brahminy, Balunu and Tangentyere youth camps are currently having an impact on their target audience. Outcomes are being achieved through services that are delivered in a responsive manner and targeting the "needs" underpinning at-risk behaviour. The evaluation provides strong support that individual youth camps have the capacity to engage youth-at-risk (including Aboriginal young people) who are at high risk of future offending or at-risk behaviour, within a therapeutically conducive environment that has the potential to translate to both attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, at least within the short term. Within the wider youth service continuum, there are few services that can engage and sustain high risk young people within such a process, and this remains a significant strength of the program model. While this evaluation provides optimism that this can translate to longer term outcomes (including reduced offending risk), this needs to be tested through the establishment of clear and robust longitudinal evaluation. It should be noted that due to issues associated with the data matching process, a control group comparison was not possible for this evaluation. Future analysis of a matched sample would assist in clarifying the attribution of outcomes associated with reductions in offender risk factors.

- Balunu and Brahminy appear to be in the best position to achieve their stated outcomes. They have a clearer and more consistent program model and more detailed program polices and procedures to manage the high levels of risk associated with youth camp interventions. A feature of youth camp interventions is the dynamic nature of "risk" that cannot be fully mitigated, especially for youth-at-risk cohorts. The importance of strong organisational processes is highlighted within this report, and this evaluation has identified a number of process gaps (identified for each provider in Chapters 4, 5 & 6) which exposes individual service organisations to considerable risk. These should be prioritised, targeted and monitored in collaboration with the funding provider.
- While progress has been made (most notably for Balunu and Brahminy), all three organisations need to strengthen their services through more explicitly applied, evidence-informed and individually tailored services that includes integrated and individually tailored post-program follow-up.
- There is preliminary support that the youth camp intervention can be a cost-effective intervention when it is targeted to young people with the highest risk of future offending. Individual programs are most likely to be cost effective when they are based upon conceptually sound models, are applied in a consistent and evidence-informed manner, and include a post-care process.
- There is much optimism that with further investment in the strategy to promote increased service integration and best-practice program alignment, the outcomes reported in this evaluation are underestimates of the potential outcomes. On this basis, the future funding of the model is supported, but in a manner that promotes the ongoing development of the model as a whole and enhances the capacity of providers in driving best-practice alignment. The period of this funding should coincide with the time required for service providers to make significant progress to reaching best-practice criteria, with further methodologically sound evaluation occurring at this point to review the effectiveness and future viability of the intervention strategy against other youth justice interventions.
- The future funding of less developed youth camp agencies needs to include resources and advice to support agencies develop conceptually sound models, manage risk and drive service development to meet best-practice criteria.
- To facilitate the better integration of services and matching of young people and intervention, the authors suggest that strong consideration is given to dividing the youth camp model into two separate models. The authors have labeled the longer and shorter term programs as: "*therapeutic residential program*" and "*therapeutic camp program*", respectively. The use of the word "therapeutic" is applied to express a targeted needs-based intervention, as underpinned by best-practice criteria. The delineation, costing and implementation of these models is provided in Chapters 8 to 10.
- It is imperative that the youth camp model is integrated within the broader service system. This is impacted by a youth justice system that is delivered across a number of portfolios with evidence of a lack of policy alignment and fragmented operations. Under these conditions, the outcomes associated with the youth camp model cannot be maximised.

- It should be noted that the key staff delivering the youth camps programs, strongly support by the NT Youth Camps Coordinator, have demonstrated strong commitment to making a difference to young people exhibiting at-risk behaviours. The commitment is matched through the considerable investment that both providers and the NT Government have made in developing programs that will have a strong and lasting impact on the lives of the young people who participate in the program. The youth camps make an important contribution to the community in the support and care they provide to young people with complex needs to assist them to reach their potential. This is a challenging and complex undertaking and the providers should be acknowledged for their dedication that has enriched many young people's lives.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Youth camps are part of the Northern Territory Government's Youth Justice Strategy. Three youth camp providers, Brahminy Group, Balunu Foundation and Tangentyere Council, are currently funded by the Department of Health and Families (DHF)[1] to deliver youth camp services. The terms of reference of the evaluation were:

Evaluate the efficacy of youth camps as a service option to support 'at risk' young people. This includes:

- Determining efficacy from the perspective of cost effectiveness, and appropriateness in making a difference to young people's circumstances;
- Assessing the most appropriate point of intervention (primary, secondary, tertiary) for youth camps in a young person's life;
- Describing the key features of a best practice model (principles and service delivery).

Evaluate the service delivery of the three youth camp providers funded to deliver youth camp services. The evaluation should be both:

- Outcome focused – what is it the youth camp is designed to achieve and how well has this been achieved? What difference has the youth camp made to the lives of the young people who have participated?
- Process focused – how well have the youth camp providers delivered the service against defined objectives, service model and service delivery; and compliance with standards, policy and procedures and the funding agreement.

[1] As of the 1st of January, 2011, the youth camp strategy was managed by the Department of Children and Families.

CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT TO YOUTH CAMP STRATEGY[2]

As at December 2008 there were 25,596 young people aged between 10 and 17 in the Northern Territory (NT) of which 11,394 were Indigenous; with 1,078 more males than females (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2010). Compared with other jurisdictions, the Northern Territory has the highest rate of young people in detention per 100,000 of the relevant population at 86.3 (30 June 2008); with other jurisdictions ranging between 14.3 and 66.4, with an average of 36.6 (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2010)[3].

The youth camps, or Youth Rehabilitation Camps as they are also referred to, form one part of the overall Youth Justice Strategy in the Northern Territory. The broad approach to youth justice in the Northern Territory is principally informed by restorative justice principles. Restorative justice, in the words of Marshall, is "a process whereby all the parties with a stake in a particular offence come together to resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future" (Marshall, 1996). The core intention of the approach, in conjunction with the young offender "making good" for the offence committed, is to divert young people away from the courts and prevent re-offending.

In the Northern Territory there has been a significant focus on diversionary programs for young offenders with the Juvenile Pre-Court Diversion Scheme introduced in July 2000 and embedded in legislation. There is also, however, a history of mandatory sentencing which required second time offenders to be detained for a month, as well as controversy surrounding the naming and shaming of young people based on the perceived impact it was having on young people. These elements reflect a tendency to a lower tolerance threshold in employing more punitive responses for repeat offenders. This appears to be primarily driven by public perception in relation to "out of control" youth crime, particularly violent crime, and the resultant politicisation of the associated issues.

The Youth Justice Strategy

In 2008, this culminated in the *[C]racking down on youth crime* (Northern Territory Government, 2008) campaign through the establishment of a *Youth Justice Strategy.* "The Youth Justice Strategy is a Northern Territory Government framework for working with young people (up to 18 years old) who are involved in anti-social, criminal or disruptive behaviour in the Northern Territory" (Department of Health & Families, May 2010). The strategy brought amendments to the Youth Justice Act (Part 6A) and made provision for the Youth Justice Advisory Committee (YJAC), which was embedded in legislation. The role of YJAC is to monitor and evaluate the "administration and operation of the Youth Justice Act" (Department of Health & Families *Fact Sheet 11*, May 2010) and provide advice to the Minister. YJAC has been functioning for the last

[2] The contents from this section of the report are correct as at December, 2010. The authors are aware of recent structural and governance changes occurring within NT Government Departments.
[3] It should be noted that other data in relation to youth justice (i.e., rates of young people under supervision) were not provided to the Australian Health and Welfare Institute for the Northern Territory for 2008/09.

12 months and intends to release a paper in relation to the merits of an improved youth justice system due to be finalised late 2010 (Northern Territory Government, 2010).

The key operational and systems initiatives of the strategy are two pronged in the provision of diversionary services for young people (including the youth camps), and services and mechanisms, namely the Family Responsibility Program, intended to support families of young people exhibiting anti-social behaviour, and hold them accountable for their engagement and compliance with the process. In the words of the Chief Minister: "[U]nder the changes, juvenile diversion will no longer be a revolving door, parents will be made accountable and youth camps will help get kids back on track" (Paul Henderson *Media Release,* 31 March 2008).

In addition to the provision of the YJAC and the Family Responsibility Program, the legislative amendments emphasise the need for young people to be referred to diversionary programs dependant on the seriousness of the crime and the history of offending behaviour (i.e., there was a call to prevent young people being referred to diversion programs more than twice). One of the most significant shifts was the change in responsibilities of key departments, which saw the responsibility for the administration of the Youth Justice Act transfer from the Minister for Justice to the Minister for Children and Families. Part of this shift included the intention for Youth Corrections responsibilities to transfer to the former Department of Health and Families. There was also provision for a Youth Justice Court (in place of the Juvenile Court s45) and the option for the Chief Magistrate to appoint a specialist Youth Magistrate (s46) (Department of Justice, Fact Sheet). There remains some contention with regards to the ongoing co-location of the Youth Justice Court with the Adult Court and the potential implications for young people presenting at the court.

Interagency Collaboration Panel

As part of the Family Responsibility Program, the Interagency Collaboration Panel (ICP) provides the mechanism for bringing a range of agencies together to administer Family Responsibility Agreements and Orders. "The Panel Satisfies section 140B(2) of the *Youth Justice Act*, which identifies that:

> *Agencies with responsibilities related to the welfare of youth must work together cooperatively and effectively to help parents and youths."*
>
> Department of Health and Families, May 2010

Representatives from the former Department of Health and Families; Justice; Education and Training, Housing, Local Government and Regional Services and the Northern Territory Police form the membership for the Panel. The Department of Health and Families are responsible for convening the meetings on a monthly basis or more frequent as required. Information from the respective agencies is shared among the members of the Panel who have been identified and trained as "Authorised Officers". Authorised Officers are bound by the Information Sharing Code of Conduct to protect the privacy of the families involved.

The Panel assesses referrals to the Family Responsibility Program to determine whether a Family Responsibility Agreement or Order may benefit a family. The Panel will also make a decision regarding the identification of the lead agency for the life of the Agreement or Order. The lead agency is responsible for ensuring that services are delivered in line with the Family Responsibility Agreement or Order. In the majority of instances, the Family Support Centre have taken the lead agency role, and therefore provided case management to families who are part of the program (Department of Health & Families, May 2010).

Family Support Centres

As well as providing a soft entry point for families seeking assistance, the Family Support Centre provides a secretariat function to the ICP, chairs the ICP and provides the overall administration and management of the Family Responsibility Program, including Family Responsibility Agreements or Orders. The Family Support Centre is also responsible for assisting the integration of relevant services and reporting to Government on any identified service gaps. Reports from stakeholders obtained within the evaluation process indicated that the various processes associated with the Family Responsibility Program have recently begun to operate effectively. There is a Family Support Centre located in both Darwin and Alice Springs.

Youth Policy Framework

Another relevant change agenda is facilitated through the Youth Policy Framework, *Building a Better Future for Young Territorians,* which was released in April 2003. The framework identifies key principles for the establishment and monitoring of policies and operations in relation to young people in the Northern Territory. It also identifies five key directions, with priority actions, intended to enhance opportunities and outcomes for young people in the Territory. Key Direction Five, *Create communities where young people can feel safe and secure,* has a dedicated 'Key Issue' for *Dealing with Young Offenders* and a suite of priority actions. Annual Progress Reports against the key directions monitors progress of the priority actions identified as well as captures new initiatives relevant to each key direction. The Youth Policy Framework provides the platform for aligning policy in relation to youth justice and encouraging integration at the operational level. It has been advised that there is a new Youth Policy Framework currently in development which will supersede the current one.

Alice Springs Youth Action Plan

The Youth Action Plan for Alice Springs, launched on the 19th of February 2009, also has relevance to the broad policy landscape. The plan was prompted by concerns regarding the wellbeing of children and families and a perception that youth crime was getting out of control. This resulted in the recruitment of a Youth Services Coordinator in Alice Springs (currently employed by the Department of Children & Families) to help facilitate and monitor the implementation of the plan. It included initiatives to improve school attendance and retention rates as well as a suite of services for families and children (including a Triage Centre for children

and young people after hours) with a focus on the town camps. The programs and services are delivered directly through government agencies as well as procured through local non-government agencies, including Tangentyere Council and the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress.

Child Protection Inquiry

The final and most current piece of work that is likely to have considerable influence in the policy and funding environments for youth justice is the Child Protection Inquiry handed down in October 2010. Relevant recommendations include the establishment of a dedicated Youth Court for both child protection and youth justice and the call for the development of programs that "engage successfully with Aboriginal youth and can demonstrate positive outcomes must surely be a Government priority" (NT Child Protection Inquiry, 2010). There is also a commitment to the establishment of a stand alone Department for Children and Families which incorporates the youth justice functions previously the responsibility of the Department of Health and Families. It is understood that the new Department of Children and Families commenced operation on 1st of January 2011, and includes those policy, program and service delivery functions that formed the NT Families and Children Division of the former Department of Health and Families.

Governance for the Youth Justice System

From a structural and governance perspective, the administration and operations of the youth justice system occurs across a number of Government portfolios. It appears that despite the intention to consolidate youth justice policy and service delivery within the former Department Health and Families there continues to be a fragmentation of policy and service delivery across a number of Government Departments; with some confusion regarding the delineation of roles between Departments. This viewpoint has been reaffirmed through the stakeholders consulted within this evaluation.

The following provides a summary of the major initiatives associated with reducing offending by the Government agency responsible for the administration and/or provision of the initiative.

Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services (NTPFES)

Northern Territory Police deliver frontline policing services as well as a range of programs designed to reduce the amount of youth crime and prevent re-offending, including:

- Management of the Youth Diversion Scheme which includes verbal and written warnings and/or assessment of offenders for suitability for diversion under the Youth Justice Act;
- Facilitation of the Youth Justice Conferencing process (family and/or victim offender conferencing) and referral for case management support (procured through non-government agencies) as part of the Youth Diversion Program;

- Youth Services Senior Policy/Program Officer, based in Darwin, with NT wide responsibilities;
- Is an identified "Appropriate Agency" in relation to the Family Responsibility Program;
- Is a member (has an appointed "Authorised Officer") of the Interagency Collaboration Panel (ICP);
- School Based Police Program with officers based between key schools and local police stations across the Territory;
- Northern Territory Early Intervention Pilot Program (NTEIPP) including two Youth Outreach Workers in Katherine and Alice Springs to raise awareness about youth binge drinking;
- NT Illicit Drug Pre Court Program;
- Dedicated Youth Crime Unit in Darwin designed to improve relationships between young people and Police and facilitate rapid resolution of youth related crimes. Similar initiatives operate in other major police stations such as Palmerston and Katherine.

The Youth Diversion Program provides the mechanisms and systems for police to access the majority of youth programs in the Northern Territory. Northern Territory Police undertake an assessment of young people referred for diversion and, where appropriate, make referrals to a youth based programs to provide case management and mentoring services. In the majority of instances these services are procured through non-government community based organisations. The programs undertake an assessment to assist Police to determine eligibility and utilise a case management approach which can includes referral to professional services, such as clinical psychology, participation in activities/programs and mentoring.

Department of Justice

The Department of Justice has historically delivered significant components of the youth justice system with some changes resulting from the implementation of the Youth Justice Strategy; namely, the transfer of responsibility for YJAC and Youth Rehabilitation Camps. It continues, however, to deliver a range of youth justice services. The following summarises the main services provided, or procured, through the Department for Justice:

- Administration of the Courts;
- Supervision of various legal orders (i.e., Bails and Obligations) as part of a generic approach for young people and adults;
- Is an identified "Appropriate Agency" in relation to the Family Responsibility Program;
- Is a member ("Authorised Officer") of the Interagency Collaboration Panel (ICP);
- Provision of juvenile detention and associated services (i.e., case management and the Elders Program);

- Provision of Regional and Indigenous Crime Prevention Councils;
- Provision of the Policy Coordination Unit designed to ensure that all whole of Government policy development occurs in line with current strategic directions.

It was originally conceived that the supervision of legal orders for young people would be transferred to the former Department of Health and Families following the activation of the Youth Justice Strategy. The transfer of this function has not occurred, however it is understood that the decision made by the NT Government for the transfer to be affected remains.

Based on conversations with stakeholders, together with best practice information, the absence of a dedicated approach to the supervision of legal orders for young people potentially dilutes the outcomes for the young people involved. It also makes integration with related systems, such as Youth Diversion and the Family Responsibility Program, more complex.

Department of Health and Families[4]

The Department of Health and Families has until recently had the overarching responsibility for the administration of the Youth Justice Act. This responsibility brings with it a range of challenges given the number of government agencies involved in the provision of youth justice services. Relevant to this report, the Department has core functions that include child protection and the provision of out-of-home care services, and it has had an increasing role in the overall approach and procurement of the following youth specific services and programs:

- Overall responsibility for the administration of the Youth Justice Act;
- Providing the secretariat function for the Youth Justice Advisory Committee;
- Overarching responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the Youth Policy Framework, the Youth Justice Strategy and the Youth Action Plan in Alice Springs;
- Administration for the Family Responsibility Program and associated agreements and orders;
- Family Support Centres in Darwin and Alice Springs to operationalise the Family Responsibility Program;
- Is an identified “Appropriate Agency” in relation to the Family Responsibility Program;
- Administration and member of the Interagency Collaboration Panel;
- Strategic and operational management of Youth Rehabilitation Camps;
- Management of non-government agencies who provide diversionary services, for example Remote Community Youth Development Units and diversionary services used by the NT Police as part of the Youth Diversion Program;
- Child protection, out of home care, family violence and sexual assault services;

[4] As of the 1st of January, 2011, this department was split into the Department of Health and Department of Children and Families.

- Volatile Substances Unit, including the administration and monitoring of mandated treatment orders, and other Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) services;
- Implementation and monitoring of the Suicide Prevention Plan and other mental health services and programs, including Headspace.

As mentioned earlier, the Child Protection Inquiry has resulted in the establishment of the new Department of Children and Families, who now has responsibility for all of the above functions, excluding those related to alcohol and other drugs and mental health.

Department of Education and Training

The Department of Education and Training plays a more peripheral, yet equally as important role in the broader justice services continuum. Schools provide both a point of early intervention as well as being a social determinant for preventing offending or re-offending. The following provides an overview of some of the services and programs related to the reduction of juvenile offending and delivered through the Department for Education and Training:

- Is an identified "Appropriate Agency" in relation to the Family Responsibility Program;
- Is a member ("Authorised Officer") of the Interagency Collaboration Panel (ICP);
- Increased resources in the School Attendance and Enrolment Team to enter into Family Responsibility Agreements and Orders with families where persistent truancy is an issue;
- Provision of School Liaison Officers, School Counsellors and School Attendance Officers;
- Student Support Coordination Pilot to improve the wellbeing and engagement of young people in schooling;
- Regional Youth Education Coordination Project for young people at risk of disengagement from school;
- Drug and Personal Safety Awareness Program.

Systems Integration

As indicated previously, the current fragmentation of the youth justice service continuum, and the lack of policy alignment across Government Departments, adds to the complexity of the governance and coordination of the broader system. The lack of a cohesive approach has meant that youth camps are not well integrated with other measures, such as the Youth Diversion Program and the supervision of various legal orders.

It should be noted, however, that both Government and non-government stakeholders reported that the improvements in the integration of services has begun to occur. It appears that the ICP is a key mechanism for assessing the complexity of need and then coordinating services to meet this need. Not only is this likely to improve outcomes for young people and their families involved

with the ICP but it can assist in ensuring the most efficient utilisation of the finite resources deployed as part of the Youth Justice Strategy.

Changes in the Profile of Young Offenders

It is also important to survey the changes that have evolved in relation to the profile of young offenders, some of which have resulted from a change in legislation and policy. Stakeholder feedback indicated that historically the population in detention compromised mainly of young people who had committed repeat "low level" property offences with a significant proportion coming from remote communities. This is no longer the case. From 2002 it was reported that the population became more targeted to young people who had committed more serious crimes and those on remand. The changing demographic and profile of detainees impacted on the delivery of programs. For example the increasing complexity of detainees has meant that there was a lack of appropriate participants for the Wilderness Work Camps resulting in a closure of that program in 2003. Funding for the Wilderness Work Camps was then diverted to the provision of case management services within the detention centre.

The Establishment of Youth Camps in the Northern Territory

Information in relation to the first youth camp was released by the Chief Minister in December of 2007. The youth camp was held at the Hamilton Downs site, and administered by the Department of Justice. Following this a further announcement was made in February 2008 in a media briefing in relation to camps at Talc Head through the Balunu Foundation and the Brahminy Group (at Brahminy Youth Facility, 200km south of Darwin) as part of a "Comprehensive plan to tackle youth crime" (Paul Henderson, 2008). As part of the Youth Justice Strategy, the administration of the youth camps was transferred from the Department of Justice to the former Department of Health and Families. A "Youth Camps Coordinator" was provided responsibility for the management of the contract and associated processes (i.e., referral in some cases) and reports to the Manager of the Youth Justice Support Unit which is a part of the Youth Services Branch of the new Department of Children and Families.

The impetus behind the youth camps occurred at a time of perceived issues with youth gangs and associated violence, which was magnified through the media. This resulted in many demanding a tougher approach in reducing crime and subsequently prompted a call from some politicians for a "boot camp" approach to rehabilitating young people who had been exhibiting anti-social behaviour. The introduction of the youth camps appears to be a compromise from the Government; with a focus on providing young people the opportunity to change their day-to-day environment and learn new coping behaviours. The core intention of the initiative was to reduce the likelihood that young people would re-offend.

In a climate of "Cracking down on Youth Crime" the camps provided a tangible commitment from Government to prevent re-offending and the "revolving door for repeat young offenders" (Northern Territory Government, 2008). Given the political nature associated with the camps, there was considerable expectation in expediting the operationalisation of the camps. There was a sense that the providers that had been approached directly could begin delivering services quickly

based on their existing operations. This, however, appears to have had an impact on the integration with other young offender, diversionary and general wellbeing programs. In addition, the apparent ambiguity as to where the youth camps where "located" in relation to other diversionary services and programs contributed to a lack of clarity regarding the targeting of program participants.

Official Northern Territory Government documentation indicates that the aim of the Youth Rehabilitation Camp program is to:

- Build self esteem and confidence;
- Develop problem solving skills and coping mechanisms;
- Develop personal attitudes towards challenging and negative behaviour;
- Encourage re-engagement with education and youth services;
- Improve life pathways and cease anti-social and criminal activities;
- Improve team work and leadership skills;
- Encourage achievable goal setting;
- Provide fun recreational and educational activities;
- Promote healthy lifestyles and community connectedness;
- Build an understanding of cultural spirituality for Indigenous young people;
- Improve family and community well being; and
- Increase employment opportunities for young people.

Youth Rehabilitation Camps can include some or all of the following:

- Educational and recreational activities;
- Support and mentoring;
- Environmental and outdoor activities that are physically challenging;
- Animal husbandry;
- Community responsibility activities; and/or
- Learning about traditional cultural values and skills.

http://www.safeterritory.nt.gov.au/combating_juvenile_crime/youth_camps.html accessed 5th July 2010

Summary

The Northern Territory's Youth Justice System is informed by a restorative framework but administered by a number of NT Government Departments. This has led to a high degree of fragmentation across the youth justice service continuum, which manifests in a lack of policy alignment across Government Departments and inefficiencies in governance and coordination. The lack of a cohesive approach has meant that youth camps are not well integrated with other measures, such as the Youth Diversion Program and the supervision of various legal orders. The Interagency Collaboration Panel appears to have a central role in bringing increased levels of client centered coordination and planning as well as enhancing the efficiencies in the way resources are deployed.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The Balunu, Brahminy and Tangentyere youth camp programs provide unique, specialist interventions for youth at-risk. The programs are heterogeneous in that they differ markedly in their practice methodology[5], the processes they purport to engage young people, and the interventions they apply to achieve their stated outcomes. Despite this, the programs are underpinned by a number of common features. First, all programs seek to engage and then create change in young people deemed "youth-at-risk", or as also referred to within this report, young people with complex needs[6]. Second, they all apply experiential processes to engage young people and foster attitudinal/behavioural changes. Third, the outdoor/wilderness environment is used to facilitate the change process. Fourth, they seek to challenge and modify young people's attitudes, behavioural patterns or coping responses to support the development of pro-social or adaptive future responses. Finally, they seek to work with young people to generalise these skills to the home environment such that the young people can develop positive connections with family, education, vocational pathways or positive life choices, and reduce their risk for future negative outcomes.

The following literature review is provided to contextualise the role and applications of youth camp interventions. This is understood as it relates to the literature on outdoor-adventure programming, Aboriginal healing interventions and therapeutic residential care programming, as well as summarise the efficacy of such interventions for youth presenting with complex needs. The review is deliberately broad to provide background context to all three service providers. Within the following chapters, pertinent content contained with this literature review is extrapolated to the individual youth camps and it is used to guide the development of summary recommendations. The literature review is divided into the following sections:

- Defining youth-at-risk;
- Developmental context;
- Aboriginal young people;
- The outdoor-adventure literature;
- Aboriginal healing services;
- Therapeutic residential programming;
- Factors mediating program outcomes;
- Best-practice intervention methodology;
- What works: Best-practice youth intervention;

[5] Practice methodology refers to the theoretical and practice frameworks the programs apply to guide the intervention and the delivery of the stated outcomes.
[6] The term "young people with complex needs" is provided in this report to signify young people who are presenting with at-risk behavioural patterns. The authors prefer the reference to "needs" as the term aligns itself to the best-practice intervention methodology (risk, need and responsivity) described in the end of this chapter.

- Summary.

DEFINING YOUTH AT RISK

The three youth camp providers are currently provided NT Government funding to support "at-risk" young people. Within the literature, the terms "youth-at-risk" or "at-risk" young people are used to describe a range of young people and their individual situations. It has been argued that all adolescents are at risk to some degree or another. In support of this, Australian research indicates that it is common for adolescents to engage in low level anti-social behaviour, including alcohol and cigarette use, and skipping school (Smart, Vassallo, Sanson & Dussuyer, 2004). However, Smart et al. indicate that a young person's engagement in multiple forms of antisocial behaviour, or more serious acts, is less usual and is considered more concerning (and arguably more at-risk).

Adolescent psychologists and psychiatrists seek to understand a youth's at-risk behaviour within a broad based framework that examines the individual within the context of their social, family, school, community and cultural environments. Referred to within the literature as an ecological analysis (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), this framework is used throughout this review to operationalise the term "youth-at-risk", as well as provide a context for understanding interventions applied to this cohort.

The term "at-risk", as it is applied to young people, can be linked to a range of behavioural, personal and situational factors present within a young person's life that may impact on a young person's ability to reach their potential. At the broadest level, a young person at-risk may be defined by the behavioural presence of:

- Anti-social behavioural patterns (e.g., stealing, property damage, aggression & violence towards others, lack of respect for others);
- Self-injurious behaviours;
- Distorted eating patterns;
- Sexually promiscuous or at-risk behaviours;
- Alcohol and drug use (and/or abuse);
- Problematic gambling;
- Offending behaviour.

Furthermore, the term may further delineate the way in which a young person relates to the support or interventions from others, as indicated by the presence of:

- Poor help-seeking behaviour;
- Low motivation towards intervention;
- Suspicion and distrust towards authority.

The term may also be applied by the presence of a number of coping responses, presenting mental health problems and personal attributes, including:

- Difficulty managing anger or emotions;
- Low maturity and impaired foresight;
- Mental health problems, including anxiety, depression, behavioural disturbances;
- Low self-esteem or self-efficacy;
- Unresolved post-trauma symptoms;
- Impulsive behavioural traits;
- Poor concentration/attention, restlessness and hyperactivity;
- Poor verbal, non-verbal and literacy skills;

Youth-at-risk may be further defined by the presence of a range of situational or system based factors that include:

- Homelessness;
- Disengagement from family;
- Disengagement from education and school;
- Experience of family violence and abuse;
- Lack of food or basic supplies;
- Financial stress.

In summary, for the purpose of the evaluation, a young person is considered at-risk when:

> *There is the presence of a behaviour, personal attribute, help seeking response or situational factor(s) that has the potential to either negatively impact on a young person's ability to fully express their potential or restrict their future life opportunities.*

It is acknowledged that young people present with different risk profiles. The term "at-risk" is operationalised on a continuum from low to high risk. The majority of youth present with a small number of risk factors, and as such are considered low risk. As the presence of the aforementioned risk factors increase, so does the risk for future negative outcomes (Andrews & Bonta, 1998). Within the Northern Territory there are a number of unique situational and demographic factors which increase the risk profile of children and young people (Bamblett, Bath & Roseby, 2010). For instance, compared to other jurisdictions, Northern Territory children are less likely to reach the minimum standard of numeracy and literacy in Year 5 and "there is a significantly higher percentage of Northern Territory children who are considered developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains" (Bamblett et al., 2010, p. 11).

Furthermore, young people within the youth justice (Day, Howells & Rickwood, 2004) and child protection system (Bamblett et al., 2010) often present with multiple risk factors or with comorbid

presenting problems (e.g., offending, substance use & background child protection issues). As an example, Pritchard and Payne (2005) reported that 46% of Australian juvenile detainees have experienced background abuse or neglect, with 36% of respondents reporting that they have experienced violent abuse.

> *"young people who come to the attention of criminal justice agencies have multiple problems and experience high levels of need across all areas of functioning" (Day, Howells & Rickwood, 2004, p. 1).*

Summary

A young person is considered at-risk where there is a presence of a behaviour, personal attribute, help seeking response or situational factor that has the potential to either negatively impact on a young person's ability to fully express their potential or restrict their future life opportunities. Young people within the child protection and youth justice systems are likely to present with multiple risk factors (and associated needs). There are unique situational and demographic factors that increase the risk profile of young people in the Northern Territory.

DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXT

When seeking to understand the at-risk behavioural patterns of young people, adolescent psychologists and psychiatrists apply a developmental model of assessment. That is, at-risk behaviours are assessed as developing through the interaction of "nature and nurture", or the interplay between biology, socialisation processes (including peers, family, media, community etc.) and culture (see Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Developmental Psychology, 1996, Volume 32, Issue 4; Zahn-Waxler 1996).

There has been increasing interest within the literature to explore the developmental trajectories or pathways (or early developmental experiences) that are the antecedents of at-risk behavioural patterns. Within the literature, the following developmental relationships are noted:

- Delayed early language development is a predictor of later criminal behaviour (Stattin & Klackenberg-Larsson, 1993);
- Early childhood maltreatment is a predictor of juvenile offending (Stewart, Dennison & Waterson, 2002);
- A youth's connectedness to school is a positive predictor of improved mental health, reduction in substance use and increased academic outcomes (Bond et al., 2007), as well as reduction in youth violence (Brookmeyer, Fanti & Henrich, 2006);

- Parent-child connectedness is a predictor of improved emotional-behavioural functioning (Ackard, Neumark-Sztainer, Story & Perry, 2006; Robinson, Power & Allan, 2010); as well as a reduction in youth violence (Brookmeyer et al., 2006);
- Young people leaving the foster care system are at increased risk of future negative outcomes (Ryan, Hernandez & Herz, 2007).

It needs to be acknowledged that the aforementioned linkages are not "causal", in that one factor does not cause another. However, it highlights the importance of considering at-risk behaviours within a developmental framework, and in doing so, identify a number of policy and programming implications that include:

- Early intervention is imperative;
- The incidence of trauma, abuse and neglect needs to be reduced within the family home;
- Positive and responsive parenting practices should be fostered and coached within the community;
- Strong, safe and responsive family relationships need to be encouraged and promoted;
- Children and young people should be supported to develop and maintain positive connections to school, education and future vocational pathways.

Application to Intervention

The developmental model has been increasingly extended to guide the application of treatment interventions, including for young people presenting with complex needs (Weitzman, 2005) and within the youth justice system (Day et al., 2004). In the past decade, this developmental understanding has increasingly sought to integrate knowledge from brain and neuroscience research (see Perry, 2006; 2009), as well as the attachment theory literature (Bacon & Richardson, 2001; Beker-Weidman, 2006; Hughes, 2004). Bruce Perry, a renowned neuroscientist specialising in the area of child and adolescent trauma, advocates a developmental model of intervention titled "neurosequential model of therapeutics". This model promotes individually tailored interventions that consider young people's previous trauma history, resultant brain development and current functioning (Perry, 2006; 2009).

In summary, best-practice therapeutic interventions for young people with complex needs include individualised needs assessments that acknowledge current functioning in the context of historical experiences (attachment & trauma), and interventions that are developmentally matched and implemented in response to this need (Schmied, Brownhill & Walsh, 2006).

Summary

Best-practice therapeutic interventions for young people target developmental needs through holistic assessment and targeted intervention. Fostering a young person's connection to family (where appropriate), culture, school, community and future vocational pathways are associated with a reduction in future at-risk behaviour.

ABORIGINAL YOUNG PEOPLE

Within the Northern Territory, it is estimated that 30.5% of the population identifies themselves as Aboriginal (AIH, 2010). It is universally acknowledged that Aboriginal people have differentially worse outcomes on nearly all health, social, vocational and educational indicators. These outcomes need to be seen in the context of a history of forced colonisation and a range of subsequent government policies and interventions (e.g., stolen generation, assimilation, "Federal Intervention"). Factors that are pertinent to this report include:

- The life expectancy of an Aboriginal is at least 10 years less than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (AIH, 2010);
- Babies born to an Aboriginal woman are twice as likely to be of low birth weight compared to a non-Aboriginal woman (AIH, 2010);
- The Report of Government Services indicates that Aboriginal young people are over-represented within the Northern Territory juvenile detention centres. In the period 2007-08, the average rate of detention of young people aged 10-17 in juvenile detention per 100,000 people was **89.2** (which is above the national average of 35.9). In the same period, the average rate of detention of Aboriginal young people aged 10-17 in juvenile detention per 100,000 people was **196** (which is well below the national average of 456).
- Aboriginal children who have experienced maltreatment are four more times more likely to engage in offending behaviours than non-Aboriginal children (Stewart et al., 2002);
- Aboriginal children are more likely to live in an improvised home, tent or sleep-out (ABS, 2009), and to be subject to overcrowding and associated family stress (Bamblett et al., 2010);
- Aboriginal young people are less likely to complete school, with 29.5% of adult ABS respondents having only completed Year 8 and below (ABS, 2009);
- Family violence and child abuse occur in Aboriginal communities at a rate that is much higher than non-Aboriginal communities (as reviewed by Bamblett et al., 2010).

Within the NT, there is increasing evidence suggesting that there is a group of young people (over-represented by Aboriginal young people) who are repeat offenders who do not respond to traditional diversionary programs. Local research indicates 76% of young people don't re-offend within the first year after diversion or court appearance (Cunningham, 2007). However Cunningham notes that young people who attend court (indicating more serious offending patterns) are likely to re-offend more quickly. Queensland research points to a similar pattern (Allard et al., 2010), suggesting that police diversion interventions are less effective for repeat and over-represented Aboriginal offenders.

In an Australia wide review of diversion and substance abuse programs for Aboriginal young people and adults, Joudo (2008) found that Aboriginal young people, compared to non-Aboriginal young people, are less likely to be accepted into diversion programs. Joudo reported the following anecdotal data to support this disparity:

- Aboriginal young people are less likely to be make an admission of guilt which is a pre-requisite for attending such programs;
- Aboriginal young people are more likely to have had previous criminal convictions;
- Aboriginal young people present with higher levels of symptom comorbidity (including mental health, substance & offending).

Taken on a whole, Allard et al. (2010) suggest that there is a need to employ early intervention programs to reduce Aboriginal over-representation in the youth justice system, as well as intensive multi-systemic interventions when young people become entrenched within the system.

Furthermore, there is increasing support to suggest that mainstream health and well-being services are not able to meet the complex and individualised needs of Aboriginal young people (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation Development Team, 2009; Archibald, 2006) and that Aboriginal people are less likely to engage in mainstream mental health services (Fan, 2007; Vicary, 2002). There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that young people experience high levels of shame ("shame job") when accessing mainstream health and wellbeing services. Furthermore, they are less likely to respond to "talk therapy", and require an intervention framework built upon trust, practical assistance and cultural competence (Fan, 2007). There has been an increasing push for culturally sensitive health and well-being services (Bamblett et al., 2010; Caruana, 2010).

Compared to their non-Aboriginal counterparts, Aboriginal young people present with higher levels of at-risk behaviour and more complex needs. This is indicated by the disproportionate level of behavioural problems, their reduced responsiveness to traditional interventions, and the increased probability that they will experience situational-based factors (e.g., family domestic violence, homelessness etc.) that negatively mediate their ability to reach their potential. This remains a significant challenge to the Northern Territory, and an area of ongoing program and policy development (Bamblett, Bath & Roseby, 2010).

Summary

In comparison to non-Aboriginal young people, Northern Territory Aboriginal young people present with differentially higher levels of at-risk behaviour and associated needs. There is need for additional culturally appropriate, targeted, holistic and need-based interventions for Aboriginal young people and their families.

THE OUTDOOR-ADVENTURE LITERATURE

The Brahminy, Balunu and Tangentyere youth camp programs utilise outdoor, wilderness and adventure-based experiences as mechanisms to facilitate their purported outcomes. Within Australia, outdoor-adventure programming has attracted increasing interest as an intervention for youth-at-risk. While there is strong support that such interventions can have a significant positive effect on this cohort (Wilson & Lipsey, 2000), this has been largely driven by intuitive appeal as opposed to robust research and validation (Heseltine, Mohr & Howells, 2003).

Heterogeneity in Outdoor-Adventure Programming

Outdoor-adventure programming is notably heterogeneous. In other words, there are significant differences in the nature, conduct and content of programming, with this translating to program: length, location, level of remoteness and type of outdoor experience (e.g., independent backpacking versus fixed accommodation). Previous reviews have found that a number of these factors mediate program outcomes (Cason & Gillis, 1994; Wilson & Lipsey, 2000). Both researchers and practitioners have found it difficult to clearly define or operationalise the diverse spectrum of outdoor-adventure programs and interventions, including delineating them from purely recreational or camping-based experiences (Berman & Davis-Berman, 2001; Russell, 2001).

Models Underpinning Outdoor-Adventure Programming

There is currently no universally agreed model for understanding outdoor-adventure programming (Berman & Davis-Berman, 2001; Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994a), which is a reflection of the notable heterogeneity in programming and practice methodology underpinning individual services. For this reason, this review does not include a detailed overview of all programs, but instead, summarises the broad themes and models which have attracted most interest within the literature. Within the chapters relating to each service provider, a detailed overview of each service provider's model is discussed with reference made to the following information.

Broad Processes of Change

Within the literature there is increasing interest to articulate the processes that mediate program outcomes (Russell, 2000). The following aspects have been considered important (adapted from McKenzie, 2000; Russell, 2000):

- **The wilderness/remote environment** – a young person's connection to nature and beauty, as well as the physical challenges found within a remote environment;
- **Facilitator instigated activities** – the facilitator instigates activities that promote skill development, resilience and the experience of success;
- **Natural consequences** - young people experience the consequences for their actions that are instigated through the environment, as opposed externally delivered by adults (e.g., if a young person does not construct adequate shelter at night, they may experience the natural consequence of becoming wet from a rain shower);
- **Time for reflection** – time is given for young people to reflect upon their lives, their decisions, their future actions and their experiences as it relates to their home environment;
- **Safe and non-judgmental relationship with adults** – with the aim of facilitating reflection, learning and skill development.

Dissonance Model

The most established model of understanding outdoor-adventure programming centers on the role of participant dissonance (or disequilibrium) in explaining the modality's purported benefits with youth-at-risk (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994a; Gass, 1993; Reddrop, 1997). This viewpoint suggests that when youth-at-risk are removed from their comfort zones or familiar environment, they undergo a state of dissonance (or an uncomfortable internal state). Through the reappraisal of their dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours, equilibrium can once again be maintained. This shift is likely to be reinforced through the natural consequences (Russell, 2001) and stress-inducing properties (Weston & Tinsley, 1999) of the wilderness environment.

This dissonance-based viewpoint has been furthered by Davis-Berman and Berman (1994a; Berman & Davis-Berman, 1991). Applying a systems theory approach, they suggest that many at-risk youth are characterised by an external locus of control and low self-efficacy. That is, they tend to attribute their destinies, successes and failures to people or situations outside of their control, and share the belief that they do not have the capacity or resources to deal with life events. As the outdoor-adventure environment forces these young people to confront the choices they have made, the only avenue to reduce this state of dissonance is for the young people to take responsibility for their actions and to confront their dysfunctional behaviours. Furthermore, by mastering activities that become incrementally more challenging, the youth not only achieve mastery over their immediate environment, but develop the self-confidence, self-efficacy and internal locus of control that transfer this mastery to their home environment.

Experiential Processes

Outdoor-adventure programming is based upon an experiential model of intervention (Gass, 2003). *Experiential education* is a process of education in which facilitators (or program staff) purposefully support young people to engage with direct experience and reflection to increase knowledge, develop life skills and promote self-awareness. As opposed to verbal or rote learning, where knowledge and skills are transferred through written or verbal means, experiential education involves:

- Program facilitators (or educators) creating opportunities for young people to undertake an experience or activity with a learning goal in mind;
- Program facilitators providing guidance, reflection and feedback to the young person in relation to the young person's performance during the experience, thereby supporting the acquisition of a desired set of knowledge or skill;

To illustrate this concept: the program facilitator may have a young person climb a mountain and at the end of the experience asks the young person to describe how they managed to complete the challenge and what they learnt from the experience.

A related concept is the process of *experiential learning.* This learning process is guided by the young person, where the young person's personal reflection of an experience leads them to create their own personal meaning from that experience. For instance, if a young person climbs a mountain and they feel proud in this achievement, this becomes their personal meaning and narrative of the experience.

Summary Model

Outdoor-adventure programs are likely to achieve beneficial outcomes for youth-at-risk client groups for the following reasons (adapted from Mohr, Heseltine, Howells, Badenoch, Williamson & Parker, 2001 p, 50).

- They remove the participant from a dysfunctional environment and thus the influences and contingencies maintaining dysfunctional conduct;
- They expose the participant to circumstances in which well-established beliefs and dysfunctional behaviour patterns are no longer viable;
- They create an uncomfortable or uncertain internal state (e.g., dissonance) – thus increasing the individual's susceptibility to the influence of models of appropriate conduct and promoting pro-social outcomes;
- They utilise a therapeutic community – i.e., a supportive group setting – in order to enhance the process of change (this section is further extrapolated in the next section).

Program Outcomes

Within the literature there have been a range of problems in evaluating the effectiveness of outdoor-adventure programming (Bedini & Wu, 1994; Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards, 1997; Mohr et al., 2001). This has been due to the: (1) heterogeneous nature of outdoor-adventure programming, (2) differences in the type and level of at-risk behaviour exhibited by individual cliental attending the programs and (3) the lack of methodologically sound research.

Engagement Tool

A consistent qualitative outcome reported within the literature is the capacity of outdoor-adventure programming to engage youth-at-risk within a predominately fun, novel and interesting experience. It has been suggested that the compatibility between youth-at-risk and wilderness programs are due to young people's high degree of energy, affiliation for risk-taking and inclination towards action, as opposed to verbal-orientated programs (Kelly & Baer, 1971). Furthermore, considering wilderness programs are often provided under the guise of adventure and fun, participants do not consider themselves involved in therapeutic intervention, thereby circumventing the barriers and resistance associated with traditional interventions. As summarised by Raymond (2004):

> *"wilderness therapy affords the opportunity to both work with and overcome many of the barriers associated with the engagement of marginalised youth. It provides a 'window of opportunity', or catalyst for change, by which young people can be engaged and sustained within a therapeutically conducive environment that is advantageous to future positive outcomes."*

Meta-Analytic Reviews

In addition to promoting engagement (Raymond, 2003; 2004; Raymond & Knuckey, 2006), there is preliminary evidence that outdoor-adventure programming can reduce the risk of future negative outcomes, for instance reduce a young person's risk of becoming marginalised from the school system or engaging in future criminal behaviour (Castellano & Soderstrom, 1992; Mohr et al., 2001; Raymond, 2003; 2004)

This review has chosen not to summarise individual program outcomes from Australian or international outdoor-adventure programming. Considering the heterogeneity of programming, there is significant difficulty in comparing external programs with the three service providers. Instead, four meta-analytic studies on outdoor-adventure programming are reviewed. Meta-analysis is a statistical method of summarising the results of a large number of empirical or evaluation studies of outdoor-adventure programming. These results can be considered quite robust and are generally reported as effect sizes, which is a standardised measure of the difference between two means[7]. To the authors' knowledge, four meta-analytic reviews of outdoor-adventure programs have been conducted (Bedard, Rosen & Vacha-Haase, 2003; Cason & Gillis, 1994; Hattie et al., 1997; Wilson & Lipsey, 2000).

Cason and Gillis (1994) examined 43 studies and reported a mean effect size of 0.31 for adolescent populations. Hattie et al. (1997) used an educational model to report a mean effect size of 0.21 for adolescent school students, with adult populations demonstrating consistently stronger effect sizes (d = 0.38). The meta-analysis most pertinent to this report was conducted by Wilson and Lipsey (2000). This meta-analysis was in response to the number of shortcomings within the previous two, notably their focus on non-behavioural outcomes (e.g., self-esteem, locus of control), and their inclusion of all subject types and single treatment studies. Adopting a rigorous methodology, they only included studies that targeted juvenile delinquency and had a matched or equivalent comparison group. Of the 22 studies they reviewed, they found a small positive effect (d = 0.18). Wilson and Lipsey (2000) found that wilderness therapy was related to a small reduction in antisocial behaviour (d = 0.24) and increased school adjustment (d = 0.30). Using a youth-at-risk population group, Bedard, et al. (2003) replicated Wilson and Lipsey's results but achieved slightly larger effect sizes (moderate range). Taken on a whole, there is moderately strong support that wilderness-adventure programming can have a small to moderate impact on the psychological and behavioural functioning of youth-at-risk.

Generalisability of Outcomes

One of the strong challenges to the outdoor-adventure discipline relates to the long-term efficacy of participant outcomes (Mason & Wilson, 1998). There are a number of studies suggesting that participant outcomes regress back to pretest functioning (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994b; Durgin & McEwen). Durgin and McEwen (1991) noted that participant changes "are soon lost in the struggle against poor family interactions and negative community environments" (p. 34). This has led to increasing interest and need within the field to develop and implement techniques that promote experience generalisation and transference (Gass, 1993; Luckner & Nadler, 1995; Priest & Gass, 1994).

[7] The effect sizes in this article are presented using *Cohen's d*. Small, medium and large effect sizes are denoted by d = .20, d = .50 and d = .80, respectfully (Cohen, 1992).

Summary

It is widely regarded that outdoor-adventure programming is not a panacea for youth crime and all at-risk behaviour. In their meta-analytic review, Hattie et al. (1997, p. 70) found that "only some programs are effective, and then only on some outcomes, and it is probable that only parts of the programs are influencing these outcomes". Differences within program type, length and composition, along with differences in client characteristics (e.g., sex, age & attitudes) will impact on program outcomes. A number of practitioners have raised questions in relation to the generalisability of participant outcomes, notably when there is no after program provision. Despite this, there is strong support that conceptually sound outdoor-adventure programs, which have a focus on generalising program outcomes, offer utility within the spectrum of youth service provision.

ABORIGINAL HEALING SERVICES

The Brahminy, Tangentyere and Balunu youth camps all integrate culturally specific healing processes (to varying degrees) with their program models. There has been recent interest within Australia to explore and implement cultural healing services for Aboriginal people. The Federal Government (Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs) recently convened a group to explore the future provision of a Healing Foundation to guide the Australian development of this model of service. The report produced by this group recommended the development of a Healing Foundation to:

> *"address the transgenerational cycle of trauma and grief in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as a result of colonisation, forced removals and other past government policies" (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation Development Team, 2009, p. xii).*

As an extension of this increased interest, a recent edition of the *Family Relationships Quarterly* (Number 17, 2010) devoted its coverage to describing a number of Aboriginal healing programs and interventions.

The development and implementation of Aboriginal healing interventions have been well established within Canada, with there being broad-based support for their utility and ongoing application (Archibald, 2006). The support for such programming is based primarily upon qualitative research and anecdotal feedback, with there being no robust evaluations that support their role as an evidence-based intervention.

In recent times, an increasing number of healing services and interventions have been developed in Australia (for overview see Caruana, 2010). This increased interest has spawned from the following considerations (adapted from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation Development Team, 2009; Archibald, 2006; Caruana, 2010):

- Traditional, western-based, mental health services lack the capacity to engage Aboriginal young people;

- Western psychological interventions have a tendency to pathalogise Aboriginal problems and focus on an individualistic intervention style, whereas Aboriginal young people require a collective, culturally appropriate and less stigmatising (reducing shame) intervention approach;
- Interventions applied to Aboriginal young people need to address the collective and historical trauma related to colonisation, and past policies and interventions (including stolen generation).

At present there is no consistent conceptual model guiding the development or implementation of the healing model. Programs tend to be locally developed and implemented in response to local needs (Larkins, 2010). At noted by Caruana:

> *"Given the complexity and diversity of needs in Indigenous communities, 'healing' will mean different things to different people, spanning sectors such as mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, family violence, child protection, addictions, sexual abuse, justice and corrections. However, there is a degree of consensus in the literature that healing relates to the personal journey of individuals, families and communities dealing with trauma caused by past policies and current disadvantage"* (Caruana, 2010, p. 5).

Based upon this, Caruana (2010) summarises the following components as underpinning Indigenous healing:

- Indigenous ownership, design and evaluation of services;
- Holistic and multi-disciplinary approach that addresses the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual needs, with a focus on connectedness to spirituality, environment, community and family;
- Culture and spirituality are at the centre of intervention;
- Informed by history and acknowledging the source of collective as opposed to individual trauma;
- Applying a positive, strength-based approach that values the resilience of Aboriginal people;
- Preventative and therapeutic strategies that are applied in a preventative as opposed to reactive manner;
- Commitment to healing as a process that takes time, as opposed to it just being an event;
- Commitment to adaptability, flexibility and innovation in their approach;
- Application of intervention approaches suited to Aboriginal people, including narrative therapy, group processing and application of traditional healers.

There are small but increasing levels of anecdotal evidence supporting the utility of healing programs for Aboriginal young people. Larkins (2010) notes that a significant protective factor for youth-at-risk is "connecting to culture" (and positive identity development) which he states is

under threat from colonisation, family breakdown, the increased influence of a global culture and historical issues such as the stolen generation. Larkins (2010) provides anecdotal support suggesting that young people who have attended healing camps with local elders "feel strengthened in their identity and sense of self" (p. 11), which translates to a positive impact on self-esteem.

Summary

The development, implementation and evaluation of culturally specific healing programs for Aboriginal young people are largely in their infancy within Australia. While there are a number of programs currently being delivered, they are at different states of development. Current programs have been largely developed in respect to local needs, and consider the role of positive cultural identity development within their model of intervention to foster behavioural outcomes. While such programs have intuitive appeal, and there is strong but preliminary support for their value, ongoing evaluation is required to more fully understand the extent of their utility within youth service provision, as well as the processes by which changes in cultural identity translate to behavioural outcomes.

THERAPEUTIC RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMMING

The Brahminy, Balunu and Tangentyere youth camps offer a residentially delivered program which is applied with therapeutic intent. There is a diversity of residential programs (and associated program models) that are delivered with purported therapeutic intent. It is beyond the scope of this report to review all programs and interventions, instead this review restricts itself to understanding the broad processes underpinning this intervention model.

Therapeutic Communities

A "therapeutic community" is the title provided to a group-based rehabilitation program that provides skills-training, education and group-directed therapeutic support, where the principal agent of intervention is the community or group process. Such programs have been applied to children and adolescents, chronic and acute psychosis patients, offenders and individuals with learning disabilities (for review see Kennard, 2004).

The therapeutic community is considered a "living-learning situation"; "where everything that happens between members (staff and patients) in the course of living and working together, in particular when a crisis occurs, is used as a learning opportunity (Kennard, 2004, p. 296). Kennard suggests that every staff member, patient, available resource and family member is pooled together to further the treatment process. The community provides a range of situations and experiences for individuals to practice and consolidate new skills, and in the process reflect upon these skills for uptake in their own life.

In her review of juvenile offender interventions, Sallybanks (2002) reports that the majority of therapeutic community programs have been delivered within the United States primarily to

address drug and alcohol problems. Sallybanks provides preliminary evidence which suggests that such programs have led to significant reductions in alcohol and other drug use, as well as improvements in criminal activity and educational achievement (at 6 month post-treatment).

An extension of the therapeutic community is the "Sanctuary Model®" which has been developed by American psychiatrist Dr Sandra Bloom for clients with backgrounds of trauma within a psychiatric setting. The Sanctuary Model utilises restorative approaches which is "working with people instead of doing things to them or for them" (Mirsky, 2010). Important principles underpinning this approach include (Mirsky, 2010; Rivard, Bloom, McCorkle & Abramovitz, 2005):

- Safety and non-violence;
- Modelling healthy relationships among community members;
- Young people are "hurt", as opposed to being "sick and violent";
- Everyone in the system (staff and clients) is important;
- Everyone (staff and clients) has a role to support each other to provide therapeutic support.

The program model suggests "that within the context of safe, supportive, stable and socially responsible therapeutic communities, a trauma recovery treatment framework could be used to teach effective adaptation and coping skills to replace non-adaptive cognitive, social, and behavioural strategies acquired as a means of coping with traumatic life experiences (Rivard et al., 2005, p. 93). Preliminary evidence supports the utility of the intervention for young people (Rivard, Bloom, McCorkle & Abramovitz, 2005), although it is noted that the evaluation was conducted by the program founders.

In reviewing the utility of therapeutic community program options for young people with offending histories, Sallybanks notes that the process of "removing a young person from their familiar environment and providing no aftercare when they return to their community is relatively ineffective" (2002, p. 38).

Residential Programming

Within Australia there are a large number of residential programs that are delivered to young people under the auspice of health, justice and community service perspectives (Ainsworth, 2007). While acknowledging that there are mixed views regarding the utility of residential programming, Ainsworth (2001) suggests that residential programs "when carefully planned and professionally managed, have a place in the continuum of child and family services". While citing both Australian and international evidence to support their utility, Ainsworth provides a number of caveats to their wholesale application:

- **Participant selection** - "Given the high cost of residential programs…it is important that these programs are highly specialised and only available to a rigorously selected group of children and young people" (Ainsworth, 2007, p. 33).

- **Conceptual model** - "there must also be a clear structure and set of processes by which the theory is translated into the behaviour change objectives that the program seeks to pursue" (Ainsworth, 2007, p. 34). In effect, "a residential education or treatment program has to have a 24/7 curriculum that sets out the place and timing of program events and the activities that children and young people will pursue in order to achieve the behaviour change objective against which they were selected as program participants. These are all matters which must carefully match the program objectives and the desired measurable outcomes" (p. 34).

- **Quality staff, training and support -** The role, quality, training capacity and function of staff teams are central to the success achieved within residential programming (Ainsworth, 2007), with some suggesting the need for increasing professionalism within the field (Beker, 2001).

In review of Australian residential programs, Ainsworth comments that "what is important for program effectiveness and the prevention of abuse is that a program must be carefully designed and the program function must be clear. If the function is not clear, then the staff will be confused and the program objectives will not be achieved. The potential for abusive practices also increases." (2007, p. 33). The NT Children's Protection Inquiry has made a recommendation for there to be better monitoring of children and young people in the care system (Bamblett et al., 2010). International trends, supported by the recent Children's Protection Inquiry, are moving towards the application of intensive therapeutic residential services which includes theoretically driven and empirically evaluated interventions (Bamblett et al., 2010; Delfabbro & Osborn, 2005). Therapeutic interventions are likely to include the following features:

- Fostering play and fun that occur through shared activities and interactions have been found to promote positive staff-client relationships (Raymond & Heseltine, 2009), and this has been linked to promoting the healing and recovery of young people with backgrounds of trauma (Perry, Hogan & Marlin, 2000);

- Include the implementation of individualised needs assessments, based upon a developmental model of assessment (Schmied et al., 2006) that acknowledge current functioning in the context of historical experiences (including attachment and trauma);

- Implementation of individually tailored interventions that consider a young person's previous trauma history, resultant brain development and current developmental functioning (Perry, 2006; 2009);

- Awareness and acknowledgement of role of transference and counter-transference between young people and youth workers within intervention (see Dozier, Cue & Barnett, 1994);

- Tailoring the interventions to the personality and temperament of the young person (Smart, 2007).

Summary

Residential programming continues to be extensively applied within continuum of youth services. In the past decade there has been increasing interest to professionalise the service provision, as well as integrate best practice and developmentally targeted therapeutic services. This has sought to better match the intervention to the needs of young people and minimise the risk of abusive practices. There is preliminary but consistent evidence to support the utility of therapeutic communities as an intervention for young people providing they include an aftercare service.

FACTORS MEDIATING PROGRAM OUTCOMES

It is widely accepted that not all outdoor-adventure programs are equally efficacious, nor do all young people respond equally well to such program options (Hattie et al., 1997; Raymond, 2004). Therefore, understanding the factors that mediate or predict program outcomes are important areas of consideration.

Outdoor-Adventure Programming

A review by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC Crime Reduction Matters, 2006) found that the following components of wilderness-adventure programming are likely to foster program success:

- "Thorough assessment and ongoing monitoring of participants;
- A risk management assessment of activities and screening of program staff;
- Multi-modal treatments with a cognitive-behavioural orientation, e.g. behaviour modification techniques, drug and alcohol programs;
- Addressing specific criminogenic needs, e.g., attitudes towards offending, peer groups, family problems, drug and alcohol use, anger and violence problems;
- Meaningful and substantial contact between participants and treatment personnel; and,
- Inclusion of an aftercare component".

Furthermore, the Australian Institute of Crime (AIC) reports that wilderness interventions for Aboriginal young people should be conducted in a culturally appropriate manner, and involve staff who can successfully engage this cohort.

The review of the outdoor-adventure literature indicates that there are a range of program specific and client factors that impact on program outcomes:

- **Program length** – there is conflicting research on the role of program length on participant outcomes. In their meta-analysis, Wilson and Lipsey (2000) found shorter programs were more effective, while Cason and Gillis (1994) found the opposite relationship;
- **Therapeutic component -** Programs that include a distinct therapeutic component (e.g., individual and group counselling, therapeutic group discussions) have been found to be more effective (Wilson & Lipsey, 2000);
- **Program intensity** – intensive programs (e.g., including strenuous solo and group expeditions) have been shown to produce greater participant outcomes (Wilson & Lipsey, 2000);
- **Best-practice processes** – there is strong evidence that outdoor-adventure programs that are closely aligned to best-practice criteria are in the best position to achieve their stated outcomes (Mohr et al., 2001);
- **Established programming** - Wilson and Lipsey (2000) found that established programs were more effective;
- **Age of participant** – there is preliminary research suggesting that younger participants may benefit more from outdoor-adventure programming (Cason & Gillis, 1994);
- **Defining features** – there is anecdotal support that programs that include "defining features" or significant challenges which are met by participants foster greater improvements in self-esteem;
- **Skilled facilitation** – program facilitators that foster safe, trusting and responsive relationships with their participants, as well as offer tailored learning experiences, are considered in the best position to achieve desired program outcomes (McKenzie, 2000);
- **Aftercare support and the application of experience generalisation techniques –** these are considered central to promoting the increased uptake and longevity of outcomes (Gass, 1993; Luckner & Nadler, 1995);
- **Cohesive narrative of experience –** interventions that offer participants a story or narrative that captures their wilderness experience have been anecdotally found to be beneficial (Luckner & Nadler, 1995).

Programming Risks

The bottom line of all interventions involving young people is the requirement of "do no harm". It needs to be acknowledged that all youth service provision poses some risk to the emotional and physical safety of young people which must be acknowledged and managed. However, such risks have the potential to be magnified with interventions that occur in remote locations and in situations where young people and program staff are under stress. The potential risks posed by such programs to young people include:

- Abusive or uninformed staff practices;
- Participants being physically or emotionally abandoned within a remote location without adult support and/or reassurance;
- Bullying and peer isolation within the group (Schmied et al., 2006);
- Physical dangers that relate to the implementation of challenging, physically demanding and adventure-based activities in remote locations.

A feature of outdoor-adventure programming is the dynamic nature of "risk". Within remote and outdoor locations there are a range of risks (e.g., dehydration, potential weapons, becoming lost) that cannot be fully mitigated. These are magnified with youth-at-risk cohorts. Therefore, it is important that agencies have adequate policies and procedures, and associated staff induction and training that addresses the dynamic nature of risk, notably in the context of young people who present with challenging behaviours or complex needs.

Outdoor-adventure programs also offer a number of distinct challenges to the staff teams. Recent Australian research indicates that program staff may experience psychological distress either during or after program attendance (Lawrence-Wood & Raymond, in press).

There are also other risks involved in the application of group-based programming. Group programs may have a "cross-contamination" effect where participants are exposed to other participants' negative attitudes (e.g., negative attitudes to relationships) or behaviours (e.g., smoking cigarettes, disrespect to others). Over the course of the program such behaviours may become role-modeled by peers, rehearsed and then positively reinforced by the peer group; thereby fostering the learning of pro-deviancy expressions that extend back to the home environment. Cited within the literature as "peer deviancy training", this has been found to develop most readily within less structured programming (Gottfredson, 2009). Furthermore, many youth programs strive to promote teamwork and cohesive peer groups. There is a risk that peer groups developed within the program will continue post-program which has the potential to lead to the increased expression of pro-deviancy attitudes and behaviours within the home environment.

Summary

Youth interventions and programs need to consider the variety of factors that mediate program outcomes, as identified through ongoing program evaluation and reviews of the literature. This section has highlighted a number of potential mediating factors, which will be expanded in future sections. Program developers need to consider that all programs have the potential to be harmful to young people. Owing to the dynamic nature of "risk", potential risks must be continually monitored, acknowledged and appropriately risk managed.

BEST-PRACTICE INTERVENTION METHODOLOGY

Taken on a whole, the outdoor-adventure, healing and residential programming discipline has been largely based upon loosely defined conceptual models, with program development largely guided by anecdotal or qualitative research methodologies. There is increasing interest within government policy, state based reviews of service provision (e.g., Bamblett et al., 2010) and the literature to align youth service provision against evidence-informed models of intervention.

The forensic psychology discipline has developed a strong reputation for conducting robust and evidence-based assessments and interventions (Day & Howells, 2002). In the past two decades a theoretical and practice framework has emerged that describes the best principles (or "what works") for offender rehabilitation. Aligned to the Canadian researchers Andrews, Bonta and colleagues (see Andrews & Bonta, 1998), the model is based upon the principles of *risk*, *need*, and *responsivity.* This tripartite model is seen as one the most significant advances in both adult and juvenile offender rehabilitation (Andrews, Bonta & Hoge, 1990; Day & Howells, 2002; Dowden & Andrews, 1999). The model has been previously applied to understand and evaluate other Australian-based wilderness-adventure programs (Mohr et al., 2001; Raymond, 2003) and it is being increasingly integrated within a number of Australian juvenile justice services (Day, Howells & Rickwood, 2004), including within the Northern Territory.

The tripartite model (risk, need & responsivity) is provided as a best-practice model of intervention, and within this report, will be used to:

- Understand at-risk behaviours in young people, including the "targets of change" to foster positive outcomes;
- Guide the development of the evaluation methodology and interpretation of evaluation findings;
- Guide the review the youth camp program models;
- Guide the formulation of the summary recommendations.

The following provides an examination of each of the principles and their relationship to outdoor-adventure programming.

Risk Principle

The "*risk principle*" suggests that for interventions to be effective, they should target individuals who are at the highest risk of future offending or at-risk behaviour. Risk includes factors that are related to the increased propensity for *at-risk* or criminal behaviour. These factors cannot be modified through intervention as they are considered static, and should be identified within the process of participant selection.

A number of important predictors have emerged within the literature as it relates to the risk of future offending, these include (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Cottle, Lee & Heilbrun, 2001; Simourd, Hoge, Andrews & Leschied, 1994):

- Prior offending behaviour;

- Type of offence;
- Age of first offence;
- Number of prior commitments;
- Sex and race;
- Socio-economic status;
- Previous abuse;

The *risk principle* suggests that the higher the risk of future problematic behaviour, the more intense the intervention required. In relation to outdoor-adventure interventions, this principle suggests that the intensity of intervention should be matched to the needs of the participants. In other words, program effectiveness is maximised when intensive interventions target young people at highest risk of engaging in an at-risk behaviour, with minimal interventionist approaches used for first time-offenders or young people presenting with less risk (Day, Howells & Rickwood, 2004; Sallybanks, 2002).

Need Principle

According to the "*need principle*", interventions should target the factors (or needs) that directly mediate the future at-risk or dysfunctional behaviour. Needs include the attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours that an individual uses to support and maintain offending or at-risk behaviour (Andrews & Bonta, 1998). Within the forensic context, needs (titled "criminogenic needs") are summarised around six domains: criminal associates, pro-criminal attitudes, substance abuse, antisocial personality, dysfunctional problem solving skills and hostility-anger. Unlike the principle of risk, these factors are dynamic or malleable to intervention. For this reason, "needs" form the immediate goals of intervention, as well as provide the means to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions (Bonta, 1996).

Table 1 provides a summary of a range of at-risk behaviours (and issues experienced by young people) and the "needs" that underpin those behaviours. It has been developed by the research team, and it should be acknowledged that this is not an exhaustive list of all "needs" that mediate the expression of behaviour, however, it is provided to support the reader understand the relationship between at-risk behaviour and need:

Table 1. Needs underpinning behaviour

Behaviour/Issue	Needs
Reducing Offending	Reducing contact with criminal associates Reducing substance use and impulsivity Improving problem solving skills Reducing hostility and anger Challenging pro-criminal attitudes or rationalisations Targeting anti-social attitudes
Substance Use	Assertiveness training Improving problem solving skills and stress management capacity Improving self-esteem (including thoughts about self and future) Suitable education Opportunities for withdrawal Reducing contact with other substance users
Targeting unresolved trauma responses	Graduated re-experiencing of trauma in a safe and controlled manner Cognitive reframing of the trauma experience Reducing avoidance behaviour relating to trauma Improving self-esteem (including thoughts about self and future) The provision of safe and responsive adult-child relationships Rebuilding of trust and safety within relationships
Suicidal ideation	Stress management Improving problem solving skills Social support and monitoring Family capacity building and parent-child connectedness Improving self-esteem (including thoughts about self and future) Development of alternative coping responses Reducing substance use
Improving school engagement	Improving emotional regulation skills, reducing impulsivity Improving concentration and attention Improving resilience or capacity to deal with failure Improving self-esteem (including thoughts about self and future) Improving positive risk taking or trying new activities Improving social and conflict resolution skills Improving self-efficacy and self-esteem Challenging negative attitudes to teachers and schools Challenging attitudes to swearing

Responsivity Principle

The principle of responsivity is considered the catalyst of treatment provision (Bonta, 1996). It concerns the program or client traits that mediate the effectiveness of intervention (or outcomes). Within the forensic literature responsivity factors include: age, gender, learning styles, motivation, personality, emotional expression, interests, cognitive abilities, mental illness and social skills (Bonta, 1996). Responsivity seeks to understand the "processes" of youth programming that mediate program outcomes. These have been previously summarised in the section "Factors Mediating Program Outcomes". Pertinent responsivity factors are identified below.

Engagement

As noted, one of the strengths of outdoor-adventure programming is the capacity of the discipline to engage and sustain young people within a therapeutically conducive environment and overcome the barriers associated with the engagement of this cohort (Raymond, 2004). This remains a significant strength of the outdoor-adventure discipline which aids intervention responsiveness.

Learning Style

An important intervention consideration relates to the learning style of the young person. Outdoor-adventure programs have an inclination towards action (or experiential), as opposed to verbal-orientated learning (Kelly & Baer, 1971). As many school-based learning environments have been negative experiences for youth-at-risk, the action (or experiential learning) environment creates the opportunity for young people to experience success and mastery.

Cognitive Capacity

A further responsivity factor relates to an individual's cognitive capacity. Adolescents have underdeveloped higher order cognitive skills (e.g., regulation of impulses and emotions) (Blakemore & Choudhury, 2006). For young people with backgrounds of early developmental trauma, abuse or violence, this can manifest in functional impairments in brain functioning (Perry, 1997; 2001). Perry notes that early trauma and abuse may lead to the development of a range of coping responses which include over-arousal (anger, aggression, violence) and dissociative behavioural states. Such coping responses have the potential to manifest in the remote/wilderness environment, notably when young people are under stress, which can impact on an individual's responsiveness to intervention. This remains a dynamic risk factor that must be managed through policies and procedures.

Motivation for Change

Young people don't respond uniformly to interventions. A factor found to strongly influence the efficacy of the intervention process is motivation for change, or the capacity of a young person to critically reflect upon their current behavioural actions, develop realistic forward goals, explore future pathways and take committed action to achieve desired outcomes. Hemphill and Howell (2000) suggest that adolescent offenders may display low motivation for change. Young people who demonstrate low motivation for change are likely to benefit more from interventions designed to support treatment responsiveness (Prochaska, DiClemente & Norcoss, 1992). Prochaska and colleagues have developed a model which operationalises the change process and guides the application of intervention. This model has been applied to addictive behaviours (Prochaska et

al., 1992), juvenile offenders (Hemphill & Howell, 2000), and mental health disorders and health promotion (Treatment Protocol Project, 2004). It is increasingly being applied within Australian adult justice systems. Furthermore, the model is regarded as an evidence-based intervention that is supported by Headspace, an Australian-based youth mental health agency (operating in Darwin and Alice Springs), as well as is applied within a number of NT Government agencies (including the former Department of Health & Families, Department of Justice) to guide local practice and intervention.

The model is comprised of five distinct stages:

- **Pre-contemplation** – young people either ignore or are unaware of their problems;
- **Contemplation** – young people are aware of their problems, but are not yet ready to take committed action to changing their situation;
- **Preparation** – young people have instigated small behavioural changes (e.g., developed a plan or set of forward goals) in the intent of taking committed action in the future;
- **Action** – young people are actively engaged in actions designed to modify their behaviour;
- **Maintenance** – a stage characterised by preventing relapse and consolidating progress.

Each of the aforementioned stages has a corresponding intervention approach. Motivational interviewing (or strategies designed to motivate young people) are applied for young people presenting in the pre-contemplative and contemplative stages, while action orientated strategies are implemented at the other stages (Treatment Protocol Project, 2004).

In a pilot study, Raymond (2003) explored the application of this model to the evaluation of the Operation Flinders wilderness-adventure program in South Australia. He found that participant pre-program motivation levels were associated with a consistent pattern of larger program effective sizes or program outcomes (p. > .05)[8]. Furthermore, he found that "responsiveness to change" (factor encompassing problem awareness and willingness to change) was linked to larger effect sizes on behavioural and anger measures, with less consistency on the cognitive measures (p. > .05).

[8] p. > .05 result is statistically non-significant, meaning that it cannot be ruled out that the result was due to chance factors.

Summary

The forensic psychology paradigm, encompassing risk, need and responsivity, is considered an evidence-informed and robust framework to:

- Operationalise a best-practice change process as it relates to targeting interventions to the "needs" underpinning at-risk behaviour in young people;
- Consider the type and level of intervention intensity based upon a young person's risk profile;
- Review both the intervention and participant (e.g., motivation, responsiveness to change) factors that mediate program outcomes;
- Guide the evaluation methodology and review of the three service providers.

WHAT WORKS: SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICE YOUTH INTERVENTION

Review of Literature

Sallybanks (2002), in "*What works in reducing young people's involvement in crime: Review of current literature on crime prevention*", produced by the Australian Institute of Criminology, conducted an international review of juvenile offender interventions. Table 2 provides a summary of the findings (as consolidated by the authors):

Table 2.

Effective	Preliminary Support	No Support/Ineffective
Social competence training or skill-based interventions based upon a cognitive-behavioural framework	Mentoring interventions	Employment programs
School engagement	Cautioning	Intensive supervised probation
Family conferencing and mediation	Recreational programs (short term impact)	Peer mediation
Multi-system therapy (MST)	Youth drug courts	Boot camps (with no therapeutic component)
	Therapeutic communities	Removing young people from familiar environment with no aftercare

The review found that skill-based interventions based upon a cognitive-behavioural framework, interventions targeting school engagement, diversionary programs that include family

conferencing, and multi-system therapy had the strongest support for their efficacy. For young people presenting with the most complex needs, multi-system therapy (MST) is regarded as a comprehensive, holistic and evidence-based intervention which aims at working at all social systems relevant to the individual (Allard, Ogilvie & Stewart, 2007; Sallybanks, 2002; Schmied et al., 2006). Within a number of Australian jurisdictions, this model is increasingly being applied through the application of intensive supervision and case management. A case management approach has been shown to be effective:

> *"where agencies work together…however it has been shown to be less effective when the intervention is simply frequent contact with the youth" (Sallybanks, 2002, p. 21).*

As suggested by the statement, the importance of interagency collaboration has been highlighted within the recent NT Children Protection Inquiry (Bamblett et al., 2010). Furthermore, it has been noted that case management programs that lack an understanding about their definition or service parameters, including the level of intensity and support provided, has potential to compromise program integrity and intervention outcomes (Schmied et al., 2006). For this reason, case management as an intervention should be guided by a clear conceptual program model.

Best Practice Criteria

There is increasing interest to articulate the programming components that foster successful outcomes. The following is a set of best-practice youth programming criteria which is adapted from background reviews (Antonowicz & Ross, 1994; Sallybanks, 2002; Schmied, Brownhill & Walsh, 2006), as well as a consolidation of aforementioned literature review:

- **Sound conceptual model with clear aims and objectives** – with models based upon a cognitive behavioural model are found to be most effective in forensic settings (Antonowicz & Ross, 1994);
- **Multi-faceted programming** - which include a variety of techniques within the intervention strategy;
- **Interventions that target multiple assessed "needs"** – as opposed to addressing one need per intervention, multiple assessed needs (which the evidence links to behaviour) should be targeted;
- **Interventions that uphold responsivity principle** - where the intervention is matched to the learning style, motivation and interests of the participant;
- **Holistic interventions** - interventions that embed themselves across settings (or systems), for instance, school, family, peers and community; with a special focus on keeping young people connected to school and/or embedding interventions within school;
- **Well-trained, skilled staff who are well supported and supervised;**
- **Skills-based training (social competence training)** – training which is based upon a cognitive-behavioural framework which supports young people to reframe their thinking; promote empathy, moral reasoning and social skills development; and target adaptive

problem solving and decision making skills. Such an intervention should be based upon a process of modeling, graduated practice, rehearsal, role-playing, reinforcement and feedback;

- **Program integrity** – where the program is delivered in a consistent manner which supports replication and evaluation, and ongoing program review and development. This "refers to the extent to which an intervention program is delivered in practice as intended in theory and design" (Day, Howells & Rickwood, 2004, p.2);
- **Delivered in a culturally specific manner** – this includes consideration of the following factors (AIC, 2004, Crime Prevention Matters, No. 25)
    - The program must be culturally appropriate in that it reflects the "traditions and values of the local community";
    - Community involvement and ownership of programs is required – where community members inform the program's strategies and philosophies;
    - There is a need for "shared responsibility" between community and government.

Chapter Summary

A young person is considered at-risk where there is a presence of a behaviour, personal attribute, help seeking response or situational factor that has the potential to either negatively impact on a young person's ability to fully express their potential or restrict their future life opportunities.

The understanding of youth at risk needs to occur through a holistic and developmental model which includes the assessment of biological, social, emotional, physical, cultural, identity, cognitive and spiritual domains. In comparison to non-Aboriginal young people, Northern Territory's Aboriginal young people present with differentially higher levels of at-risk behaviour. A number of questions have been raised in relation to the effectiveness of current services and youth justice interventions to respond effectively to Aboriginal young people, notably for Aboriginal young people who present with high needs or engrained offending behaviour. There is a need to consider culturally appropriate, targeted, holistic and need-based intervention services for Aboriginal young people and their families.

There is much optimism that interventions based upon a youth camp model, encompassing features of healing, residential camping and outdoor-adventure programming, offer utility within the continuum of youth services for youth-at-risk. A review of the literature indicates notable heterogeneity of interventions and program models, all at various stages of development. Program effectiveness is mediated by a range of factors linked to program, staffing and participant profiles. Considering this, there is a need to evaluate youth camp programs on a case-by-case basis that considers the relationship between individual program model, participant profile and purported outcomes.

The forensic psychology paradigm of risk, need and responsivity represents an evidence-based model to formulate an understanding of youth-at-risk, guide the evaluation methodology and review individual youth camp service models. This model provides foundational guidance to "what works" for young people presenting with at-risk behaviour.

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CHAPTER 3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

PRINCIPLES INFORMING EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The research team sought to implement a robust evaluation methodology that could respond to the unique challenges posed by evaluating outdoor-adventure programming for youth-at-risk cohorts, as well as to conduct both an outcome and process analysis of programs that have had limited exposure to independent evaluation. In developing an evaluation methodology, the following aspects were considered:

The Case for a Robust, Reliable and Valid Evaluation Framework

Throughout the outdoor-adventure literature serious questions have been raised regarding the validity of the research (Hattie et al., 1997). An overwhelming majority of historical evaluations have not been theory driven, had weak measurements, lacked methodological rigor, and reliability and validity measures were often overlooked (Bedini & Wu, 1994; Newes 2001). A common finding within the literature has been the tendency for researchers to evaluate program outcomes, as opposed to understanding the processes or variables that mediate these outcomes (Hattie et al., 1997; Russell, 2000).

In relation to the current evaluation process, the evaluation model had to respond to the following issues:

- Significant variability in the three programs (e.g., content, application); including program models, client groups (needs and behaviours) and purported outcomes;
- The need to employ a consistent, reliable and valid evaluation framework, where conclusions were only drawn on the basis of evidence gathered, with consideration given to the limitations of the evidence gathering process;
- To add to the body of knowledge of the individual service providers, thereby supporting ongoing program development;
- Identified need to understand both the outcomes and processes as it relates to each service provider.

To guide the development of the evaluation methodology, it was acknowledged that empirically validated and best-practice evaluation frameworks included the following components (adapted from Mohr et al., 2001; Raymond, 2004; Reddrop, 1997; Weston & Tinsley, 1999):

- The use of a randomly selected control group;
- Multi-level assessment that included both outcome and process-orientated measures;
- An appropriate sample size for the analysis undertaken;
- The use of standardised measures that directly related to stated goals of the program;

- The use of both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Challenges Involved in Evaluating Community Service Organisations

> *"evaluation of community-based organisations should not focus on the health economist perspective. It could be more usefully focused on process, quality practice, philosophies, relationships, how well the organisation networks with others and whether it can demonstrate that it makes a difference to clients' lives in the long term. Given the nature of the work in the child and family sector, this accountability is crucial to the development of thriving families and communities (Briggs & Campbell, 2001, p. 10).*

There are a range of challenges posed in conducting evaluations with community service agencies, notably with organisations that have had a limited history of external evaluation (Briggs & Campbell, 2001). Briggs and Campbell suggest that independent evaluation may not be accepted as part of the organisational culture, with resistance to the process likely to occur for the aforementioned reasons:

- **Distrust towards evaluation of the program model** – workers and managers may question the role of evaluators questioning their intervention model. Briggs and Campbell suggest that this may be due to managers lacking "a sound theoretical framework, claiming that they use 'common sense' methods and do what they do 'because it works'. While this may appear successful, it is important for staff to know why 'it works' and whether it is effective in the long-term" (Briggs & Campbell, 2001, p. 8).

- **Threat to survival –** Briggs and Campbell suggest that the evaluation of organisations that are led by a "founder-manager", where significant emotional and physical resources have been contributed to the organisation, may evoke elevated feelings of threat and distrust.

- **Loss of control** – it is acknowledged that agency staff and management may feel a loss of control within the evaluation process. It is further noted that "successful and charismatic founder-managers are usually accustomed to persuading funders that they are capable of undertaking a wide range of services because of their level of commitment." Furthermore, they may be "persuasive marketers who present their perceptions and aspirations as 'the reality'." (Briggs & Campbell, 2001, p.8). In such cases, the feelings of disempowerment can be magnified through the evaluation process.

- **Unrealistic expectations of program findings –** Briggs and Campbell suggest that program managers may expect "perfect evaluations" and there may be a tendency for managers to: "ignore the positive aspects of the evaluation and demand the removal of researchers' conclusions and recommendations that they perceive as critical of their management style, staff or methodology" (p. 8).

In response to the noted concerns, the researchers strove to implement an open, collaborative and transparent evaluation process. This was facilitated through a pre-evaluation face-to-face introduction with key program managers, and regular phone, email and letter communication with program management. The researchers adopted the publicly stated expectation that:

> *"each service provider was achieving positive outcomes for young people and it was the role of the research team to work collaboratively with the agency to collect evidence to quantify these outcomes, as well as support the ongoing development of their service".*

Furthermore, the researchers aimed to keep the evaluation as "child-focused" as possible, with the evaluation process designed to support improved outcomes for Northern Territory's children and young people.

Participant Related Factors Likely to Impact on Evaluation Process

The following participant factors were identified as impacting on the evaluation process (aspects adapted from Briggs & Campbell, 2001):

- Probable low numeracy and literacy levels of participants;
- Likely difficulty of engaging families within the evaluation process;
- Cultural barriers associated with a non-Aboriginal research team conducting evaluation processes with Aboriginal young people and families;
- Challenges posed by accessing past program participants owing to high mobility rates;
- Participant distrust, apathy or frustration with external evaluation processes;
- Obtaining client consent from young people and families.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The research team conducted an outcome and process orientated evaluation (see Terms of Reference, page x.) of the Balunu, Brahminy and Tangentyere programs incorporating the following six phases:

Evaluation Phase 1 – Scoping Assessment Process

In July 2010, the first author met with key delegates from NTFC, NT Police and all individual service providers to scope the assessment process, answer stakeholder questions and to better understand the NT Youth Justice Strategy. The aim of this initial visit was also to assist the research team to develop an assessment process that was matched to each service provider, was realistic and achievable, and was conducted in a valid and reliable manner.

Phase 2 – Development of Assessment Process and Material

The research team developed a detailed assessment plan. This included an overview of the evaluation processes, evaluation tools, an implementation plan and relevant consent forms and information sheets for all stakeholders.

Phase 3 – On-Site Evaluation

In September 2010, the authors spent 12 days in the Northern Territory to conduct and/or facilitate the assessment process, as well as liaise with a range of stakeholders. This time period coincided with program delivery of the Tangentyere, Balunu and Brahminy youth camps, and time was spent in all camp locations with participants.

Phase 4 – External Stakeholder Feedback and Data Collection

Between October and December 2010, the research team conducted further interviews with stakeholders and past participants, as well as sought descriptive/statistical data from NT Government agencies.

Phase 5 – Evaluation Feedback (scheduled to occur)

In late January 2011, Ivan Raymond and Sean Lappin will provide face-to-face feedback to all service providers, NT Government representatives and nominated stakeholders.

OUTCOME ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND SPECIFIC EVALUATION PROCESSES

The design and implementation of the outcome evaluation tools was informed by the desire to implement the most robust evaluation framework possible (see section: *The Case for a Robust, Reliable and Valid Evaluation Framework*), given the limitations posed by the:

- Timeframes provided;
- Dynamic nature, complex needs and accessibility of the participant group;
- Availability of NT Government Departments;
- Access to required data and information;
- Small participant sample sizes;
- Conducting psychometric evaluation with Indigenous client groups;
- Capacity of the service providers.

The development of tools was further guided by the:

- Forensic psychology methodology – outcomes were chosen in which the research suggests mediate the expression of future at-risk behaviours (criminogenic needs and other needs identified in Table 1, Literature Review);

- Need to capture multi-leveled outcomes, including attitudinal, behavioural, participant, stakeholder and observer measures;
- Need to consider culturally appropriate evaluation measures and processes - culturally appropriate methods were assessed as including the application of mixed method approaches, that include case study, narrative approaches and other qualitative measures that capture the diversity of potential outcomes, and respond to the complexity of the client group (evaluation informed by Mikhailovich, Morrison & Arabena, 2007);
- The authors' practical experience and knowledge gained within previous evaluations (including Raymond, 2003; Raymond & Knuckey, 2006).

Specific Tools

The following tools and processes were applied:

1. Risk of Offending and Anti-Social Behaviour – Pre and Post-Program Police Data

The reduction of repeat (or recidivist) offending in youth remains one of the stated goals of the youth camp model. There are a number of methodological and pragmatic issues related to the evaluation of recidivism (see review by Payne, 2007). Traditionally, evaluations have attempted to evaluate the rate and type of offending through the use of police, court or corrections data. Each source of data is prone to a range of methodological problems. For instance, there may be a time lag between offence, court date and incarceration with the use of correctional and court data. Conversely, the application of police data may (1) underestimate offending to the extent that it may only include offences that come to the attention of police or (2) overestimate offending because not all contact with police is associated with an actual committed offence (Payne, 2007).

Electronic data records are the primary source of collating offending patterns. As identified within the current evaluation, within the Northern Territory the collation of such data is impacted by:

- Individual Government Departments (e.g., NT Police, Department of Justice) computer systems not being compatible, requiring data to be manually matched and compared across Departments;
- A small number of young people are coded within electronic data-bases under different names and/or dates of births, requiring a data analyst to make judgments about the identity of participants;
- The coding and input of electronic data, relating to contact with police and offence behaviour, is open to individual police officer interpretation at the point of data entry. For instance, if a police member attends an "offence" and it is reported that an individual young person was within the local area when it occurred, the police member has to make a judgment whether or not it is coded on the system as "Person of Interest", "Suspect" or not coded at all.

The research team worked alongside the NT Police to obtain a set of de-identified data. Individual participant data was collated for the period of 240 days both prior to and after attending a youth

camp, and only included days in which an individual young person was not incarcerated. If a young person was incarcerated during either period, the period of measurement was increased by the number of days of incarceration relating to the period of observation (pre-program or post-program). While there are a range of considerations that guide the observation period (see Payne, 2007), the time period was chosen to assess short to medium term outcomes, in a manner that afforded the opportunity to construct a suitably sized sample.

Owing to the issues previously identified, this evaluation chose not to examine recidivism (or repeat offending), but to evaluate the construct of "*risk of offending and anti-social behaviour". Risk of offending* and *anti-social behaviour* was constructed using the following NT Police data sources:

- "FV Offender" – this is internally defined as police have attended a domestic disturbance involving a family and the young person has been identified as the offender within the disturbance;
- "FV Participant" - this is internally defined as police have attended a domestic disturbance involving a family and the young person has been identified as a participant within the disturbance;
- "Person of Interest" - this is internally defined as police have attended an offence and police wish to speak to the young person in relation to that offence;
- "Offender" - this is internally defined as police have attended an offence and have identified the young person as committing the offence;
- "Suspect" - this is internally defined as police have attended an offence and have strong reason to suspect that the young person has committed the offence;
- "Spoken To" **-** this is internally defined as police have spoken to the young person which was considered significant enough to be logged onto the system to aide intelligence or information gathering and provides a basis for future follow-up.

Risk of offending and anti-social behaviour was operationalised as increased contact with police, whether it is related to a committed offence or police-participant contact. Three composite measures were applied for this study:

1. **Offending** - this composite measure included total number of logged entries in relation to *FV Offender* and *Offender*. Only a small number of logged entries were identified in the *FV Offender* category across the participant group;
2. **Contact with police** – this composite measure included total number of logged entries in relation to *Suspect, Spoken to* and *Person of Interest*.
3. **Total** – this composite measure included total number of logged entries in relation to *FV Offender*, *Offender*, *Suspect, Spoken to* and *Person of Interest*.

Across the participant group there was only a small number of *FV Participant* loggings and they are not included in the data analysis. The current NT Police electronic data system does not code offences in relation to the type of offence or whether or not the young person was found guilty for an offence. Therefore, these variables remains confounded within the current study. Data was

also collected in relation to the participants' age when they were first logged onto the data system as an *Offender* and the total number of logged entries of *Offender* prior to the participants' attendance at a youth camp. Previous incarceration history was also obtained. Together, this data was accessed to assess the risk profile of participants, as well as explore the impact of the camps on different subsets (or risk profiles) of participants.

To recruit the sample, the research team made a request to the NTFC Youth Camps Coordinator for the names of all of the young people who had attended the three youth camp programs from October 2008 to February, 2010. Participants were excluded if they attended either another youth camp, or attended the same youth camp on a second occasion within the observation period (one participant was excluded). The sample can be considered a valid representation of the entire youth camp population group.

The data was analysed in relation to both individual youth camps (Chapters 4, 5 & 6) and as a whole (Chapter 7), with the descriptive properties of the samples provided in individual chapters.

The research team worked alongside both NTFC and NT Police to explore the feasibility of employing a matched control group. Owing to the time constraints posed by the evaluation process, as well as difficulties in identifying a matched set of controls, it was suggested to the research team that a control group should not be pursued. **When repeated measure designs are applied without the use of a control group, the authors are unable to rule out that any changes in participant behavioural functioning were not due to factors unrelated to youth camp attendance (e.g., participant maturation, other related interventions, miscellaneous changes in participant). This poses questions in relation to the attribution of the outcomes achieved (i.e., to what degree can the outcomes be attributed to the young people's participation in the youth camps).** This issue is discussed in more detail in the individual service provider reports.

2. Critical Review of Historical Program Reviews, Program Records and Past Evaluations

The research team obtained historical records relating to each service provider. This included: performance reports, participant discharge summaries, contracted program evaluations and independent service evaluations. Thematic analysis guided the consolidation of themes, with themes coded in relation to the reliability and validity of supporting evidence supporting the theme.

This evaluation approach afforded the opportunity to understand the development of each service provider over time, as well as assess the breadth of reported outcomes.

3. Repeated Attitudinal/Behavioural Measures

Six attitudinal/behavioural assessment measures were completed by participants or program staff during two or more periods of time, thereby allowing the researchers to assess the impact of program attendance on participant attitudes or behavioural functioning.

An important consideration in applying such tools is: (1) the degree the questionnaires consistently measure a desired construct (e.g., are reliable) and (2) the degree they measure the construct they are purportedly designed to measure (e.g., are valid). Where possible, the research team adapted previously validated and reliable tools, and reliability analyses was conducted during this evaluation (using Chronbach's Alpha). To assess a broad range of outcomes, the research team also developed measures (e.g., responsiveness to change) whose psychometric properties are less clear. Based upon both the reliability analysis and the historical psychometric properties of the tool, comments are made in relation to the methodologically soundness of the following tools, with the descriptors of *excellent*, *good*, *average* and *fair*.

Self-Concept

Self-concept reflects the perceptions and attributions an individual makes about oneself. While there is no evidence to support self-concept as a criminogenic need (or mediator of offender behaviour), it is an important mediator of other at-risk behaviours. A five-item self-concept scale was developed by the research team from a selection of items from the Self-Concept Inventory for Youth (BSCI-Y); which is one subscale of the larger Beck Youth Inventories, a standardised measure of social/emotional/behavioural functioning in children and young people aged from 7 to 18 (Beck, Beck, Jolly & Steer, 2005). Respondents were asked to rate items on a four point scale that included the responses of *never*, *sometimes*, *often* and *always*. Higher scores reflect more positive self-perceptions in relation to aspects such as competency and positive self worth. The scale is located in Section 1, Appendix K. Methodological properties: *Average*

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a term that describes an individual's confidence in their ability to achieve a goal in a specific situation. Self-efficacy does not relate to the actual skills an individual possesses, but instead, relates to the judgment or inferences the individual makes in relation to what they can do with those skills. A seven item self-efficacy scale was adapted from a previous measure applied by Operation Flinders for youth-at-risk client groups (reported by Mohr et al., 2001), and then subsequently applied by Raymond and Knuckey (2006). Respondents were asked to rate items on a seven point continuous scale from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* (see first 7 items Section 3, Appendix K). Scores have been coded such that higher scores represent increased self-efficacy. Methodological properties: *Good*

Responsiveness to Change - Participant

The research team designed an 11 item questionnaire that sought to assess a young person's responsiveness to making changes; including awareness of problems, and willingness to consider changes and access supporting adults to foster change. The questionnaire was an extension of a participant completed questionnaire developed and applied by Raymond (2003) for a youth-at-risk cohort, and guided by the stages of change literature (Prochaska, DiClemente & Norcross, 1992). Respondents were asked to rate each item on a seven point continuous scale from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* (see items 8-20, Section 3, Appendix K). The measure was designed to include two scales: *Awareness of Problems* and *Accessing Helping Relationships.* Scores have been coded such that higher scores are represented by the young person demonstrating increased awareness of their problems and greater willingness to access helping relationships. Methodological properties: *Fair*

Trust within Adult Relationships

The presence of trust within an adult-adolescent relationship is an important responsivity factor. This is particularly true for Aboriginal young people (Fan, 2007) and with young people with backgrounds of trauma, abuse, attachment disorder histories or early relationship instability (Hughes, 2004). For this reason, the construct of relationship quality as mediated by trust was considered an important dimension to capture. The research team developed an eight item Likert scale which was adapted from the Trusting Relationship Questionnaire, which has been found to posses sound psychometric properties (Mustillo, Dorsey & Farmer, 2005). A nominated program facilitator was asked to complete this measure at two or more points in time corresponding to the participants' attendance on camp (see Appendix E). Higher scores are represented by the presence of stronger relationships. Methodological properties: *Good*

Attitudes to Police

Negative attitudes to police are a criminogenic need which is predictive of offending behaviour. The study applied a seven item measure previously applied by Mohr et al. (2001) and Raymond (2003), which was developed from the Criminal Sentiments Scales (Andrews & Wormith, 1984). Raymond and Mohr et al. found that the scale possessed a good level of internal consistency with youth-at-risk cohorts. Examples of items include: "on a whole, police are honest" and "life would be better without police" (for complete scale see Section 2, Appendix K). Respondents were asked to rate items on a five point Likert scale, with 1 representing *strongly disagree* and 5 representing *strongly agree*. For analysis, responses were coded so that increasing scores represented more positive attitudes towards police. Methodological properties: *Excellent*

Program Facilitator Rated Assessment of Behaviour

Adolescent Behaviour Checklist (ABC) consists of 38 items which represent behavioural indicators of participant conduct during program attendance. The checklist had been previously adapted by Mohr et al. (2001) from the checklist developed by Davis-Berman and Berman (1994). The research team adapted the Mohr et al. scale for this study. The scale was designed to provide an assessment of "important indicators of progress on therapeutic wilderness trips" (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994, p. 154). The scale is comprised of seven subscales:

- **Interaction with Peers –** this is a five item scale to assess the degree the participant acts in a friendly and responsive manner with peers, as opposed to a manipulative or threatening manner;
- **Affect –** this four item scale assesses emotional states related to depression, anxiety, suspiciousness and happiness;
- **Self-Esteem –** six items tapping the verbal and non-verbal cues of how participants portray themselves to others;
- **Conflict –** this five item scale includes the degree participants engage in conflict and confrontation with others;
- **Response Initiation –** this five item scale assess the spontaneous behaviour of participants as it relates to participants' asking questions, or seeking responses from others;

- **Co-operation –** this four item scale taps the degree the participant offered help to others and complied with the requests of others;

- **Behavioural Incidents** – this is a nine item scale designed to measure how often the participant verbally or physically threatened or assaulted another person.

For each of the 38 items (see Appendix D), a nominated program staff member was required to circle the response that best described the degree the participant performed the nominated behaviour at two or more points in time during the program (see individual service provider chapters for timing of administration). A score of 1 represents non-performance of the behaviour, while a score of 7 represents the participant always performing the behaviour, and a score of 4 represents the behaviour being performed approximately 50% of the time. Methodological properties: *Excellent*

Summary

The use of repeated measure tools provides the opportunity to assess a diverse range of participant outcomes in a relatively efficient manner. However, there are a number of limitations posed by the use of such tools**.** First, the methodological properties of each tool must be acknowledged within the interpretation of results. **Second, when such tools are applied without the use of a control group (as occurred here), the authors are unable to rule out that any pre- and post-program changes were not due to factors unrelated to the program (e.g., participant maturation, other related interventions**). For this reason, as a standalone tool they should not be used to evaluate program efficacy. Third, behavioural assessment tools (Adolescent Behavioural Checklist) that are completed by program staff are open to potential skewing. Finally, owing to the small sample sizes (low power[9] of evaluation), as what occurred in the current evaluation, it is not possible to identify small changes in participant functioning and at the same time rule out that the results are due to chance (e.g., are statistically significant).

4. Participant End of Program Questionnaire

The first author undertook a semi-structured end of program interview (with questionnaire) with participants from the Balunu and Tangentyere youth camps (Appendix F). This included a set of questions designed to explore a range of camp experiences and the following constructs:

- **Perception of Pleasure** – this includes four questions related to the experience of fun, excitement and pleasure during the program. These questions had been formulated by the Operation Flinders' Clinical Advisory Committee and have been previously applied by Raymond and Knuckey (2006);

- **Program perception and impact** – questions designed to elicit a young person's reflection of the program and the program's impact (now and future) on their lives.

Thematic analysis guided the interpretation of themes, with members of the research team providing critical comment and independent review to increase theme validity.

[9] Power refers to the degree the study will pick up small changes in participant functioning while at the same time increasing confidence that the results are not due to chance factors (e.g., statistically significant). Power is increased through the application of larger samples and/or the use of more sensitive tools.

Participants also reviewed a set of statements (read to participants by first author) in which sought their experience of the youth camp. Replies were sought on a five point Likert scale from *not at all* to *very much* (for items see Appendix F).

Taken on a whole, the strength of this qualitative tool is the ability to explore a diverse range of participant outcomes and experiences which cannot be easily obtained through more structured techniques. The limitations of this assessment process reflect the qualitative nature of the data collection process and analysis.

5. Parent and Guardian Measures

The evaluation sought parent/guardian feedback and observations. A small sample of guardians, relating to two service providers, completed the following measures (Information Sheet provided with material – Appendix G) prior to their young person's attendance at the youth camp. It was intended to be completed at two points in time; prior to camp and end of camp completion. However, owing to the low response rate (described in subsequent chapters relating to individual providers), only the pre-camp measure was completed and the data analysis restricted to broad-based (to protect client confidentiality) descriptive interpretation. The questionnaire included the following measures:

- **Responsiveness to Change – Guardian -** the research team designed this 11 item questionnaire that sought to assess a young person's responsiveness to making changes; including awareness of problems, and willingness to consider changes and access supporting adults to foster change. The questionnaire was an extension of participant completed questionnaire developed and applied by Raymond (2003) for a youth-at-risk cohort, and guided by the stages of change literature (Prochaska, DiClemente & Norcross, 1992). Respondents were asked to rate each item on a seven point continuous scale from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* (see Section 1, Appendix H).

- **Risk and Needs Descriptive Analysis** – the research team designed this 16 item questionnaire that asked respondents to rate a range of behaviours as they pertained to their child on a 7-point continuous scale from *not at all* to *extremely severe*. This questionnaire was designed to elicit descriptive information on the broad risk factors and needs pertaining to the cohort of young people attending the youth camps (Section 2, Appendix H).

- **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire –** is a normed and validated 25 item questionnaire that is designed to assess broad range social/emotional/behavioural problems in young people aged from 11 to 17 (Section 3, Appendix H). The questionnaire was developed by Goodman (1997) and is used by a number of health and well-being agencies for clinical assessment and evaluating outcomes as it relates to emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problems and pro-social behaviours. The application of this questionnaire was designed to elicit descriptive information on the broad risk factors and needs pertaining to the cohort of young people attending the youth camps, as well as offer the camp providers the opportunity to conduct post-camp evaluation using a normed and validated assessment tool.

6. Program Observations

The authors independently undertook naturalistic observation techniques while participating in the three youth camps which were transcribed during quiet periods. The first author has been trained in this assessment process, and provided guidance to the process to increase data collection validity/reliability. Observations were sought in relation to the following:

- Interactions between program staff and young people;
- Behaviour, attitudes and reflections of young people;
- Responsiveness of young people to suggested activity or intervention;
- Staff behaviour management practices.

The authors compared transcribed notes and formulated summary themes, with review by members of the research team increasing the validity of results.

The observation process provided the opportunity for the authors to “experience” the program on a first hand basis, and identify outcomes which may not have been picked up through other analysis. Despite best intent, and as would be expected considering the nature of the evaluation, the observation process impacted on the expression of participant and staff behaviour through the evidence of coaching and more constricted/cautious behavioural patterns by young people and staff.

7. Post-Camp Narrative

The authors interviewed young people, either face-to-face or by phone, after their attendance at a youth camp program. The recruitment of young people differed across the three service providers and are specified in individual chapters. Interviews were conducted with young people between 6 weeks and 18 months post-program. An interview template (Appendix I) was developed by the research team, with the questions presented in a dynamic and youth-friendly manner, with opportunity provided for extended comment. This assessment process was designed to assess the way young people constructed a narrative of the youth camp as it related to:

- Their generalised experience of the camp, including a review of dominant memories;
- Their ongoing contact with camp or program staff;
- The role and impact of the camp as a change factor in their life.

Thematic analysis guided the construction of summary themes, with members of the research team providing independent review to increase the reliability of the data analysis. This approach provided an opportunity to conduct a broad-based and youth focused understanding of the camps, but was limited by the recruitment processes applied in obtaining the sample. Owing to the difficulties in accessing a geographically dispersed and dynamic client group, with two of the service providers, part of the recruitment process included a convenience sampling approach that was facilitated by the service providers themselves. There are a number of potential biases in this approach, including the risk that the data is positively skewed in favour of positive program

descriptors. Taken on a whole, the limitations posed by the sampling methods means that the results are best generalised to higher functioning and less complex cohorts of young people, with the generalisability of results to more complex client groups cautioned.

8. Case Study Analysis

To explore the diversity of outcomes associated with the youth camp intervention, the research team sought to conduct a case study analysis of each of the three service providers. To guide the evaluation methodology and analysis of data, the following research question was posed:

> *What role and impact, as a "change factor", did the youth camp have on the participants' post-camp functioning?*

A robust data collection methodology was proposed (informed by Noor, 2008) that included the following elements:

a. **Recruitment of a representative sample** – a sample was sought where conclusions could be generalised to the larger population;

b. **Use of multiple data sources** – including the sourcing of historical youth camp records and both camp provider and third party feedback;

c. **Triangulation method of thematic data analysis** – where summary themes were drawn from the triangulation (or coming together) of multiple data sources.

There were a number of factors that impacted on the methodological soundness of the case-study analysis as it related to individual service providers. This is discussed in detail within the subsequent chapters (Chapters 4, 5 & 6).

9. Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholder feedback was sought in relation to individual service provider outcomes and processes, as well as broad feedback in relation to the continuum and application of youth service provision within the Northern Territory (NT). Stakeholders were identified by:

- At the point of initial submission, the Department of Health and Families provided the authors a list of stakeholders who had involvement with the youth camps;
- The authors wrote to the Department Heads of NT Police, NT Department of Justice, NT Department of Health and Families and NT Department of Education and Training, and Magistrates Courts requesting that they nominate stakeholders from their agency to contribute to the evaluation process;
- The authors made a formal request to each service provider to nominate stakeholders for the research team to make contact with. The authors liaised with the overwhelming majority of stakeholders provided;

- Additional stakeholders were identified through the contacts obtained through the aforementioned process.

Email and phone contact was initiated with all stakeholders provided. Where a stakeholder was not able to be contacted after three attempts (phone and email), the researcher informed the NT Government Department or service provider and requested that they facilitate the contact and/or provide additional contact information. Where further attempted contact was unsuccessful, no further attempts were made. A list of stakeholders consulted is provided in Appendix A. A semi-structured question template guided the interview process (Appendix K), with questions individually applied on the basis of the stakeholder's experience/knowledge of individual youth camp/s and area of expertise. All stakeholders received an Information Sheet (Appendix B) and provided their consent to participate through either Consent Form (Appendix C), email acknowledgement or verbally at the start of the phone interview (case noted).

The stakeholder analysis provided a breadth of information. Taken on a whole, considering that all agencies that have a vested interest in the youth camp model, individual camps and the NT Youth Justice Strategy were provided the opportunity to be represented, the information obtained through the stakeholder analysis can be considered a valid representation.

TRIANGULATION OF OUTCOMES

The previous section summarised the tools and processes to capture outcome-based evidence. As noted, there are a number of limitations in the reliability and validity of individual tools, therefore, wholesale conclusions based upon individual tools is not permissible. To overcome this problem, the research team implemented a triangulation methodology that summarises the evaluation data in respect to the "confidence level" relating to individual conclusions. The triangulation method is considered a robust and scientifically valid method to overcome issues related to internal reliability and validity (Jick, 1979; Thurmond, 2001), and has been applied within other program evaluations (Piggot-Irvine, 2008). Within the individual service provider chapters, summary statements relating to individual outcomes are made in reference to the level of confidence. The level of confidence has been independently reviewed and triangulated by the research team in respect to the following dimensions:

- Type of evaluation process undertaken;
- Reliability and validity of data collection method;
- The degree of triangulation between multiple assessment tools.

The following descriptors are provided to quantify the confidence level of individual outcomes:

- **Very high –** the reader should be very confident that the statement provided is a valid assessment of the program's outcomes. The confidence has been obtained through the application of robust assessment tools and/or multiple assessment processes.
- **Moderate –** the reader should be moderately confident that the statement provided is a valid assessment of the program's outcomes. Further evaluation and assessment is required to strengthen the validity of the statement and the statement should only be

reported with this disclosure. The confidence has been obtained through the application of a moderately robust assessment process and/or more than one assessment process.

- **Preliminary –** while the evaluation found support for this outcome, the reader should be cautious when either reporting or basing conclusions on the statement. The statement is based upon less reliable or robust assessment processes. Further robust evaluation and assessment is required to strengthen the validity of the statement and the statement should only be reported with this disclosure.
- **Inconclusive –** the evaluation provides no current support for this outcome, and as such, this outcome should not be reported without scientifically acquired supporting evidence.

PROCESS EVALUATION

To conduct a clear and transparent evaluation of the service providers' "processes", the research team developed a process evaluation tool; where conclusions could be drawn based upon a structured and evidence-informed data collection process.

The development of the evaluation tool was informed by a best-practice tool previously developed and implemented by Mohr et al. (2001), with consideration given to best-practice wilderness-adventure underpinnings (Crisp, 1997). The authors' extensive experience in developing, implementing, maintaining and evaluating processes associated with the delivery of youth and wilderness programs also informed the development of the tool. This includes working with a range of external quality frameworks such as the South Australian Service Excellence Program (SEP) which is an internationally accredited quality improvement program. The SEP superseded the original Service Excellence Framework (SEF) and was developed and implemented by the South Australian Department of Families and Communities (South Australian Government Website, last updated 2010).

Importantly the process evaluation tool was tailored to the nature of the youth camps and the legislative and policy environment that the youth camps operate within. In terms of the nature of the youth camps there was particular attention given to cultural aspects associated with the delivery of services to Aboriginal young people and their families, as well as acknowledging the specific requirements associated with the delivery of programs in a wilderness environment. In relation to the legislative and policy environment, exploration was undertaken to understand the particular requirements of relevant legislation and policies. For example the privacy and confidentiality requirements associated with the Northern Territory Information Act (2002).

The process evaluation tool was designed based on best-practice benchmarks and intended to highlight areas for ongoing development. Ideally the information that resulted from the process evaluation will inform the development of a quality improvement plan which would assist in prioritising areas for development based on an assessment of risk.

There are six main *Process Elements*, with *Focus Areas* that relate to each element. Each *Focus Area* then has service goals which are described together with an identification of the evidence required to achieve the *Service Goals*. Each *Service Goal* was then assessed and identified as

either *Demonstrated*, *Partially Demonstrated*, *Not Yet Demonstrated* or *Unable to be Determined*. Comments were provided based on the evidence provided for each service goal.

Where there was anecdotal information in relation to a *Service Goal*, but no evidence that could be substantiated, it was deemed to be *Unable to be Determined*. Where there was little or no evidence to support a *Service Goal* being achieved it was deemed to be *Not Yet Demonstrated*

The structure of the process evaluation tool is as follows:

Process Element 1 *Our Young People*
- Focus Area 1 *Understanding Our Outcomes*
- Focus Area 2 *Communication*

Process Element 2 *Our Approach*
- Focus Area 1 *Our Systems*
- Focus Area 2 *Our Practice*
- Focus Area 3 *Our Model*

Process Element 3 *Our People*
- Focus Area 1 *Workforce Planning*
- Focus Area 2 *Recruitment*
- Focus Area 3 *Developing Our People*
- Focus Area 4 *Our Systems*

Process Element 4 *Our Partners*
- Focus Area 1 *Our Communication*
- Focus Area 2 *Integration*

Process Element 5 *Our Organisation*
- Focus Area 1 *Our Governance*
- Focus Area 2 *Our Systems*
- Focus Area 3 *Our Planning*

Process Element 6 *Our Funding*
- Focus Area 1 *Our Agreements*

Information for each process element was captured in a variety of ways. Where possible, background research provided some of the evidence required, with the remaining information sourced through an interview with the senior manager, general manager or CEO representing the agencies. Follow-up emails were then sent, where required, to confirm any outstanding information requests. The tool was then completed which informed the summary analysis for each camp.

While the tool has been informed by best-practice, there are limitations in the accuracy of the assessment of *Service Goals*. The first of these is the fact that, in many instances, there is no way to quantify whether a *Service Goal* had been achieved or not. In these instances the professional judgment of the second author was employed. The second limitation was the lack of tangible evidence for some of the *Service Goals*. Again judgment was applied based on the evidence that was available. The third limitation was whether the agency representative had a

clear understanding of what was involved for each *Service Goal*. In the majority of cases the interviewer attempted to clarify the interviewee's understanding of each *Service Goal*, however given the volume of information required, it is likely that there was some inconsistencies in the understanding of some of the *Service Goals* and required evidence. The final limitation was in the translation of information and understanding of the interviewee's response. This was partially mitigated through the interviewer reflecting the interviewee's answer back to them in an attempt to ensure it had been captured accurately.

Chapter Summary

The researchers strived to implement a robust evaluation methodology that could respond to the unique challenges posed by evaluating outdoor-adventure programming for youth-at-risk cohorts, as well as conduct both an outcome and process evaluation methodology for services that have had limited exposure to independent evaluation.

The evaluation process included 6 distinct phases, which included face-to-face meetings with the service providers within an introductory and active evaluation phases.

A multi-leveled outcome assessment was conducted applying both qualitative and quantitative measures, and including participant and stakeholder information. Data was collected applying observational, attitudinal, behavioural, stakeholder, case-study and historical record data collection tools. Given the limitations posed by the timeframes, the participant profile and available local resources, there were a number of factors that impacted on the evaluation's internal reliability and validity. For this reason, a triangulation methodology was employed to specify the confidence level attached to individual outcomes reported.

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The process component of the evaluation was based on best practice evidence, as well as the extensive experience that the authors bring in developing, implementing, maintaining and reviewing various processes associated with the delivery of youth and wilderness programs. The process evaluation tool provides a thorough assessment against a number of *Service Goals* that make up the six *Process Elements*. Despite employing a range of mitigation strategies, there are a small number of limitations in the accuracy of the assessment that are primarily associated with the nature of the evaluation and the associated timeframes.

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CHAPTER 7. EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CRITICAL REVIEW OF YOUTH CAMP MODEL AS AN INTERVENTION STRATEGY

This section of the report: (1) summarises the findings from stakeholder feedback as it relates to the youth camp model, (2) reviews and summarises the findings from the three individual youth camp evaluations (Chapter 4, 5 & 6), (3) makes comments about efficacy of the model as a whole and (4) offers recommendations to support the understanding and development of the model.

Background Context

The youth camp model is currently applied under the Northern Territory's Youth Justice Strategy. This strategy is based upon a restorative framework but is administered by a number of NT Government Departments. This has led to a high degree of fragmentation across the youth justice service continuum, which manifests in a lack of policy alignment across Government Departments and inefficiencies in governance and coordination. The lack of a cohesive approach has meant that youth camps are not well integrated with other measures, such as the Youth Diversion Program and the supervision of various legal orders. There are currently a range of agencies, including Department of Children and Families, Department of Education and Training, Department of Justice and NT Police, which have a vested interest in the youth camp model.

Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholders, supported by the Literature Review in Chapter 1, supported the viewpoint that there are a number of unique and complex challenges within the NT within the provision of services for youth-at-risk. There was a general consensus that specialist interventions, like youth camps, offered significant utility within the continuum of youth services. Opinion of where they fitted within this continuum differed across agencies and stakeholders, with agencies' philosophical and practice viewpoints guiding their analysis. As an example, representatives from education spoke about the role of youth camps to engage young people with educational pathways, as well as embed educational concepts into the camps. In contrast, representatives from NT Police spoke about the camps in terms of crime prevention, diversion and rehabilitation.

This evaluation spoke to a range of stakeholders across agencies, and taken on a whole, there was strong support for the youth camp model, with greater diversity of opinion related to the evaluation of individual services (see comments made in Chapters 4, 5 & 6). The Balunu program received the strongest and most consistent support for its utility and application, notably as a culturally appropriate and targeted intervention within the Darwin region. While Tangentyere lacked program visibility (e.g., not well known or understood) within the service spectrum, there was an identified need for specialist interventions to engage high risk young people within the Alice Spring region. The Brahminy program received the strongest mixed reviews, which

appeared most strongly linked to the agency's inconsistent ability to engage with a range of stakeholders.

Based upon stakeholder feedback and background context (see Chapter 1), at the current point in time, the efficient and integrated application of the youth camp intervention is impacted on by the:

- **Fragmentation across the youth justice service continuum** – this manifests in a lack of policy alignment across Government Departments and inefficiencies in governance and coordination.

- **Heterogeneous client group** – the youth camp intervention targets young people "at-risk", which as noted within the Literature Review (Chapter 2), remains a broad cohort of young people who present with multiple behaviours and associated needs. A young person at-risk may include the presence of a behaviour, personal attribute, help seeking response or situational factor that has the potential to either negatively impact on a young person's ability to fully express their potential or restrict their future life opportunities. A review of stakeholder feedback indicates that different agencies, stakeholders and service providers define "youth-at-risk" differently. This fosters heterogeneous participant groups, unwarranted referrals and less targeted intervention.

Recommendations

- The role and function of the youth camp model, as guided by this evaluation, is integrated within broader policy reviews of the youth justice system;

- The target audience of the youth camp model is more tightly defined to facilitate the better matching of client need and service.

Contextualising the Model

There is much optimism that interventions based upon a youth camp model, encompassing features of healing, residential camping and outdoor-adventure programming, offer utility within the continuum of services for youth-at-risk. A review of the literature, supported within the current evaluation, indicates that there is notable heterogeneity of interventions and program models, all at various stages of development. In a robust review of outdoor-adventure programming, Hattie et al. (1997, p. 70) indicated that "only some programs are effective, and then only on some outcomes, and it is probable that only parts of the programs are influencing these outcomes". Despite this, there is strong support that conceptually sound outdoor-adventure programs, integrated with follow-up services, offer utility within the spectrum of youth service provision. The literature indicates that program effectiveness is mediated by a range of factors linked to the development of the organisation (e.g., staffing, policies etc), program model and individual participant (see Literature Review).

Youth camps for youth-at-risk cohorts offer a number of distinct challenges in comparison to other youth interventions. In particular, they offer notable risk to the organisation, individual clients (see Literature Review) and funding body. A feature of such programs is the dynamic nature of "risk". Within remote and outdoor locations there are a range of risks (e.g., dehydration, potential weapons, becoming lost) that cannot be fully mitigated. These are magnified with youth-at-risk cohorts. Therefore, it is important that agencies have adequate policies and procedures, and associated staff induction and training, that address the dynamic nature of risk, notably in the context of young people who present with challenging behaviours or complex needs.

Furthermore, youth camps as delineated within the literature as outdoor-adventure programs, residential programs and healing based interventions, are largely within their infancy within Australia. While they offer intuitive appeal and preliminary supporting evidence, there is a paucity of research to guide their understanding and application, notably for complex client groups. On this basis, "youth camps" (per se) do not represent an evidence-based intervention for youth-at-risk.

In light of the aforementioned, it is not surprising that client outcomes are correlated with the establishment age of the outdoor-adventure program (Wilson & Lipsey, 1998). In this regard, "block-funding" has been suggested as a best-practice initiative to support organisation's develop and build their program models (AIC, 2006). From the first author's personal experience with the Operation Flinders Foundation in South Australia, the development of a robust, evidence informed and organisationally sound outdoor-adventure program takes at least five to seven years, if not longer. It is not possible to "buy programs off the shelf" and then implement them within local contexts. Such programs are developed and individually risk managed in response to the local physical environment, program manager's ethos and client needs.

In response to the challenges of developing innovative outdoor-adventure interventions, the development of robust programs requires either a passionate, capable and committed management team and/or a well resourced funding body who can support the development of the program model and processes. Two of the current service providers have strong, well-known and passionate leaders, and a number of stakeholders have made comment to the risks and problems with "person-centric" organisations. While there are shortfalls with such an organisational structure, they are also mechanisms to drive innovative service delivery and the overcome barriers associated with the development of outdoor-adventure programs.

Key Points

- While there is optimism for their utility, there is a paucity of contextual research supporting the application of youth camps (outdoor-adventure programs, healing interventions, outdoor residential interventions) for youth-at-risk. The program model as it relates to Australian youth-at-risk is in its infancy.
- A feature of such programs is the dynamic nature of "risk". Within remote and outdoor locations there are a range of risks (e.g., dehydration, potential weapons, becoming lost) that cannot be fully mitigated. These are magnified with youth-at-risk cohorts. Therefore, it is important that agencies have adequate policies and procedures, and associated staff induction and training, that address the dynamic nature of risk, notably in the context of young people who present with challenging behaviours or complex needs.
- Considering the heterogeneous nature of programs and outcomes, evaluations of youth camp programs should be done on a case-by-case basis that considers the relationship between individual program model, participant profile and purported outcomes.
- If the NT Government wish to maximise the outcomes of the youth camp model, they need to consider funding service providers who have made significant advances in both the development of their model and organisation. Alternatively, if they wish to fund less developed models and/or agencies, they need to be willing to offer significant support, resources and advice to support agencies develop conceptually sound models, manage risk and drive service development to meet best-practice criteria.

Review of NT Police Data Across all Youth Camps

Within the individual service provider chapters (Chapters 4, 5 & 6), an analysis of NT Police data as it relates to the provider was undertaken. This section relates to the analysis of the NT Police data, on a whole, or as it relates to Brahminy, Balunu and Tangentyere youth camps.

Background

Police data was obtained for all young people that had participated in the following programs:

- Balunu Healing Camps: 10-17 November 2008; 13 - 21 April 2009; 18 - 26 May 2009 and 29 June - 6 July 2009;
- Young people (funded under Service Agreement) that had attended the Brahminy Youth Facility from October 2008 to March 2010;
- Tangentyere Circuit Breaker Camps: 23 March - 10 April 2009, 23 March - 10 April 2009, 22 June - 3 July 2009, 31 August - 11 Sept 2009.

Two participants were excluded from the analysis as their identity could not be reliably ascertained. Table 1 provides a descriptive summary of the sample, including as it relates to distinct subgroups related to sex and risk profile. Descriptive analysis indicated that 50% of the females and 79% of the males had a history of being logged as *"offender"* on the police database prior to attending a youth camp. A young person was classified as "*high risk"* if they been logged on the NT Police data system as "*offender*" for three or more occasions at any time prior to attending the youth camp (not limited to observation period). They were classified as *"low risk"* if they had been logged on the NT Police data system as "*offender"* for two or less occasions at any time prior to attending the camp.

Measures

Risk of offending and anti-social behaviour was operationalised as increased contact with police, whether it be related to a committed offence or police-participant contact. Three composite measures were applied for this study:

- **Offending** - this composite measure included the total number of logged entries in relation to *FV Offender* and *Offender*. Only a small number of logged entries were identified in the *FV Offender* category across the participant group;
- **Contact with police** – this composite measure included the total number of logged entries in relation to *Suspect, Spoken* to and *Person of Interest*;
- **Total** – this composite measure included the total number of logged entries in relation to *FV Offender*, *Offender*, *Suspect, Spoken* to and *Person of Interest*.

Table 1.

	Range	Mean	SD
	Total population (n = 68)		
Age first logged on system as an "offender"	9 to 15	11.59	1.81
Total number of "offender" logged entries prior to attending youth camp*	1 to 54	8.95*	13.35*
	High risk sample (n = 31)		
Age first logged on system as an "offender"	9 to 14	11.28	1.82
Total number of "offender" logged entries prior to attending youth camp*	3 to 54	12.86*	15.00*
	Low risk sample (n = 37)		
Age first logged on system as an "offender"	9 to 15	12.13	1.82
Total number of "offender" logged entries prior to attending youth camp	0 to 2	0.40*	0.68*
	Females (n = 52)		
Age first logged on system as an "offender"	10 to 15	12.43	1.81
Total number of "offender" logged entries prior to attending youth camp	0 to 16	6.67*	5.09*
	Males (n = 16)		
Age first logged on system as an "offender"	9 to 14	11.20	1.74
Total number of "offender" logged entries prior to attending youth camp	0 to 54	15.57*	9.87*

* This analysis only included participants with a history of "offender" logged entries

Results

Paired sampled t-tests (two-tailed) were conducted to examine the number of logged events for the participant group across the pre- and post-program period, and for each of the three measures and subgroups. Table 2 shows the mean number of logged entries for the pre- and post-program period, as it relates to the total sample, *high risk*, *low risk*, male and female subgroups. The effect sizes, or the size of the changes observed between the pre- and post-program observation periods, are reported in this evaluation using *Cohen's d*. Small, medium and large effect sizes are denoted by $d = .20$, $d = .50$ and $d = .80$, respectfully (Cohen, 1992).

Table 2.

		Pre-Program		Post-Program			
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-test	*d*
TOTAL SAMPLE (n = 68)	***Offending -*** Number of logged entries of "offender" *	2.78	5.96	1.85	3.23	t(67) = 1.95, p = .05	0.19
	Contact with police - Number of logged entries of "spoken to", "suspect", and "person of interest"	1.94	3.27	1.05	2.47	t(67) = 2.51, p = .01	0.31
	Total - Total number of logged entries of "offender", "FV offender" "spoken to", "suspect", and "person of interest"	4.72	7.44	2.91	4.95	t(67) = 2.58, p = .01	0.29
HIGH RISK SAMPLE (n = 31)	***Offending -*** Number of logged entries of "offender" *	5.81	6.30	3.45	4.08	t(30) = 2.47, p = .02	0.44
	Contact with police - Number of logged entries of "spoken to", "suspect", and "person of interest"	3.84	4.08	1.90	3.45	t(30) = 2.69, p = .01	0.51
	Total - Total number of logged entries of "offender", "FV offender" "spoken to", "suspect", and "person of interest"	9.65	8.74	5.35	6.31	t(30) = 3.08, p < .01	0.56
LOW RISK SAMPLE (n = 37)	***Offending -*** Number of logged entries of "offender" *	0.24	0.43	0.51	1.45	t(36) = -1.23, p = .22	-0.28
	Contact with police - Number of logged entries of "spoken to", "suspect", and "person of interest"	0.35	0.63	0.35	0.54	t(36) = 0.01, p = .99	0.00
	Total - Total number of logged entries of "offender", "FV offender" "spoken to", "suspect", and "person of interest"	0.59	0.96	0.86	1.70	t(36) = -1.10, p = .26	-0.20
MALES (n = 52)	***Offending -*** Number of logged entries of "offender" *	3.25	5.35	2.21	3.63	t(51) = 1.85, p = .07	0.23
	Contact with police - Number of logged entries of "spoken to", "suspect", and "person of interest"	2.25	3.58	1.21	2.77	t(51) = 2.33, p = .02	0.32
	Total - Total number of logged entries of "offender", "FV offender" "spoken to", "suspect", and "person of interest"	5.50	7.96	3.42	5.49	t(51) = 2.43, p = .02	0.30
FEMALES (n = 16)	***Offending -*** Number of logged entries of "offender" *	1.25	3.72	0.69	1.14	t(15) = 0.64, p = .53	0.20
	Contact with police - Number of logged entries of "spoken to", "suspect", and "person of interest"	0.94	1.73	0.56	0.89	t(15) = 1.10, p = .14	0.28
	Total - Total number of logged entries of "offender", "FV offender" "spoken to", "suspect", and "person	2.19	4.76	1.25	1.73	t(15) = .87, p = .40	0.26

* This measure includes “FV offender” log entries. ** A result can be considered significant, or less than 5% probability that the result was due to chance, when p < .05 (two-tailed).

Table 2 shows that across the observation period there were consistent reductions in the frequency of logged entries for each of the three measures (reported as means), and for each of the samples (except for *low-risk* cohort). A feature of the analysis is the generally high standard deviations (SD) for all measurements, indicating that there was significant variability between participants.

The results indicated that over the observation period, relating to the participants' attendance at a youth camp, there were significant and *small* to *medium* reductions in logged entries on the *Offending*, *Contact with police* and *Total* measures for the total sample, *high risk* and male[10] subgroups. The largest effect sizes were demonstrated with the *high risk* group, with the *low risk* group demonstrating negligible to small increases in offending risk over the observation period (non-significant). While the female group also demonstrated reductions in risk on all three measures, the effect sizes were general smaller than the males and high risk group. This, combined with the smaller sample size, meant that these results were not statistically significant.

Interpretations

Taken on face value, the results indicated that over the period of observation, which coincided with the participants' attendance at any one of the three youth camps, the following occurred:

- The cohort of participants' risk of offending and anti-social behaviour reduced over the observation period (except for the *low-risk* cohort);
- The *high risk* cohort (young people who had three or more "offender" log entries prior to attending a camp) had the largest reductions in risk;
- There is preliminary evidence that *low risk* (young people who had two or less *"offender"* log entries prior to attending a camp) participants experienced a small increase in offending risk over the observation period;
- There was significant variability between participants.

These results must be interpreted in relation to the limitations of the current study. Owing to the lack of control group, the above results may be attributed to one or more of the following factors:

- Participants' attendance at one of the youth camps;
- A related intervention/s occurring at the same point in time;
- Developmental maturation in the participants;
- Regression towards the mean – this occurs when young people enter an intervention at the peak of their at-risk behaviour and their behaviour naturally stabilises or moves back to the average or mean position;
- Unrelated factor/s.

[10] The reduction of entries on the "Offending" scale was near significant (p = .07)

Conclusions and Future Directions

The effect sizes, for the *high risk* group, as reported in Table 2, were moderate (medium) in size, indicating that the reduction in offending risk has practical utility. If one makes the assumption that a reduction in offending risk translates to an actual reduction in offences, the social and community impact can be considered quite large. By applying this assumption to the data, the results suggest that there was a 34% and 41% reduction in offending for the entire sample and *high risk* cohort, respectively. In other words, for the *high risk* cohort, each young person committed 2.36 less offences in the post-program observation period.

It should be acknowledged that the observation period was relatively small (eight months) and the translation of the impact to longer term outcomes remains uncertain.

Furthermore, it is probable that the triggering of a referral to a youth camp occurred through the escalation of an at-risk behaviour (including offending). It is likely that other interventions (e.g., curfew, supervision, bail conditions) may have been triggered at the same time, therefore the causal nature of individual components (e.g., youth camp) cannot be determined. The replication of the analysis with a suitably matched control group is warranted. Furthermore, it is suggested that a robust evaluation methodology should be embedded within the future funding and application of the youth camp model. For example, the names of participant referrals who don't attend future youth camp programs should be collated and later used as a "waiting list" control group as applied within the replication of the current study. However, it is only through the provision of large-scale, longitudinal (and therefore expensive) and multi-factorial research can the direct impact of youth camp interventions, as it relates to other interventions, be adequately quantified.

Acknowledging the limitations, the results provide optimism for the efficacy of the youth camp model, in particularly for *high risk* young people. However, a more robust conclusion is that the results provide optimism for the efficacy of the broader NT Youth Justice Strategy (as a whole) and its different components (including police, justice and non-government agencies), with the youth camps being one component of that strategy.

Recommendations

- Consideration is given to repeating the current analysis with a matched control group;
- A system based and robust evaluation methodology is embedded within the future application and funding of the youth camp model.

Critical Review of Youth camp Model Applying Best-Practice Forensic Principles

Within the Youth Justice Strategy, there are a number of NT Government Departments that are engaged within the strategy. There is currently no common language, or practice methodology, that guides the broad sector's implementation of evidence-informed interventions for young people. This evaluation has applied the forensic psychology paradigm of risk, need and responsivity; an evidence-based model to formulate an understanding of youth-at-risk, to guide the evaluation methodology and review individual youth camp service models. This model provides foundational guidance to "what works" for young people presenting with at-risk behaviour. Within stakeholder feedback, while a small number of representatives were aware of this model, it did not appear embedded within practitioner intervention. Within other Australian jurisdictions this model is supporting the development of the youth justice program framework, individual services and practitioner-based interventions.

Risk Principle

The "*risk principle*" suggests that for interventions to be effective, they should target individuals who are at the highest risk of future offending or at-risk behaviour. Risk includes factors that are related to the increased propensity for *at-risk* or criminal behaviour. As these factors cannot be modified through intervention, they are considered static, and should be considered within the process of participant selection.

The *risk principle* suggests that the higher the risk of future problematic behaviour, the more intense the intervention required. In relation to the youth camp intervention, this principle suggests that the intensity of intervention should be matched to the needs of the participants. In other words, program effectiveness is maximised when the intensive interventions target young people at highest risk of engaging in an at-risk behaviour.

Taken on a whole, the youth camps are currently targeting young people at higher risk of offending and at-risk behaviour. The Brahminy program is consistently targeting the highest risk cohorts, which probably reflects their greater alignment to the court system and non-diversionary interventions. There is preliminary evidence (NT Police data) that young people at *low risk* of offending may have neutral or slightly worse outcomes by being exposed to an intensive intervention like a youth camp (possibly through association with young people who are at higher risk of offending, see Literature Review, Programming Risks).

Need Principle

According to the "*need principle*", interventions should target the factors (or needs) that directly mediate the future at-risk or dysfunctional behaviour. Needs include the attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours that an individual uses to support and maintain offending or at-risk behaviour. For this reason, "needs" form the immediate goals of intervention, as well as provide the means to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

One of the features of the *need principle* is that different at-risk behaviours present with different needs underpinning or maintaining the behavioural response. Therefore, as the current

intervention targets "at-risk" behaviour, there are a diversity of at-risk behaviours and associated needs. This supports the previous recommendation that there needs to be more clarity and "tightness" to the model's target audience, or what at-risk behaviours the model should be targeted to address.

In relation to this evaluation, the current youth camp providers are providing a range of interventions which are targeting the "needs" of young people with at-risk behaviour. However, they are implementing such strategies in an intuitive manner, with no clear and evidence-informed conceptual model guiding the implementation of individual strategies to individual young people. Furthermore, the application of skill-building approaches (which is representative of best-practice youth interventions) is occurring largely within an implicit manner, which could be significantly strengthened by aligning it to more robust learning processes (e.g., cognitive-behavioural skill-building processes). It is the authors' opinion that the above issues are magnified within the Tangentyere program.

While it is noted that the providers are targeting the right type of "needs" mediating at-risk behaviour, program outcomes can be maximised if the following occurs:

- The providers develop conceptual models to guide their practice which examines program inputs (intervention processes) as it relates to purported outcomes (e.g., develop a clear "program logic"). The evaluation has attempted to support the providers initiate this process (see individual Program Logic sections);
- Cognitive-behavioural models (e.g., problem solving skills training, anger management training) guide the skill-development intervention process;
- A participant's skill and reflective learning occurs intensively enough, and for long enough, to support the young persons' capacity to observe the skill, practice the skill, receive adult feedback on the skill and then rehearse the skill to the point of consolidation;
- The skill, attitudinal and insight outcomes are embedded within the young person's after program environment, and supported through multi-systemic interventions.

Responsivity

The principle of responsivity is considered the catalyst of treatment provision. It concerns the program or client traits that mediate the effectiveness of intervention (or outcomes). Within the forensic literature responsivity factors include: age, gender, learning styles, program features, motivation, personality, emotional expression, interests, cognitive abilities, mental illness and social skills.

The strength of the youth camp model (on a whole) is that the intervention has the capacity to engage and sustain young people who present with complex needs within a therapeutically conducive environment which has the capacity to improve the uptake of targeted intervention. Within this evaluation, it was found that the youth camp model increases responsivity by:

> ***Engagement –*** young people (including challenging and at-risk cohorts) are engaged within an intervention.

Learning Approach – the young people are engaged within an experiential (see Literature Review) as opposed to verbal/written intervention (which is often associated with feelings of failure).

Motivation for Change – this evaluation supports the viewpoint that the youth camp intervention can increase a young person's responsiveness to future change. That is, it fosters the capacity of a young person to critically reflect upon their current behavioural actions, develop realistic forward goals, explore future pathways and take committed action to achieve desired outcomes. Adolescent offenders invariably present with low motivation for change, and there is consistent and moderately strong support that the youth camp intervention can support young people transition from *contemplative* to more *action* stages of change (*preparation* and *action*). A number of questions surround the capacity of young people to sustain such *action*.

Summary

This evaluation has found that all three youth camp service providers are currently having an impact on their target audience. Outcomes are being achieved through services that are delivered in a responsive manner (upholding *responsivity principle*) and targeting the "needs" underpinning behaviour. The evaluation provides strong support that individual youth camps have the capacity to engage youth-at-risk (including Aboriginal young people) who are at high risk of future offending or at-risk behaviour, within a therapeutically conducive environment that translates to both attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, at least within the short term. As noted within the Literature Review, there are distinct challenges within the NT about the ability to engage Aboriginal young people with complex needs, most notably young people at high risk of offending, where diversionary services appear to lack utility. Within the wider youth service continuum, there are few services that can engage and sustain high risk young people within a change process, and this remains a significant strength of the program model. While this evaluation provides optimism that this can translate to longer term outcomes (including reduced offending risk), further methodologically sound and longitudinal evaluation is required.

This evaluation finds that both Balunu and Brahminy appear to be in the best position to achieve their stated outcomes. They have a clearer and more consistent program model and more sophisticated organisational systems to manage the high levels of risk associated with youth camp interventions. Despite this, all three organisations need to strengthen their application and understanding of the "*need principle*" in order to drive their organisations to upholding best-practice programming. Furthermore, there are a number of process gaps (identified in the Process Evaluation) which exposes individual service organisations to considerable risk which should be prioritised, targeted and monitored in collaboration with the funding provider.

The NT Government has made a significant investment into the youth camp strategy. Considering, at the time of initial investment, both the conceptual model underpinning the intervention and individual service providers' programs were underdeveloped, significant progress has been made. This report contains a range of recommendations, for both individual providers and stakeholders, to drive the model to best-practice application and maximise outcomes. It is

worth acknowledging however, that, in comparison to other youth interventions, the current application of the youth camp model remains both conceptually loose and underdeveloped. On this basis, the outcomes identified within this report are likely to be underestimations of the potential outcomes that are possible with the future development and refinement of the model. On the basis of this point, combined with the report's findings, future funding of the model is supported, but in a manner that supports the ongoing development of the model as a whole. The period of this funding should coincide with the time required for procured service providers to make significant progress to reaching best-practice criteria, with further methodologically sound evaluation occurring at this point to review the effectiveness and future viability of the intervention strategy against related interventions.

At the current point in time the youth camp model is comprised of three heterogeneous programs. Each program is underpinned by a different conceptual model, individual processes and client groups. The forensic literature highlights the importance of matching client risk, underlying needs and intervention. At the present point in time the umbrella concept of "youth camp" is a homogenous concept that does not adequately delineate the current intervention within the continuum of youth services.

Although not stated as a recommendation, the authors suggest a move away from the term "camp" as defining the intervention. Camps are representative of a recreational activity that can be provided by any agency or institution (e.g., school). Instead, the term "program" better captures the nature of the intervention. That is, programs have direct aims, objectives and processes to achieve their stated outcomes, and they are longitudinal or embedded interventions as opposed to "once-off" or "stand-alone" in nature.

To facilitate better integration of services, matching of young people and interventions, and future evaluation, it is suggested that strong consideration is given to dividing the current youth camp model into two separate models of intervention which reflect the length of intervention. At the present point in time there is currently a short-term model (Tangentyere & Balunu) and longer-term model (Brahminy). This evaluation provides support for both models. The authors have labeled the longer and shorter term programs as: "*therapeutic residential program*" and "*therapeutic camp program*", respectively. The use of the word "therapeutic" is applied to express a targeted needs-based intervention, as underpinned by best-practice criteria, and acknowledging that different programs will apply different therapeutic processes to achieve their outcomes (e.g., cultural healing versus wilderness-adventure interventions). The delineation, costing and application of these programs is provided in the following chapters.

Recommendations

- The NT Government meets individually with Brahminy, Balunu and Tangentyere and prioritises a list of future actions that relate to the recommendations made within this report.

- The NT Government continue to fund the youth camp intervention but in a manner and style that supports the model developing better integration within the wider youth justice service continuum, and drives individual service delivery towards best-practice criteria (see Chapter 8).

- The period of this funding should coincide with the time required for service providers to make significant progress to reaching best-practice criteria, with further methodologically sound evaluation occurring at this point to review the effectiveness and future viability of the intervention strategy against related interventions.

- Consideration is given to dividing the current youth camp model into two separate models of intervention to facilitate both better integration and matching of young people and interventions. The authors have labeled these as "*therapeutic residential programs*" and "*therapeutic camp programs*".

CHAPTER 8. BEST PRACTICE CRITERIA

In determining the best-practice criteria for the youth camp[11] model, it is important to begin with an understanding of the hierarchy of outcomes that are required to reduce offending, re-offending and other anti-social behaviour. Based on an analysis of the literature, together with an understanding of the legislative and policy context, the following outcomes have been identified as core to reducing the rates of offending and recidivist offending. It is acknowledged that this is not a comprehensive overview of outcomes for youth offending or at-risk behaviour, but is designed to show the relationship between short- and long-term outcomes, as a means to initiate a broad "program logic" for the youth camp program model.

Figure 1. Youth Camp Model Outcomes Hierarchy

SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Positive attitudinal change	Decrease in risk factors associated with offending	Decrease in the percentage of recidivist offending
Increased self-awareness	Decreases in offending post-program	Decrease in the rate of offences
Increased assertiveness skills	Decreased prevalence of substance use	Reduction in the impact of youth offending
Development of pro-social peer relationships and attitudes	Increased engagement with school	Decrease in the prevalence and severity of mental health issues
Increased understanding and application of strategies for adaptive problem solving, emotional regulation and decision making skills	Increased capacity to connect with and/or negotiate family relationships	Enhanced community wellbeing
	Improved self concept and cultural identity	Enhanced individual health and wellbeing
Increased understanding of relevant cultural practices and wisdom		Increased self-esteem for individuals

Given the finite resources available for youth justice services in meeting the significant demand in the sector, it is imperative that consideration is given to the cost and utilisation of funds

[11] *Youth camp* from this point onwards refer to both the "therapeutic camp program" and "therapeutic residential program"

associated with the youth camps. Based on the restorative justice focus that underpins the youth justice system, together with an analysis of the services and processes that make up the youth justice system, the challenge remains to reduce the number of young people who participate in diversionary services but re-offend in the subsequent year. Currently 76% of young people who offend (and undertake diversionary services) do not re-offend within the first year. It is recommended that future directions for the youth camps are targeted to reducing the remaining 24% of young people who are not diverted away from the youth justice service following participation in mainstream diversionary services. For the purpose of this analysis, the definition of "diversionary" is taken from the report *Early Intervention and Youth Conferencing* as follows:

> *…programs and practices which are employed for young people who have initial contact with the police, but are diverted from the traditional juvenile justice processes before children's court adjudication.*
>
> (Polk et al, December 2003)

Supporting the *risk principle* of forensic intervention (see Literature Review), Polk et al. note the importance of reserving the cost intensive interventions for the most serious (or highest risk) cases to ensure they are cost effective.

Throughout the evaluation process it has become clear that there are two distinct models for youth camps that can meet different needs within the system. The shorter youth camp model, titled *"Therapeutic Camp Program",* is likely to be effective in augmenting mainstream diversionary system for those young people who are likely to re-offend without additional intervention. The more intensive "*Therapeutic Residential Program",* on the other hand, is likely to be effective in meeting the needs of young people who have disengaged from services, are presenting with multi-needs (including recidivist tendencies) with a high risk that they will end up in juvenile detention. In other words, the *Therapeutic Camp Program* provides a targeted service to at-risk young people who are likely to re-offend and the *Therapeutic Residential Program* targets young people who are starting to become entrenched within the youth justice system.

There is a growing recognition that in order to "reduce youth offending, programs need to be designed and implemented that address the complex needs of persistent young offenders" (Allard et al., 2010). The following models are designed to identify and respond to the needs of young people who are likely to re-offend, as well as those who are becoming entrenched in recidivist offending.

Given the identification of two distinct models, best practice criteria will be considered separately for each model as follows:

THERAPEUTIC CAMP PROGRAM MODEL

The *Therapeutic Camp Program* is shorter in duration, between 8 and 10 days, and delivered to between 8-10 young people (aged 13 to 16) in a wilderness environment with follow-up to generalise outcomes to the young person's day-to-day environment. The program is targeted to those young people who have demonstrated offending and anti-social behaviour and likely to re-offend based on the assessment of evidence-informed risk factors.

An overview of the model, or its "Program Logic", is summarised at the end of this chapter. The Program Logic, together with identified measures, forms the basis of an evaluation framework which measures the achievement of projected outcomes.

Targeting

Based on the principles of cost and utilisation, together with best-practice information, the targeting of the *Therapeutic Camp Program* is critical to the overall performance of the broader system. To this end, it is recommended that, at the point of referral, a screening and assessment process is conducted which is guided by the Interagency Collaboration Panel (ICP) with input from the service provider. This would ensure that those young people most at need at any one point in time receive a service, and most importantly, ensure that the service is integrated into a broader strategy for the young person and their family. It would also enable the sharing of information in order to make an accurate assessment of a young person's suitability for the program and subsequent intervention.

Program Outcomes

This model's program outcomes are consistent with those identified in the Outcomes Hierarchy (Figure 1). The differences in the two models are reflected in the target profile and intensity of delivery; both in terms of length and approach.

Key Principles

The key principles that underpin the *Therapeutic Camp Program* model are as follows:

- Culture is foundational to the program design and cultural programs are tailored to the individual;
- The program is sufficiently challenging (physical and/or emotional) to promote resilience and meaningful achievement in the young person, as well as promote enhanced skill development as it relates to coping and interacting with the world;
- The program has clearly articulated therapeutic intent;

- Young people form strong and trusting relationships with the camp facilitators and program staff;
- Young people are afforded the opportunity to experience a wilderness environment away from their everyday experience;
- A continuous improvement quality monitoring and evaluation process informs the ongoing evolution of the program; and,
- An analysis of each young person's needs and strengths provides guidance for tailoring the camp experience and follow-up case management service.

Key Components

The following represent key components of the proposed *Therapeutic Camp Program* model:

- Clear information regarding the model outcomes and the theory that underpins the logic for the model is freely available;
- The program, including individual components, are delivered in a consistent manner (upholding program integrity, see Literature Review);
- Programs are delivered in a wilderness environment with appropriate and individually tailored risk management that can respond to the dynamic nature of risk;
- Cultural programs are delivered to young people to help them connect to their cultural heritage and build positive self-identity;
- The congregate living experience provides an opportunity for young people to learn and practice different coping skills;
- The camp is delivered based on a cohesive therapeutic framework, which includes explicitly delivered skill-development targeting "needs" underpinning at-risk behaviour;
- There is a clear targeting process for referrals, based upon evidence-informed risk criteria, developed in consultation with the NT Government (or funding provider);
- Comprehensive policies on behaviour management are developed which provide practical guidance on the application of physical intervention (restraint), with consideration given to staff being provided nationally recognised training in non-violent intervention strategies as guided by an individually assessed risk assessment;
- The service provider actively undertakes partnership building to increase service integration, as well as build capacity to augment the after-care process;
- An assessment of each young person's needs and strengths is undertaken to inform the case management process;

- Follow-up case management occurs for up to 12 months that is guided by a multi-systemic program model and informed by the forensic principles of risk, need and responsivity. This process is facilitated through continuous relationships developed between young people and youth workers on the youth camp program;
- Follow-up case management is based upon individual need, and reviewed and monitored through a documented approach provided to stakeholders;
- Peer mentoring approaches are embedded within the model to support the longitudinal progress of past participants (who show promise) and augment program outcomes;
- Prior to the program starting, participants undergo medical screening and/or assessment, as informed by a risk assessment of the program model;
- The program delivers a structured 24/7 program timetable, where individual activities and programs are implemented in response to identified client needs;
- Program staff are employed on the basis of clearly specified minimum criteria linked to program output, and engaged within a process of ongoing professional development and up-skilling;
- Timely (within 10 days) post-camp written feedback is provided to the referral agency;
- A variety of experiential activities provide young people exposure to different attitudes, beliefs and strategies that assist young people to develop more adaptive behaviours; and,
- Young people connect with a positive and meaningful “narrative” from the camp experience which becomes a reference for sustaining the impact of the experience.

THERAPEUTIC RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM MODEL

The *Therapeutic Residential Model* is much longer and more intensive, in terms of resources and approach, in comparison to the *Therapeutic Camp Program.* As such, it is targeted to those young people who have effectively disengaged from services, have comorbid issues and present with recidivist offending patterns. The *Therapeutic Residential Program* offers an alternative to detention for young people who are exhibiting high levels of offending and anti-social behaviours. Young people targeted for this service will have complex needs that place them at high risk of having a long association with justice systems without intensive intervention. The length of residential stay is guided by an independent Clinical Review Process, but it is anticipated to be from 6 to 18 weeks, followed by embedded follow-up case management.

For an overview of this model, see "Program Logic" for the *Therapeutic Residential Program* at the end of the chapter. The Program Logic, together with identified measures, forms the basis of an evaluation framework which measures the achievement of projected outcomes.

Targeting

As indicated previously, the targeting of services is critical from an outcomes perspective as well as from a cost and utilisation perspective. Responding to young people with complex and multiple needs necessitates the integration of a range of services prior, during and post participation in the *Therapeutic Residential Program*.

To facilitate the integration process, it is recommended that young people, and their families, who are identified for the service are engaged by a Family Support Centre. This may include young people whose families are subject to a Family Responsibility Agreement or Order, however each family must be engaged within holistic case management with a lead agency who can provide specialist case management services. The Interagency Collaboration Panel (ICP) would consider which young person would benefit most from the *Therapeutic Residential Program* and ensure it is integrated within the broader intervention for the family.

The ICP provides background case coordination and monitoring of all young people within a *Therapeutic Residential Program*. Where there is no statutory case manager, the ICP delegates this role to a suitably qualified individual. The ICP monitor and provide a delegate to the independent Clinical Review Process, which is a professional body that includes representatives from the *Therapeutic Residential Program*, case manager and other relevant stakeholders. The Clinical Review Process is conducted at the point of program entry, three-weekly for the duration of the young person's stay and at the point of exit. The review process provides recommendations in relation to the length of program stay and post-program exit planning. Where consensus cannot be reached, the ICP delegate is provided the casting decision, with the professional input of other ICP members. This Clinical Review Process provides recommendations on the application of post-program case management, including the application of discretionary funding for post-program case management services based upon a unit-costing formula.

Young people identified for the service will have experienced the diversionary process, exhibit risk factors associated with becoming an entrenched recidivist offender and have complexity in at least three or more life domains.

Program Outcomes

The program outcomes are consistent with the Outcomes Hierarchy identified earlier (Figure 1). The differences in the two models are reflected in the target profile and intensity of delivery; both in terms of length and approach.

Key Principles

Key principles that underpin the *Therapeutic Residential Program* model are as follows:

- Culture is foundational to the program design and cultural programs are tailored to identified individual needs;
- The program is sufficiently challenging to promote resilience and meaningful achievement in the young person, as well as promote the enhanced skill development as it relates to coping and interacting with the world;
- The program is based on a therapeutic model with a pre-program holistic assessment and ongoing clinical review;
- Young people form strong and trusting relationships with the camp facilitators and program staff;
- A wilderness and/or remote environment enables young people to have respite from everyday distractions for an extended period;
- The environment provides a natural, transparent and safe means to contain young people within a therapeutic process;
- Embedded, targeted and explicitly delivered cognitive behavioural interventions allow young people to develop new skills and adaptive behaviours;
- Targeted educational experiences provide young people with opportunities to further their education or explore further training or vocational opportunities;
- A continuous improvement quality monitoring and evaluating process informs the ongoing evolution of the program;
- An analysis of each young person's needs and strengths provides guidance for tailoring the *Therapeutic Residential Program* experience, and follow-up case management service to the collective and individual needs of the young people involved.

Key Components

The following represent key components of the proposed *Therapeutic Residential Program* model:

- Clear information regarding the model's outcomes and the theory that underpins the logic for the model is freely available;
- The program, including individual components, are delivered in a consistent manner (upholding program integrity, see Literature Review);
- Programs are delivered in a wilderness environment with appropriate and individually tailored risk management that can respond to the dynamic nature of risk;
- Individual tailored cultural programs and experiences are delivered to young people to help them connect to their cultural heritage and build positive self-identity;
- The congregate living experience provides an opportunity for young people to learn, practice and continually rehearse adaptive coping skills;
- A Clinical Review Process, which is chaired by a delegate of the ICP, guides and informs the clinical intervention for individual young people, including admissions, referrals and exits from the accommodation and subsequent case management process;
- There is a clear targeting process for referrals through the ICP;
- All prospective participants undertake an independent medical assessment prior to program initiation, with medically related inclusion and exclusion criteria reviewed within the assessment process;
- Intensive supervision and support provide safety, stability and security for young people;
- A facility provided by a service provider can accommodate up to 8 young people with the view to accommodating an average of six young people at any one time;
- The program can engage and sustain young people within a therapeutically conducive environment for an extended period in a safe and transparent manner;
- The program delivers a structured 24/7 program timetable, where individual activities and programs are implemented in response to identified client needs;
- The facility provides the opportunity to separate young people to assist in the management of complex behaviours and potential contamination issues for participants;
- Comprehensive policies on behaviour management are developed which provide practical guidance on the application of physical intervention (restraint), with staff provided nationally recognised training in non-violent intervention strategies;
- Program staff are employed on the basis of clearly specified minimum criteria linked to program output, and engaged within a process of ongoing professional development and up-skilling;

- A validated and holistic assessment of each young person's needs and strengths is undertaken to inform the residential intervention and case management process;
- A validated assessment tool is applied at the point of referral and then replicated throughout the intervention;
- Follow-up case management occurs for up to 12 months that is guided by a multi-systemic program model, and aided through continuous relationships developed between young people and youth workers developed within the program;
- Follow-up case management is based upon individual need, and reviewed and monitored through a documented approach provided to stakeholders;
- Timely (within 10 days) discharge feedback is provided to referral agency;
- The program offers an extensive array of experiential activities that provide young people with exposure to different attitudes, beliefs and strategies that assist young people to develop more adaptive behaviours; and,
- Young people connect with a positive and meaningful "narrative" from the experience which becomes a reference for sustaining the impact of the experience.

Therapeutic Camp Program Model

Situation:

The over-representation of Aboriginal young people in detention, coupled with concerns regarding anti-social behaviour, has prompted the implementation of a Youth Justice Strategy in the Northern Territory. Youth camps are one of these initiatives designed to reduce the number of young people who re-offend. The *Therapeutic Camp Program* provides support to young people with complex needs to establish positive coping behaviours and reduce the likelihood of exhibiting anti-social behaviour through a wilderness camp experience. The service is designed to augment mainstream diversionary services for those young people assessed to be likely to re-offend without further intervention.

Inputs	**Outputs**		**Outcomes -- Impact**		
	Activities	*Participation*	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
Funding for: 1 FTE Manager 2 FTE Youth Workers 1 FTE Program Coordinator 1.5 FTE Program Coordination Camp accommodation Incidental Funds Vehicles x2 Client/Program Funds Cultural Consultants Office Rent Office Expenses Program Expenses Travel Expenses Training Expenses Program Information	Case Management Services Therapeutic Programs Experiential skill based interventions Wilderness camp experience from 8 to 10 days Needs Assessment Living skills development Cognitive Behavioural Intervention Post camp peer mentoring programming Cultural Programs Education Programs Opportunities for reflection Programs are tailored to the collective and individual need	Young people with complex needs who are unlikely to be successfully diverted away from the Youth justice system through the mainstream diversion process Young people's families and/or carers/significant others	Positive attitudinal change Increased self-awareness Increase in assertiveness skills Increased capacity to negotiate peer group relationships Increased understanding of strategies for problem solving, emotional regulation and consequences Increased understanding of relevant cultural practices and wisdom	Decrease in risk factors associated with offending Decreases in offending post the camp experience Decreased prevalence of substance use Increased engagement with school Increased capacity to connect with and/or negotiate family relationships Improved self concept	Decrease in the percentage of recidivist offending Decrease in the rate of offences Reduction in the impact of youth offending Decrease in the prevalence and severity of mental health issues Enhanced community wellbeing Enhanced individual health and wellbeing Increased self-esteem for individuals

Assumptions

The youth camp is integrated as part of a broader and more holistic intervention.
6 Camps per year are delivered with 10 young people on each camp.
Youth camp programs have a long-term enduring positive impact for young people.

External Factors

Availability of adequate recurrent funding.
Political commitment and supportive legislative and policy environment.
Variations in public opinion (i.e., reactions against an 'event' causes a backlash from the public in the manner in which juvenile offending is being managed).

Therapeutic Residential Program Model

Situation:

The over-representation of Aboriginal young people in detention, coupled with concerns regarding anti-social behaviour has prompted the implementation of a Youth Justice Strategy in the Northern Territory. Youth camps are one of these initiatives designed to reduce the number of young people who re-offend. The *Therapeutic Residential Program* provides intensive support to young people with multi-dimensional complexity to establish positive coping behaviours and reduce the likelihood of exhibiting anti-social behaviour through skill based interventions. The service is targeted to the 23% of young people who re-offend in their first year after attending diversionary services to reduce the rate of entrenched recidivism.

Inputs	**Outputs**		**Outcomes -- Impact**		
	Activities	*Participation*	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
Funding for: 1 FTE Manager 2 FTE Youth Workers per rotating shift (11.5 total) 1 Post Care Support Coordinator 1.5 FTE Program Coordination/Education 0.5 FTE Clinical Support 1 FTE Property Management (Maintenance/Cleaning) 0.5 FTE Administration 0.5FTE Clinical Support Accommodation facility with capacity for 8 young people Incidental funds Vehicles x2 Client/Program Funds (including cultural programs) Office expenses Property Damage and other Capital Works Funding Travel Training Program Information	Case Management Services Therapeutic Support and supervision Skill Based Interventions Accommodation (Average of 3 months) Holistic Needs Assessment Living skills development Cognitive Behavioural Intervention Post care support Engagement of young people for extended periods Cultural Programs Education Programs	Young people with high and complex needs (comorbidity of issues) who have not successfully responded to either diversionary programs or other youth justice interventions Young people's families and/or carers/significant others	Positive attitudinal change Increased self-awareness Increase in assertiveness skills Increased capacity to negotiate peer group relationships Increased understanding of strategies for problem solving, emotional regulation and consequences Increased understanding of relevant cultural practices and wisdom	Decrease in risk factors associated with offending Decreases in offending post the camp experience Decreased prevalence of substance use Increased engagement with school Increased capacity to connect with and/or negotiate family relationships Improved self concept	Decrease in the percentage of recidivist offending Decrease in the rate of offences Reduction in the impact of youth offending Decrease in the prevalence and severity of mental health issues Enhanced community wellbeing Enhanced individual health and wellbeing Increased self-esteem for individuals

Assumptions

Existence of a Clinical Review Process with independent professional representation.
Average residential stay of 3 months and average 12 months total case management.
Residential Therapeutic Programs have a long-term enduring positive impact for young people.

External Factors

Availability of adequate recurrent funding.
Political commitment and supportive legislative and policy environment.
Variations in public opinion (i.e., reactions against an 'event' causes a backlash from the public in the manner in which juvenile offending is being managed).

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Program Logic templates are sourced from:

http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html

CHAPTER 9. COST EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUTH CAMP STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

Factors Impacting on Analysis

The authors have been asked to make comment on the cost effectiveness of the youth camp model. There are a number of extraneous factors that impact on this analysis:

- The NT Government funded three providers to provide a "youth camp" model of intervention which, at the time of initial funding, was largely in its conceptual and practical infancy. Owing to this starting point, there are high program establishment and infrastructure costs that need to be acknowledged within this analysis, which cannot be easily delineated. It is expected that, over time, established models and interventions will manifest in improved cost efficiency;
- The youth camps are delivered in remote and wilderness environments, which inflates program costs in the need to retain program staff and conduct adequate risk management;
- The youth camps are a "unique" and heterogeneous model of intervention in which provides a number of distinct challenges in comparing "like-for-like" interventions;

At an individual service provider level, the following factors impact on the analysis of cost effectiveness:

- Many of the providers have received income from other streams which impacts on the research team's ability to assess the true cost of the programs;
- A comparison of individual service provider budgets indicates that each provider utilises different cost codes (or budget lines) for different expenditure, making cost comparison's difficult;
- The funding conditions have changed for Brahminy over the course of the current Service Agreement;
- The NT Government funding of Balunu was briefly withheld and then reinstated, which needs to be acknowledged within the unit costing analysis;
- There are significant variations in the way the current Service Plans are written in terms of service delivery. For instance, service expectations have been articulated in terms of "number of weeks", "number of camps" and "number of young people". This poses difficulties for cross-program comparisons.

Furthermore, the research team initially proposed to undertake a cost-outcome analysis of the youth camp model. For such an analysis to occur in a valid and ethical manner, it requires methodologically sound and reliable information on both current program costs and outcome data. As previously noted, there are a number of methodological problems with the NT Police outcome data obtained in this study. Traditionally outcome analyses are quantified by "effect size", a statistical measure that examines the size of the difference between pre- and post-

program measures. Such a measure provides an opportunity to compare one intervention against another by examining the size of the outcome. While in the current evaluation "moderate" reductions in offending risk were seen across the intervention period, this cannot be attributed to the youth camp intervention. As previously recommended, the application of a pretest posttest control-group design facilitates causal analysis and the facilitation of valid cost-outcome analyses. Owing to the limitations of the current study, the youth camp model cannot be reliably compared with other interventions, but qualitative inferences and comments are made.

Assessment Process

It was the intent of the research team to apply a transparent assessment tool/process to conduct the cost effectiveness analyses. Owing to the issues previously identified, it was the opinion of the research team that it was not possible to assess individual providers, or the intervention on a whole, based upon a single quantitative formula or defined assessment process, as initially hoped.

Instead, the research team has conducted a qualitative analysis that evaluates the current providers, as well as the model on a whole, on the basis of the following three qualitative components:

1. Funded Versus Actual Services Provided[12]

Based upon the funding and participant figures contained in this report, the per day costs of young people attending the youth camp program is as follows[13]:

- **Brahminy –** Under the current Service Plan, Brahminy was provided $400,000 (per annum) to fund 12 young people to stay up to a maximum of 12 weeks. Based upon the assumption that funding has been provided for all young people to stay 12 weeks (1008 program days), the unit costing of program attendance is $397 per day. For year 2009/10, the actual unit costing (relating to actual number of participants staying within program) was $688 (representing 568 program days), for an average cost of intervention of $42,147. Currently, there is a lack of shared understanding between Brahminy and the NT Government in relation to the number of program days that are to be provided under the current Service Plan.

- **Balunu -** Under the current Service Plan, Balunu is to provide 6 healing camps (with follow-up support) for 10 young people per camp. It is implied through this that Balunu should service 60 young people. They are currently funded $300,000 per annum, with an additional $145,000 from FaHCSIA. In 2010, Balunu conducted 6 camps for 52 young people, the unit costing of each participant on the program and intervention was $5769 (based upon $300,000 funding) and $8557 (based upon $445,000 funding).

- **Tangentyere –** Under the current Service Plan, Tangentyere is required to provide a minimum of 8-weeks of camp, for between 10-12 young people, with post-camp services. They are currently provided $370,000 per annum. In the financial year 2009-10, six programs were delivered for 42 young people for a unit costing of $7142

[12] All figures provided in this section of the report are GST exclusive
[13] These figures have been derived from data provided in the individual service provider chapters (Chapter 4-6), and each service provider has been provided the opportunity to comment on these starting figures.

per participant per program[14]. It cannot be reliably inferred from the current Service Plan how many young people should be serviced per financial year.

2. Comparative Services and Benchmarks:

Operation Flinders Program

The Operation Flinders Program, which is an eight-day intensive wilderness-adventure program for youth-at-risk in South Australia, has a current unit costing of participant of approximately $1600.00 (per program, no follow-up). Cost comparisons are cautioned because:

- The Foundation receives significant in-kind support (reduced cost of food, free fuel, subsidised expenses, and significant volunteer support);
- Schools, parents and sponsoring agencies are responsible for the transport costs to and from program site, as well as providing half of the program staffing;
- Each program is delivered to 80-90 young people, which requires significant volunteer support to manage and coordinate, and the Foundation maximises economies of scale.

Juvenile Detention

The cost of housing a young person in NT juvenile detention is reported at being $648.00 per day (year 2008/09, figure may now be higher).

Therapeutic Residential Care

While the research team does not have access to current figures, it is their understanding that the costs of well-developed and therapeutically resourced models of residential care are congruent with juvenile detentions models.

Contracted Case Management

Contracted case management provision in South Australia, embedded within schools, has a yearly cost of $3400.00 per young person, with an average of 40 hours of client related contact time per year. This figure has been used to formulate the proposed case management component of the intervention.

Community Service Benchmarks

From the research team's experience, the payroll expenses of community service agencies represent approximately 70% of their total budget. In general terms, on-costs (i.e., costs associated with superannuation, payroll, Workcover etc) equates to approximately 20% of the salary.

Other Factors

It should be noted that there is considerable variation in costs across agencies depending on the level of established infrastructure (i.e., systems such as Human Resources, Information Technology, Finance etc) as well as the economy of scale that is able to be achieved in the

[14] Based upon funding provision of $300,000.00

supply of goods and services. Subsequently, there is significant difficulty in applying generic costings. The budget figures that are provided in the following analyses have been extrapolated from current budget figures from existing youth camp providers, but reviewed and analysed in relation to the research team's current understanding of the costs associated with running "like" programs.

3. Costs of Best-Practice Models

To assist in the comparison process, and to provide the NT Government guidance on future procurement processes, the research team has conducted a cost breakdown of both the *Therapeutic Camp Program* model and the *Therapeutic Residential Program* model. The costs have been based upon the program inputs identified within the Program Logic section of the previous chapter.

Table 1. Therapeutic Residential Program

Cost line	Expense	
Manager (1.0FTE)	$90,000.00	*
Administration support (0.5FTE)	$30,000.00	*
Youth workers (11.5FTE)**	$759,000.00	*
Program and After Care Coordinator (1.0FTE)	$75,600.00	*
Educational Officer (0.5FTE)	$37,800.00	*
Clinical Support (0.5FTE)	$45,000.00	*
Property Manager (including maintenance) (0.5FTE)	$35,000.00	*
Camp accommodation (@ $600 per week)	$36,000.00	
Capital expenses (including repairing damage)	$30,000.00	
Food for camps (@ $600 per week)	$36,000.00	
Vehicles/boat/equipment	$30,000.00	
Staff training ($1000.00 per staff member)	$16,500.00	
Cultural consultants	$10,000.00	
Incidentals (gas, water, electricity etc)	$30,000.00	
Office rent and equipment	$27,000.00	
Office expenses	$3,000.00	
Program expenses	$20,000.00	
Total	$1,310,900.00	

* Includes superannuation, Workcover and remote location employment costs (allowing for 20% cost on top of base salary)
**Based upon two youth workers per rotating shift, with an additional youth worker rostered per day for back-up and providing outreach.

Within this model, follow-up case management may or may not be provided by program staff, but is guided by the Clinical Review Process. For this reason, case management is separately costed within the model.

Assuming that the daily average occupancy rate is 6 young people over the course of the year, the unit costing of program attendance together with case work and pre and post care support is $598.00 per day. Assuming that a young person has an 8 week intervention, the total cost of intervention is $33,520 per young person. As noted, follow-up case management and support remains a central component of the program. In instances where there is not an

overarching professional case management service available externally, intensive case management can be purchased separately. Based upon current contracted case management rates in South Australia, with an additional 50% for remote location servicing, the application of 52 hours of post-care case management is $6630 per 12 month period. Therefore the total intervention is $40,150, which equates to an average unit costing of $110 per day over the course of the 12 month period; or $34,270 for the duration of the residential program (based on an eight week stay) which includes a case management fee of $1020 for the same period or a total of $612 per residential program day.

Table 2. Therapeutic Camp Program

Cost line	Expense	
Manager (1.0FTE)	$90,000.00	*
Administration support (0.5FTE)	$30,000.00	*
Youth workers (2.0FTE)	$132,000.00	*
Program Manager/After Care Coordinator (1.0FTE)	$75,600.00	*
Camp accommodation (63 days @ $300 per day)	$16,000.00	
Food for camps ($1500.00 per camp)	$9,000.00	
Vehicles/boat/equipment	$30,000.00	
Staff training ($1000.00 per staff member)	$6,000.00	
Cultural consultants	$5,000.00	
Administration incidentals (gas, water, electricity etc)	$15,000.00	
Office rent	$20,000.00	
Office expenses	$3,000.00	
Program expenses	$12,000.00	
Total	$443,600.00	

* Includes superannuation, Workcover and related employment costs (allowing for 20% cost on top of base salary)

This model is based upon a case management ratio of 1:15, with there being an expectation that 25% of clients will access 12 months of case management, 50% of clients will access 6 months of case management and 25% of clients will access 3 months of case management. Within this model, follow-up case management is provided by program staff and costed within the model.

Based on an average of nine days for each camp, with six camps per annum, including case management support, this equates to $73,933 per program. Extrapolated to each young person (i.e., the camp experience and case management) the intervention cost is $7393 (assuming 10 participants per program).

SUMMARY REVIEW OF CURRENT SERVICE PROVIDERS

Balunu

In relation to current financial reporting, the research team notes small discrepancies between the independently Audited Statement and the statements provided to the NT Government. Balunu are currently funded to provide a service for 60 young people, and in 2010 they

serviced 52 young people. There is currently a negative differential between funded and actual services provided. As per Balunu's current Business Plan (which includes current state and federal funding for year 2010-11), the unit costing per participant (per program) was $8557 for the year 2010 or $7416 if a full quota of participants (60) is applied. This figure is close to the funding formulae attached to the proposed *Therapeutic Camp Program* ($7393), however, the proposed model is both more conceptually and practically robust.

Brahminy

As noted, there is currently a lack of shared understanding between Brahminy and the NT Government in relation to the number of program days that are to be provided under the current Service Plan. If one makes an assumption that, under the current Service Plan, Brahminy is to service 12 young people for the maximum 12 weeks, then on this basis there has been a 44% shortfall of actual service provision for the year 2009-10. For the period of 2009-10, the unit costing of a participant's stay at Brahminy was $688 per participant day. If the assumption is made that the current cost of the service is $500 per participant day (fee currently charged to other NT Government agencies and stakeholders from other Australian jurisdictions), then in the year 2009-10 there was either an under-utilisation of services or an overcharging of program costs. Taken on a whole, a number of questions are raised in reference to the historical cost efficiency of the Brahminy program.

The cost of participant stay in 2009-10 ($688 per day) is close to the unit costing of juvenile detention (and likely to be similar to therapeutic residential care), but higher than the funding formulae attached to the proposed *Therapeutic Residential Program* ($598). However, the proposed model is both more conceptually and practically robust, with higher levels of integrated clinical and therapeutic provision.

Tangentyere

Tangentyere is currently funded to provide 8-weeks of camp, for between 10-12 young people, with post-camp services. In the financial year 2009-10, six programs were delivered to 42 young people for a unit costing of $7142.85 per participant per program[15]. If one makes the assumption that the 6 camps should have had a minimum of 10 participants, there is currently a negative differential between funded and actual number of services provided. The unit costing figure of $7142 is slightly lower than the funding formulae attached to the proposed *Therapeutic Camp Program* ($8,214); whose model is both more conceptually and practically robust.

SUMMARY REVIEW OF "YOUTH CAMP" MODEL

At the current point in time, based upon the assumptions made, at least two of the service providers (Balunu & Tangentyere) and possibly three (Brahminy) have over the course of the Service Agreement not met their level of funded service, as has been analysed through the previous section. This appears linked to both a lack of shared understanding of the expectations of the current Service Plan in relation to Brahminy, and for the other providers,

[15] Based upon funding provision of $300,000.00

low participant group sizes (at times). While it is the first author's experience that the later is common with such programming, this can be mitigated through service provider's ensuring that they are highly visible within the marketplace, applying robust marketing and recruitment approaches, and using emergency waiting lists. Recommendations have been made in the previous chapters relating to these issues (Chapter 4-6).

Recommendations

- Within future procurement processes, the NT Government develop clearly defined service expectations that facilitate independent analysis and review of unit costing;
- The NT Government prioritise recommendations with the service providers that relate to program visibility, the application of robust marketing and recruitment processes, and mitigating risk that funded service will be unused.

As noted, the cost effectiveness of the current programs, as it relates to other interventions, cannot be easily delineated. The research team has chosen to examine the cost effectiveness of the proposed camp models against comparable interventions and/or best practice interventions.

Therapeutic Residential Program

The *Therapeutic Residential Program* is closely aligned to the youth justice service continuum in terms of participant risk and need. As noted, the proposed program is slightly more cost effective than the juvenile detention option, but when including the case management component the costing is marginally higher (if not the same depending on current cost calculations of juvenile detention). If it was assessed that this model achieved higher outcomes than a juvenile detention intervention, then one could strongly argue that this is a cost-effective alternative to detention. Stakeholders who refer to this program within the legal system anecdotally suggest that such programming options achieve greater outcomes for young people compared to juvenile detention. Based upon the information contained within the Literature Review, it is the authors' opinion that *Therapeutic Residential Programs*, when delivered upon sound conceptual models and in a robust evidence-informed manner, are more closely aligned to a best-practice intervention (in comparison to juvenile detention). Furthermore, if such programs integrate a multi-system therapeutic approach within post-care follow-up, this would be more closely aligned to a best-practice intervention. Taken on a whole, there is preliminary but strong supporting evidence that *Therapeutic Residential Programs* are more cost effective (e.g., achieve higher outcomes) in comparison to juvenile detention options. As previously recommended, further robust evaluation is required to better inform this opinion.

Therapeutic Camp Program

A comparison analysis of the *Therapeutic Camp Program* is more difficult. The proposed program integrates an intensive therapeutic camp intervention with follow-up case management. At the current point in time, an evidence-informed intervention for high risk young offenders is multi-systemic therapy with embedded cognitive-behavioural skill-building based upon an evidence-based intervention framework (e.g., risk, need & responsivity). Other Australian jurisdictions are exploring this model within a case management framework. The proposed model, *Therapeutic Camp Program*, integrates case management components within its follow-up, but applies an intensive camp intervention to augment the intervention.

Therefore, the question is whether or not the intensive camp intervention increases the impact or effectiveness of the case management intervention, as opposed to just delivering a case-management approach based upon a multi-systemic framework. As noted within this evaluation, there is strong support that the camp intervention increases intervention responsiveness and can be a catalyst for motivation for change (*responsivity principle*), therefore there is cautious optimism that the integration of the camp component may increase the effectiveness of the subsequent multi-systemic intervention. Considering the unique needs of the Northern Territory, in particular the challenges in engaging Aboriginal young people with complex needs and no longer serviced within the diversionary system, it is the authors' opinion that the further exploration and development of the youth camp model, as proposed, is conducted. This should be conducted in a manner that includes the ongoing review and monitoring of related interventions within Australia, as well as the ongoing and robust evaluation of the youth camp model (as previously recommended).

Key Point

- Based upon everything contained within this report, it is the authors' opinion that individual youth camp programs are unlikely to be cost effective when they are based upon conceptually loose models, are applied in an inconsistent and intuitive manner, and do not include a post-care process.

Recommendations

- The NT Government continues to review and monitor a range of youth justice interventions with Australia to assess their application and utility to the Northern Territory, and assess their efficacy against the current youth camp model.

CHAPTER 10. SUMMARY: FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is dedicated to summarising the higher level recommendations associated with the youth camps. More detailed recommendations for the current camps can be found within the individual chapters for each respective camp. This chapter should be read in conjunction with the recommendations provided in Chapter 7, *Evaluation Summary and Critical Review of Youth Camp Model as an Intervention Strategy.*

In an area of high demand, and finite resources, it is imperative that the youth camps are clearly conceptualised as part of the broader system and targeted to those who are both most in need and most likely to benefit from the camps. In addition, and based on an ecological approach to working with young people with significant and complex needs, the youth camps must be embedded within a broader intervention that seeks to address and support other elements associated with the young person's day-to-day living environment. The most critical element is the young person's family, followed by those who constitute the young person's community; including their peer group, extended family and significant others.

At the highest level, the key imperative is ensuring that the camps are integrated within the broad service continuum. In the first instance this should be focussed on the youth justice service system, however, consideration should also be given to integrating the youth camps with other relevant services systems (e.g., health, mental health, education & housing).

While issues identified with the lack of cohesion in the broader youth justice system falls outside of the terms of reference for this evaluation, there are considerable impacts on the future effectiveness of the youth camps and other associated programs (including the supervision of legal orders for young people). As such, it is critical that work is undertaken as soon as practicable to create a more cohesive system that can meet the diverse needs of young people and their families who come into contact with the youth justice system. Based on an analysis of the system, the authors support a consolidation of youth justice functions within the newly formed Department of Children and Families; including the establishment of a system dedicated to the supervision of legal orders for young people. There are also reasonable arguments that can be made for the transfer of the current Juvenile Detention Facility from the Department of Justice to the Department of Children and Families. Consolidating these functions would enhance the policy alignment for youth justice, as well as to create a more cohesive youth justice service system.

To this end, it is recommended that:

- The Youth Justice Advisory Committee proposes a plan for the consolidation of policy and services within the Department of Children and Families, in line with the original intention of the Youth Justice Strategy, for the consideration of the Minister as soon as practicable.

In line with the comments in the *Best Practice Criteria* (Chapter 8), two distinct models have been identified in order to promote enhanced cost and utilisation of the resources attributed to the youth camps, as well as to reduce the rate of those who are currently unsuccessfully diverted from the youth justice system. Recent evidence has highlighted that Northern Territory has a significantly lower rate

of diversion, at 41%, in comparison to other jurisdictions who are diverting as many as 71% of young people from court (NAAJA, 2009). Furthermore, there is evidence of higher rates of post offending for young people who attend court: "[O]ver one-third of juveniles (39%) who appeared in court re-offended within the first 12 months, significantly different from only 21 percent of juveniles who had undertaken a conference and 19 percent who received a warning" (Cunningham, 2007). This highlights the potential scope for reducing the number of young people who re-offend by targeting youth camp interventions at the higher risk cohorts.

The following are principles to guide the establishment of future youth camp interventions:

Principles to guide the establishment of the proposed youth camp models:

- Secondary interventions, based on an assessment of offender risk factors, are critical in diverting young people away from becoming entrenched recidivist offenders;
- The risk, need and responsivity framework promotes effective and cohesive service models that assist in motivating positive change and formulating evidence-informed interventions;
- Multi-modal case management interventions, based on the integration of multiple agencies, and incorporating cognitive behavioural orientation, are required to respond to young people and their families with high and complex needs;
- Post-care interventions assist in generalising and sustaining outcomes achieved through young people's participation in a youth camp and therapeutic residential interventions;
- Interventions that employ therapeutic group care can foster positive coping responses for young people exhibiting anti-social behaviours;
- Cultural healing programs that incorporate strength based narrative approaches can reduce shame for young people and encourage changes to negative behavioural responses;
- Individualised needs assessments are key in informing interventions tailored to the needs and learning styles of young people demonstrating at-risk behaviours;
- Services that target the criminogenic needs of young people can reduce future risk of offending and assist in matching young people's needs to service intensity, thereby improving efficiencies in the cost and utilisation of finite resources;
- Fun, engaging and interesting activities can assist in forging positive and meaningful relationships with safe adults;
- Engagement of young people within an alternative and naturally containing environment for prescribed periods of time can be a catalyst for instigating behavioural change;
- Skills based training through established programming and sound conceptual modeling can assist in fostering improved decision making and problem solving;
- Cohesive narrative of experiences is important in the transference of experiential learning which aides in sustaining outcomes in the longer term;

Principles to guide the establishment of the proposed youth camp models (cont.):

- Risk management (conducted in a dynamic manner) is essential in reducing young people's exposure to harm;
- Intensive interventions that incorporate challenges can be effective in enhancing young people's capacity for self-reflection in relation to their behaviours and the establishment of functional responses into the future;
- A robust evaluation framework enables the longitudinal monitoring of program outcomes to inform the dynamic and ongoing evolution of the program;
- The effectiveness of post-program case management is maximised when the relationships young people form with youth workers form the basis of the intervention, and the follow-up is guided by an evidence-informed conceptual model; and,
- Service models that are delivered in a culturally specific manner assist in enhancing young people's sense of self-awareness and identity;

It is the authors combined opinion that a significant contribution to the evolution of the youth camp model has been the provision of the Youth Camp Coordinator position within the Department of Children and Families. This role has proven to be important in building the capacity of agencies and is critical to the future provision of guidance and support for the evolution of the youth camp model. Historically, this position has been responsible for the management of the contracting process with provider agencies, as well as facilitating client related functions (i.e., referral). This duel role adds complexity in the management of the procurement relationships. Alternative options for the referral and assessment of candidates for the youth camps are outlined within this chapter.

This evaluation process presents an opportunity to review the Youth Camp Coordinator role in supporting the ongoing development of individual services and the model as a whole.

To this end, it is recommended that:

- There continues to be a dedicated "Youth Camps Coordinator" to mange contractual arrangements with providers and work collaboratively with the providers to drive the model to reaching best-practice criteria;
- That functions associated with client processes, such as referrals, are separated from the Youth Camp Coordinator's role.

THERAPEUTIC CAMP PROGRAM

For the purpose of this discussion, *Therapeutic Camp Programs* will refer to the proposed *Therapeutic Camp Program* described in *Best Practice Criteria (*Chapter 8). The *Therapeutic Camp Program* model is embedded within a broader intervention and provides 10 young people a camp experience between eight and 10 days, with appropriate preparation and 12 month case management follow-up for young people and their families.

This model of intervention is designed to target young people who have exhibited anti-social and/or offending behaviour with identified risk factors for future offending. There is "…evidence that pre-court diversion had a positive impact on reducing re-offending. Policy should focus on better identifying children at an early age, who are at risk of developing antisocial behaviour" (Cunningham, 2007). In this manner, the *Therapeutic Camp Programs* become an "upstream" intervention to reduce the likelihood of re-offending for those young people who are likely to otherwise develop serious anti-social behaviours.

Targeting

A critical component in implementing this model is ensuring the program is targeted to those likely to escalate without intervention.

To this end, it is recommended that

- An assessment tool is developed that assesses the risk factors for young people developing serious anti-social behaviours, and this is used to guide the recruitment and screening of referrals.

Procurement and Funding

The camps were originally directly awarded to providers, and in the interests of equity and identifying the best placed agency to deliver the service:

It is recommended that

- The camps are procured through an open tender process at the end of the contract for current youth camp providers. Ideally camps would be procured in each of the main regional areas, including Darwin and Alice Springs, to enable easy access to programs, local decision making and after care support through local case management provision;

- If a new provider is procured, the NT Government should provide the agency with additional up-front funding and consultancy to support the provider reach and maintain best-practice standards.

It should be noted that this does not reflect the performance of current providers but acknowledges the proposed changes to the model and the targeting for the model.

Wilson and Lipsey (2000) found that established outdoor-adventure programs (shorter-term interventions) were more effective, with the AIC (AIC Crime Prevention Matters, No. 44) suggesting "the need for ongoing core funding to assist programs to be more effective". Furthermore, considering the youth camp model is in its infancy, it is the authors' opinion that future procurement processes need to support service providers to invest in the development of their models through core funding arrangements.

To this end, it is recommended that

- Block funding is made available to the successful tendering agencies and that the quantum of funding is based upon clear costing of the model.

Screening and Integration

Based on the need to ensure that those young people most at need, who fit the assessment criteria, receive the service, it is proposed that an existing collaborative mechanism is employed to screen eligible applicants. This will also ensure that the youth camp experience is embedded within a broader intervention that engages the young person's family and significant others in the process.

To this end, it is recommended that

- An Integrated Collaboration Panel meeting is dedicated to screening eligible participants prior to each camp with input from the *Therapeutic Camp Program* provider, with an emphasis on the provision of transparent referral feedback;
- The NT Court system (including Magistrates, legal representatives) is provided education on the selection criteria (including assessment tool) and individual *Therapeutic Camp Program* models to foster better matching of client and service.

It is important that innovative mechanisms are considered that encourage the integration of the ICP within the screening, assessment and post-program youth camp process. A possible mechanism includes providing the ICP with small amounts of brokerage funding to provide post-care supports which can be accessed by the *Therapeutic Camp Program* provider (e.g., to enable provider to pay for a young person's football or tutoring fees).

To this end, it is recommended that

- Innovative mechanisms are considered to maintain the relevance and role of the ICP within the referral and client management process.

Model

The model has been described in reasonable detail (see Chapter 8 of this report, including Program Logic section). It effectively employs an outdoor-adventure and/or cultural healing experience and case management service that is embedded as part of a broader intervention. Most critical is the articulation and marketing of the model to ensure that all stakeholders, including young people and

their families, have a clear understanding of the outcomes associated with the model as well as the various components that constitute the service.

To this end it is recommended that

- The model is clearly articulated, together with program outcomes, and that marketing information is made available to key stakeholders.

Evaluation

While there were merits identified with the current youth camps, the lack of longitudinal quantitative evidence does not allow for a detailed assessment of the outcomes for the young people that participate in the program; and most importantly how sustainable those outcomes are. Considering that the youth camp model is largely in its infancy, and the NT Government has committed significant resources to such a model, it is the authors' opinion that the NT Government has a role to play to guide the development and implementation of future local level evaluation initiatives.

To this end it is recommended that

- Each service provider works alongside the NT Government to implement an evaluation framework that is based upon a documented "Program Logic"; with corresponding monitoring and data collection systems that can measure the efficacy of the program.

THERAPEUTIC RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

The *Therapeutic Residential Program* model is a longer-term intervention where young people are accommodated within a congregate environment with an independent Clinical Review Process which guides the therapeutic input; including the length of the intervention. A one-page summary of the program logic for the *Therapeutic Residential Program* is included as part of the *Best Practice Criteria* (Chapter 8).

The *Therapeutic Residential Program* is targeted to young people who have become entrenched in cycles of recidivist offending and anti-social behaviours. Participants will have a range of complex needs in a number of different life domains and will have disengaged from other services. The model is predicated on six to eight young people at any one time; with the capacity to provide intensive supervision and programming options geared to promoting skill development for participants based on a cognitive behavioural model.

A critical component of the *Therapeutic Residential Program* is the integration with a range of other services. This includes an intensive post-care case management service.

Targeting

A further critical component in implementing this model is ensuring that the program is targeted to those likely to escalate in offending risk without intervention.

To this end, it is recommended that

- An assessment tool is developed that assesses young people who have become entrenched in recidivist offending, who present with a range of complex issues in three or more life domains and without intervention, are likely to spend considerable periods of time in youth detention. This tool should be used to guide the recruitment and screening of referrals.

- The NT Court system (including Magistrates, legal representatives) is provided education on the selection criteria (including assessment tool) and individual *Therapeutic Residential Program* models to augment the matching of client and service.

Procurement and Funding

Given the *Therapeutic Residential Program* is designed to tailor interventions to individual young people with high and complex needs, both in terms of intensity and length of service, the procurement model must be able to be applied flexibly and within a manner that fosters collaborative multi-disciplinary interventions. Furthermore, it is noted that there are likely to be different applications of *Therapeutic Residential Programs* which can be matched to the continuum of client needs. To facilitate the best matching of client need and service, as well as the ongoing development of this program model, procurement processes should seek to promote the inclusion of different applications of this model.

To this end, it is recommended that the procurement process:

- Is implemented in a manner that fosters flexible service delivery, collaborative multi-disciplinary interventions and ongoing development of the program model through systems that promote the possible inclusion of multiple service providers;

- If a new provider is procured, consideration is given to providing the agency with additional up-front funding and consultancy to support the provider reach and maintain best-practice standards;

- Service providers are funded on the basis of individual service agreements (unit costing approach), which are developed around clearly articulated and identified needs for individual young people.

To this end, a suggested mechanism is as follows:

- This model is procured through individual service schedules for agencies that have been assessed to meet requirements for a preferred panel of providers. Eligibility for inclusion on the Panel is contingent on providers having a signed master agreement that stipulates:
    - Costs for individual service components (e.g., accommodation and case management services on a cost per unit basis);
    - Minimum benchmarks for services provided in relation to a range of factors including best-practice youth programming criteria, financial management, the existence of policies and procedures and governance;
    - Demonstrated willingness and capacity to work collaboratively with associated agencies;
    - Regular reporting and information sharing; and,
    - Any other exceptional requirements based on the individual needs of young people.

It should be noted that this does not reflect the performance of current providers but acknowledges the proposed changes and the targeting for the model.

Screening and Integration

Based on the need to ensure that those young people most at need, who fit the assessment criteria, receive the service, it is proposed that an existing collaborative mechanism is employed to screen eligible applicants. This will also ensure that the *Therapeutic Residential Program* is embedded within a broader intervention that engages the young person's family and significant others in the process.

To this end, it is recommended that

- The Integrated Collaboration Panel (ICP) screens and makes recommendations about the eligibility of participants with input from the *Therapeutic Residential Program* provider. Where referrals are directed (Court), the ICP provides input and guidance within the assessment process conducted by the service provider.

It is important that innovative mechanisms and systems are implemented to promote the continued role and function of the ICP. A possible mechanism includes providing the ICP with small amounts of brokerage funding to provide post-care supports which can be accessed by the youth camp provider (e.g., to enable provider to pay for a young person's football fees). A further mechanism may include the ICP being delegated authorisation to the allocate brokerage money for a young person's attendance at a *Therapeutic Residential Program*.

To this end, it is recommended that

- Innovative mechanisms are considered to maintain the relevance and role of the ICP within the *Therapeutic Residential Program* referral and client management process.

Based on the degree of complexity of young people's needs targeted for this model, it is critical that, where required, specialist and professional services can be brokered on an individual basis and in a timely fashion.

To this end, it is recommended that

- The lead agency, identified through the Interagency Collaboration Panel, has access to a flexible funding source to broker specialist and professional services as required.

Model

The model has been described in reasonable detail (see Chapter 8 of this report) and summarised in the Program Logic section (at end of Chapter 8). It effectively employs a wilderness therapeutic experience and case management service that is embedded as part of a broader intervention. Most critical is the articulation and marketing of the model to ensure that all stakeholders, including young people and their families, have a clear understanding of the outcomes associated with the model as well as the various components that constitute the service. The model must also promote clarity in the decision making for each young person or each agency involved in the intervention. Owing to the intensive, therapeutic and costly nature of the intervention, it is important that the intervention is open to regular and independent review, where a young person's stay within the intervention is assessed as it relates to a whole-of-case review. Furthermore, is important that a young person's psychological welfare is closely and independently monitored within the intervention.

To this end, it is recommended that

- The model is clearly articulated, together with program outcomes, and that marketing information is made available to key stakeholders;
- The ICP provide background case coordination and monitoring of all young people within a *Therapeutic Residential Program*. Where there is no statutory case manager, the ICP delegates this role to a suitably qualified individual;
- The ICP monitor and provide a delegate to the independent Clinical Review Process, which includes representatives from the *Therapeutic Residential Program*, case manager and other relevant stakeholders;
- The Clinical Review Process is conducted at the point of program entry, three-weekly for the duration of the young person's stay and at the point of exit. The review process provides recommendations in relation to the length of program stay and post-program exit planning. Where consensus cannot be reached, the ICP delegate is provided the casting decision, with the professional input of other ICP members.

Evaluation

While there were merits identified with the current youth camps, the lack of longitudinal quantitative evidence does not allow for a detailed assessment of the outcomes for the young people that participate in the program; and most importantly how sustainable those outcomes are. Considering that the youth camp model is largely in its infancy, and the NT Government has committed significant resources to such a model, it is the authors' opinion that the NT Government has a role to play to guide the development and implementation of future local level evaluation initiatives.

To this end, it is recommended that

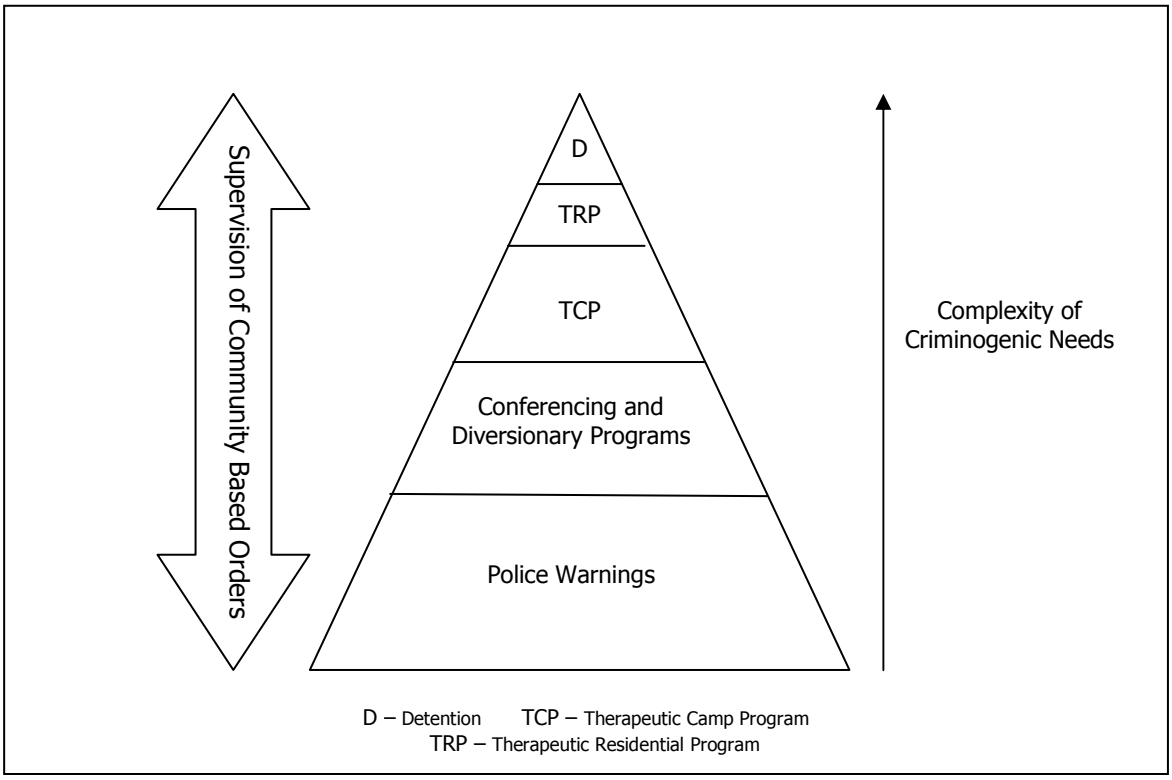
- Each service provider work alongside the NT Government to implement an evaluation framework that is based on a documented "Program Logic"; with corresponding monitoring and data collection systems that can measure the efficacy of the program.

CONCLUSIONS

The authors have noted cautious optimism for the utility of the youth camps in providing a "catalyst for change" that can be maintained through the follow-up support provided by the *Therapeutic Camp Programs* and *Therapeutic Residential Programs*, as well as through integration with broad externally delivered multi-systemic interventions. Based on the understanding that the cohort of young people who are likely to re-offend based on the presence of a range of risk factors will have a low motivation for change, it is imperative that programs exist to provide the catalyst for motivating change, and then maintaining such change. Throughout the evaluation process some evidence has become apparent that suggests that the camp programs can stimulate young people to move from *pre-contemplation* to *contemplation* of change, as well as engaging in some *action* towards creating that change (see *Motivation for Change* model described on pp. 34-35). Future work should focus on the development of strong follow-up support that will become foundational in maintaining change in conjunction with other related holistic service provision.

At the systems level the aforementioned models are designed to enable effective interventions, at two different points in time, to reduce the likelihood that young people will become entrenched in recidivist offending and anti-social behaviours. The *Therapeutic Camp Programs* provide the opportunity to identify young people who have exhibited significant at-risk behaviours, and who demonstrate a number of criminogenic needs, that place them at high risk of serious and repeat offending and anti-social behaviours. In contrast, the *Therapeutic Residential Programs* are more intensive in nature, and therefore more costly, and targeted to young people who have become entrenched in cycles of offending and anti-social behaviours with a history of disengagement from the "mainstream" service system. Figure 1 provides a graphic depiction of the proposed positioning of the *Therapeutic Camp Program* and *Therapeutic Residential Program* in the broader service continuum.

Figure 1. Positioning of *Therapeutic Camp Program* and the *Therapeutic Residential Program* in the broader service continuum



By utilising the Interagency Collaboration Panel it is anticipated that both interventions will be better integrated into a multi-systemic approach through the engagement of multiple agencies that can respond to the needs of young people and their families across a range of life domains. It also enables a more effective and equitable assessment of young people's relative needs to be undertaken. This enables a triaging of young people that matches their needs to an intensity of service intervention that is more likely to have the desired impact in diverting young people away from the formal youth justice system. It also enables a more effective cost and utilisation of the finite resources available for these types of interventions. Overall this assists in promoting a more cohesive and "joined up" service system that has been found to be most effective in responding to the multi-dimensional needs of young people and their families.

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APPENDICES

Over the course of evaluation the following stakeholders were consulted.

- Alesha Edmonds, Youth Worker, Brahminy Group
- Alexis Hinglet, Danila Dilba Emotional Wellbeing Centre
- Allan Brahminy, Chief Executive Officer, Brahminy Group
- Allan van Zyl, former Department of Justice policy and program advisor
- Amanda Hart, School Counsellor,
- Anita Davidson, Student Services, Department of Education and Training
- Anna Sebbins, Aboriginal Education Worker, Palmerston High
- Anotoinette Carroll, Youth Justice Advocacy Project Coordinator and Chair of the Youth Justice Advisory Committee, CAALAS
- Brenton Pedler, NT Open Education Centre, Department of Education and Training
- Carol Atkinson, A/Senior Manager, NGO Service Development Unit, NTFC
- Charity Macavia, Counsellor, Taminmin High
- Cheryl McKenzie, NT Police, Batchelor
- Christa Bardjen-Westermann, Manager, Alice Springs Family Support Centre, NTFC
- Christine Kelly, Volatile Substance Abuse, Alcohol and Other Drugs, DHF
- Clare Lennon, Youth Camps Coordinator, NTFC
- Dale Austin, Aboriginal Education Worker, Taminmin High
- Dani Mattuizzo, NT Police, Katherine
- Dave Whitman, NT Police (Crime Prevention), Alice Springs
- David Cole, Director Balunu Foundation
- Dean Chisholm, Anglicare, Youth and Families Connect Program
- Debra Zupp, Director, Youth Services Unit, NTFC
- Dennis Orr, Tangenyere Youth camp Leader
- Di Fattore, ICP Member and Authorised Officer, Youth Diversion Unit, NT Police,
- Di Hughes, Team Leader, Casuarina Child Protection Service, NTFC
- Donelge Dingo, Aboriginal Education Worker, Gray Primary School, Palmerston
- Dorian Howard Dent, Volatile Substance Abuse, Alcohol and Other Drugs, DHF
- Fiona Kepert, Solicitor, NT Legal Aide Commission
- Gail Wright, Volatile Substance Abuse, Alcohol and Other Drugs, DHF
- Greg Barrodeen, Education and Awareness Program Coordinator, Forwaard
- Herbie Donaghey, Senior Youth Worker, Brahminy Group
- Howard Bath, NT Children's Commissioner
- Jason Rothe, NT Police
- Jeanette Donahue, Manager Casuarina Community Corrections, Department of Justice
- Jennie Renfree, Senior Policy and Program Officer, Youth Diversion Unit, NT Police
- Joel Mitchell, Youth Programs Coordinator, Youth Diversion
- John Adams, Manager, Out of Home Care, NTFC
- John McGlynn, Human Resources Manager, Tangentyere Council
- John Patterson, CEO, AMSANT
- Jon Carroll, Tangentyere Youth Camps Coordinator
- Josh Veitch, A/Senior Probation Officer, Department of Justice
- Josh Brock, Northern Australia Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA)
- Julie Weber-O'Bryan, Manager Pathways, Department of Education and Training

- Kane Ellis, Danila Dilba Medical Centre
- Kate Fischer, School Counsellor, Centralian Middle School, Alice Springs
- Katrina Hill, Advanced Practitioner, Mobile Child Protection Team, NTFC
- Kelvin Gardner, Youth Worker/Outreach Worker, Balunu
- Kieran Boylan, Prison Education Officer, NAAJA
- Louise Ogden, Manager Youth Services Unit, NTFC
- Marcus Becker, NT Police
- Margaret Johnson, Private Psychologist, Consulting with Tangentyere Youth Cam
- Mark Dewhirst, Services Development Officer, NTFC
- Mark Schuster, A/Manager Darwin Remote, NTFC
- Mary Culhane-Brown, Manager, Darwin Family Support Centre, NTFC
- Matthew Watson, Principal Batchelor Area School
- Megan Donahoe, Manager, Alternative Care - Home Based and Residential Care, NTFC
- Melissa Kean, Tangentyere Camp Facilitator,
- Michelle McGuirk, Volatile Substance Abuse, Alcohol and Other Drugs, DHF
- Michelle Strang, Project Officer, NGO Service Development Unit, NTFC
- Natalie Paris, Former Youth Camps Coordinator
- Noeletta McKenzie, Youth Worker, Balunu
- Norelle Coles, Services Development Officer, NTFC, Alice Springs
- Paul Maccioni, NT Police, Batchelor
- Peter Curwen-Walker, Senior Policy Officer Community and Justice Policy Coordination Division, Department of Justice
- Prue Walker, Manager, Nhulunbuy NTFC
- Reg Hatch, Manager Youth Activity Service, Tangentyere Council
- Rick Dank, Coordinator of the Brothers Program, YWCA
- Robert Northey, NT Police, Katherine
- Samantha Osborne, Field Supervisor/Youth Worker, Brahminy Group
- Sheree Ahsam, Aboriginal Education Worker, Dripstone High
- ShMaya Houtman, Manager and Senior Clinician, NTFC Therapeutic Services, DHF
- Stuart Davidson, Therapeutic Services, NTFC
- Tanya Blakemore, Senior Case Worker, Don Dale, Department of Justice
- Timothy Burr Burr, Youth Worker, Balunu Foundation
- Trevor Owen, Officer in Charge, Crime Prevention Unit, Alice Springs
- Trudi Burn, A/Manager Katherine Community Corrections, Department of Justice

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Stakeholder Information Sheet – Youth Camp Evaluation

You have been invited to participate in an evaluation being conducted by Connected Self of the Northern Territory (NT) Youth Camp service model.

Youth Camps are an important component of the NT Government's Youth Justice Strategy to improve the lives and outcomes of young people. To assist in the ongoing development of this model of service, the NT Government has contracted Connected Self to undertake an evaluation of the Balunu, Brahminy and Tangentyere Youth Camp programs. Specifically, Connected Self has been asked to:

- Evaluate the efficacy of youth camps as a service option to support 'at risk' young people.
- Evaluate the service delivery of the three youth camp providers applying both outcome and process orientated analysis.

An important component of the evaluation process is obtaining stakeholder feedback. We have identified you as a key person who can help us better understand the role and outcomes of this model of service. We are requesting your involvement and consent to participate in this evaluation. At no time will you be forced or coerced to participate, and you may withdraw your consent at any time.

Connected Self is committed to conducting the evaluation in an open and transparent manner, and in a way that is respectful of staff, participants and stakeholders. The evaluation is being undertaken as per the ethical guidelines and Code of Conduct issued by the Australian Psychological Society, as well as Connected Self's internal policies. To this end, the confidentiality of all participants and stakeholders will be maintained at all times. We wish to advise you that your name and job title will be documented within the appendices of the final report (unless you withhold this consent). However, the content of the information you provide will not be linked to your identity or role, unless you provide your consent for this to occur.

We do not foresee any significant issues arising within the evaluation process. However, if for any reason you have any concerns, comments or queries regarding the evaluation process, in the first instance you should direct them by phone (0417 846 103) or email (ivanraymond@connectedself.com.au) to Ivan Raymond. If your stated concerns have not been adequately responded to, you should forward your queries to Ms Clare Lennon from the Northern Territory Government - (08) 8999 2541.

Thank you for taking the time to review this request.

Ivan Raymond
Principal Psychologist

Sean Lappin
Principal Consultant

Ivan Raymond
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Stakeholder Consent Form

I, ……., have been provided a "Stakeholder Information Sheet" which details the nature of the evaluation being conducted by Connected Self on the NT Government Youth Camp service model.

I provide my consent to participate in this evaluation.

I am aware that:

- My participation in this evaluation is voluntary'
- I may withdraw my consent at any time;
- My name and job title will appear in the appendices of the final report (unless I withhold my consent for this to occur);
- I will not be paid or remunerated for participating;
- The content of the information I provide will not be linked to my identity or role, unless I provide my verbal consent for specific information to be linked to my identity or role.

Signed Dated

…… ……/……/2010

Reflecting back over the preceding three days, please rate the following behaviours on a seven point rating scale; with **1** representing a non-occurrence of the behaviour and **7** representing a very high frequency of behaviour. Accordingly, the rating of **4** would be an average or expected level of occurrence. Please circle only one number for each item of the checklist.

	Never						Always
Interactions with peers							
1. Responds without prompting when addressed by another	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Is friendly and interested in peers; seeks them out for interactions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Is abrasive or demanding in comments towards and interactions with peers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Is manipulative (friendly for secondary gain) rather than genuine in interactions with peers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Threatens others when does not get own way	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Affect							
6. Depressed: remains withdrawn, minimises interactions with others, low mood, sad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Tense or anxious: responds too quickly, speech pressured, too sharp	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Suspicious: lacks trust, wants information repeated, believes only self, does not self-disclose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Happy: smiles easily, laughs appropriately, enjoys the company of others and daily activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-Esteem							
10. Talks negatively about self and abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Criticises accomplishments and performance excessively even when adequate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Displays poor posture, slouches, holds head down, makes poor eye contact	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Says positive things about self when asked	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Talks openly about self and achievements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Takes pride in personal belongings and appearance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Conflict							
16. Downgrades others to make self look better	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Engages in malicious teasing and horseplay	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Argues over minor issues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Becomes abusive when criticised or gives negative feedback	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Focuses externally (blames others) when confronted with own issues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Response Initiation (Spontaneous Behaviour)							
21. Asks others about upcoming activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. Asks others about wildlife and environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Asks others about their feelings, perceptions, experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Volunteers own feelings, thoughts, internal experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Asks others for feedback about self	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Never						Always
Co-operation							
26. Offers help to peers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. Offers help to staff	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. Complies with requests from staff	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. Completes assigned tasks without additional prompting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Behavioural incidents							
30. Threatens others verbally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. Threatens others physically	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. Hits others with hand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. Hits others with weapon	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. Engangers self or others inadvertently	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. Endangers self or others intentionally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. Attempts to run away	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. Hurts self or others intentionally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. Refuses to participate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Reflecting back over the preceding three days, please rate the following observations on a five point rating scale; with **1** representing "never", **3** representing "sometimes" and **5** representing "very frequently". Please circle only one number for each item of the checklist.

	Never		Sometimes		Very Frequently
Has the young person talked to you about his or her problems?	1	2	3	4	5
Has the young person considered your point of view?	1	2	3	4	5
Has the young person wanted to spend time with you?	1	2	3	4	5
Has the young person shared information of a personal nature?	1	2	3	4	5
Has the young person sought out counselling or advice from you?	1	2	3	4	5
Has the young person initiated contact with you during a crisis?	1	2	3	4	5
Has the young person identified things he or she likes about you?	1	2	3	4	5
Has the young person told you when they are sorry?	1	2	3	4	5

END OF PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

This structured questionnaire is designed to tap a young person's experience of the youth camp, with particular focus on (1) the perception of fun and pleasure, (2) the strongest memories that have been evoked from the program, (3) the impact of the program on a young person and (4) what teachings a young person has taken from the program.

Introductions and consent process

What activities did you do on the camp?

Who were the facilitators of the camp?

What were the highlights of the camp for you?

What was most fun thing you did on the program?

Describe one thing (it might or might not have been fun) that got you in, made you forget yourself.

Describe one time on the program when you felt really excited.

What were the things that you did not like about the camp?

What things did you learn on the camp?

Do you think the camp can help you in your life at all? If yes, please describe?

Did the camp challenge you (e.g., it was difficult)?

In what ways did it challenge you?

Did you learn anything about yourself during these challenges? If so, what?

Has the camp had an impact on the way you feel about being an Aboriginal young man/woman?

Has the camp helped other young people?

What are the other young people saying about the camp?

Completed with …….

Date completed……

Youth camp ……

	 Not at all		Unsure		Very Much 
1. I really enjoyed the youth camp	1	2	3	4	5
2. The youth camp has been one of the best experiences of my life	1	2	3	4	5
3. The adult team who supported me on the program did a good job	1	2	3	4	5
4. The youth camp was a waste of time	1	2	3	4	5
5. During the youth camp I was bullied or teased by other young people	1	2	3	4	5
6. I enjoyed spending time with other young people during the program	1	2	3	4	5
7. I participated at my best (e.g., gave 100%) during the youth camp	1	2	3	4	5
8. I had fun with the adult team during the youth camp	1	2	3	4	5
9. I have learnt things about myself during the youth camp	1	2	3	4	5
10. The youth camp will be able to help me deal with life better	1	2	3	4	5
11. I would undertake the youth camp again	1	2	3	4	5

Connected Self
Connection Inspiration Innovation

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

Information Sheet – Youth Camp Evaluation
Your Support is Requested

Your child is about to undertake the Balunu Youth Camp; an innovative program designed to support young people reach their potential. To assist in the ongoing development of the program and to further improve the lives of Alice Springs' young people, the NT Government has asked Connected Self to undertake an analysis of the program. Connected Self is a South Australian organisation that provides specialist training, programs and consultancy to children, young people and families.

In addition to yourself, we are requesting your child's involvement in the evaluation. If you and your child agree to participate, we will be asking your child to complete a short questionnaire (with the help of a camp facilitator) and to answer some questions about their experience of the Youth Camp. We will also be asking you to complete a short questionnaire about your child on two occasions; before the program starts and at the end of the program.

Involvement in the evaluation is completely voluntary for both yourself and your child. Information will be held in the strictest confidence and at no time will names or other identifying information be released. At the point of questionnaire collation, all names will be removed from the questionnaires. Both you and/or your child may withdraw your consent at any time. This will have no bearing on your child's current or future involvement with the Balunu Youth Camp.

If you are willing to participate in the evaluation, we ask that you please complete the attached consent form and questionnaire.

The evaluation is being undertaken as per the ethical guidelines and Code of Conduct issued by the Australian Psychological Society, as well as Connected Self's internal policies. If for any reason you have any concerns, comments or queries regarding the evaluation process, in the first instance you should direct them by phone (0417 846 103) or email (ivanraymond@connectedself.com.au) to Ivan Raymond. If your concerns have not been adequately addressed, you should forward your queries to Ms Clare Lennon from the Northern Territory Government - (08) 8999 2541.

Your time and support in this project is greatly appreciated.

Ivan Raymond

Pre-Program Questionnaire – Parent/Guardian

Name of child: …… Age …..

Male / Female Date of completion: ……/……./……..

Your name……..

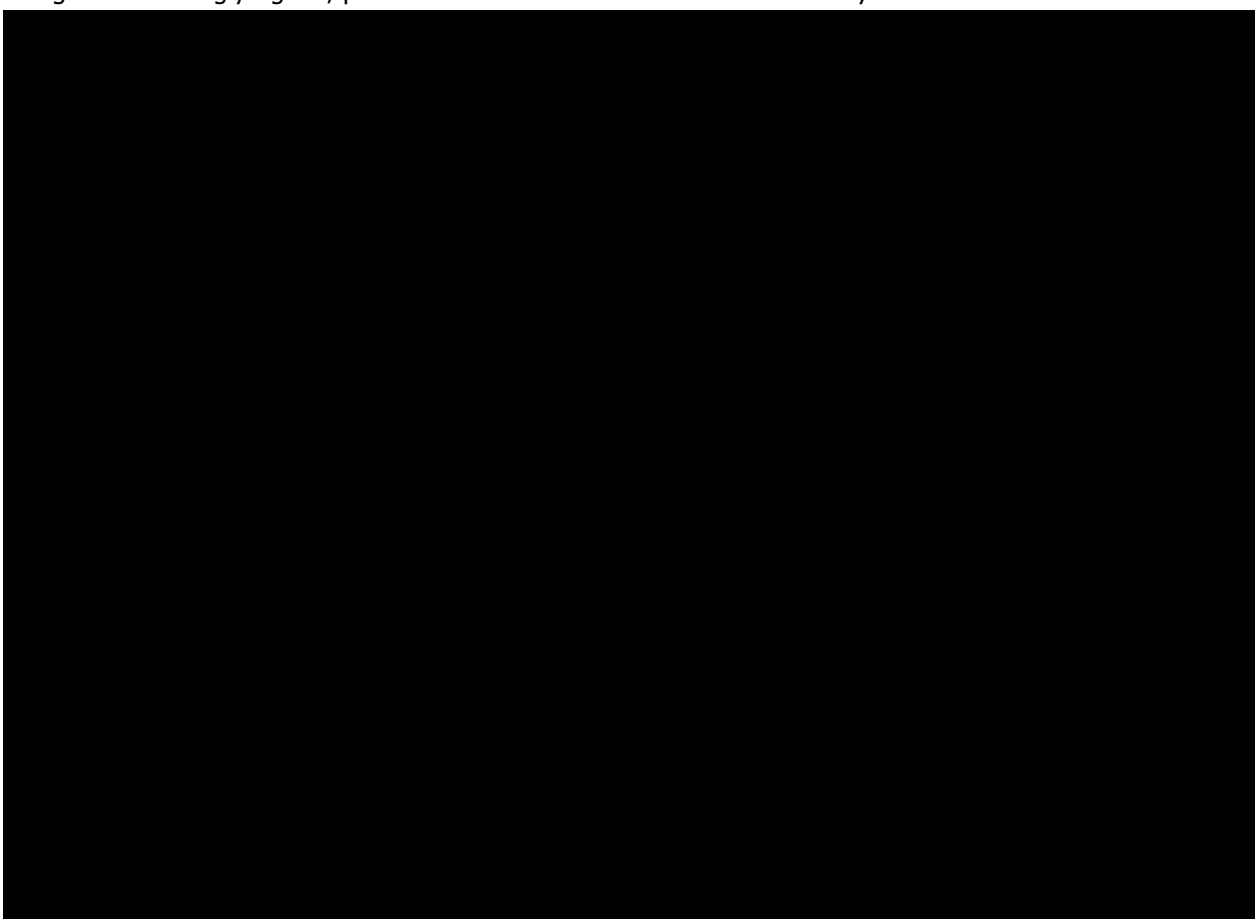
Your relationship to child: ……..

Do you consent for your child to be involved in the evaluation process: Yes / No

We would value the opportunity to speak to you briefly at the end of the program. Do you provide your consent for an evaluation team member to make contact with you via phone after the program? Yes / No If yes, contact number is …….

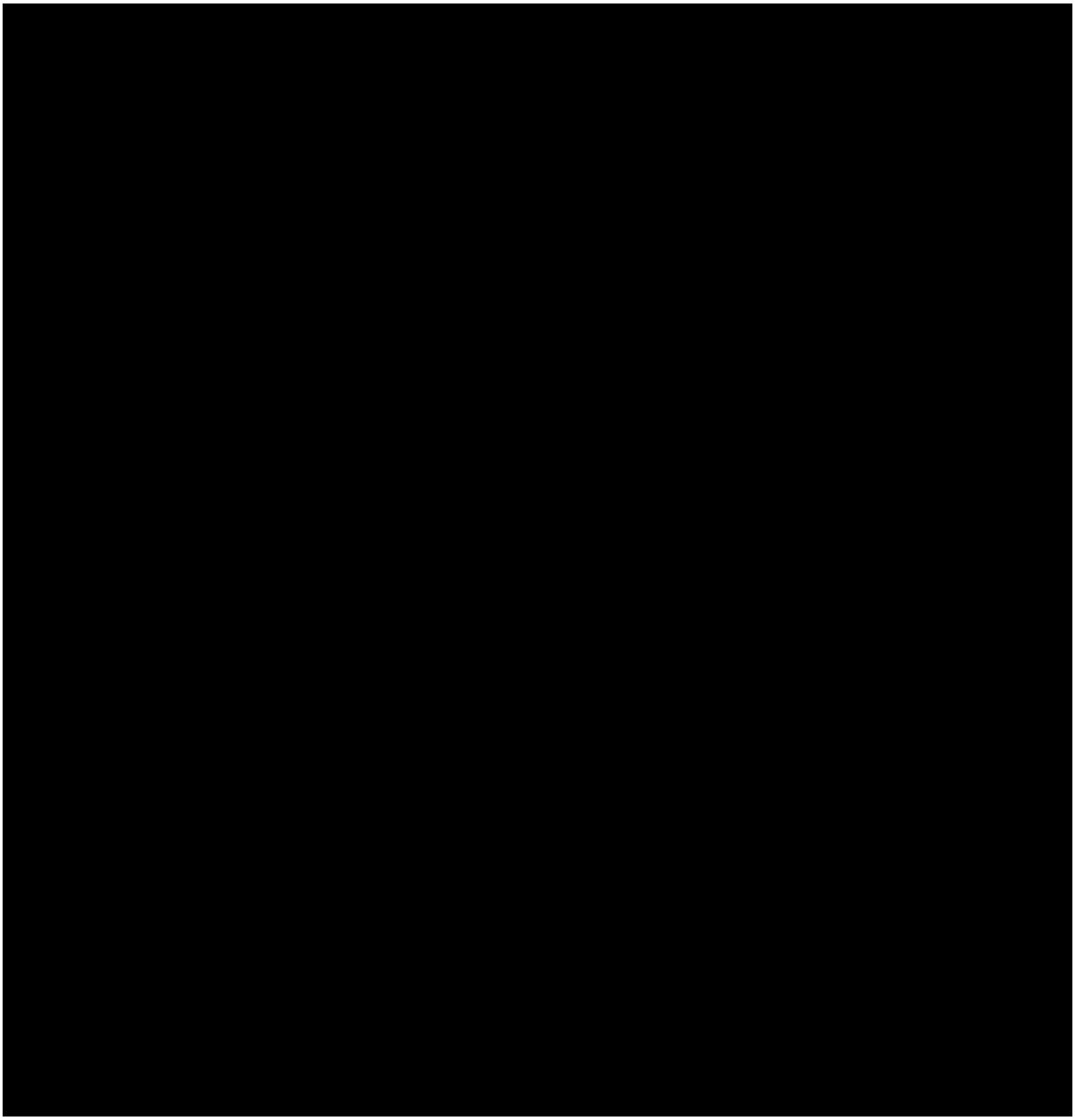
SECTION 1.

The following are a number of statements about your child. On a seven point scale, from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree', please circle the number that best describes your child?



SECTION 2.

The following are a number of issues that your child may be experiencing - please rate the degree your child is currently experiencing them from "Not at All" to "Extremely Severe".



SECTION 3.

The following are a number of statements about your child. For each item, please mark the box for *Not True*, *Somewhat True* or *Certainly True*. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain. Please give your answers on the basis of your child's behaviour over the last 2 weeks (please tick relevant box).

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
Considerate of other people's feelings			
Restless, overactive, cannot sit still for long			
Often complains of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness			
Shares readily with other young people, for example CDs, games and food			
Often looses temper			
Would rather be alone than with other young people			
Generally well-behaved, usually does what adults request			
Many worries or often seems worried			
Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill			
Constantly fidgeting or squirming			
Has at least one good friend			
Often fights with other young people or bullies them			
Often unhappy, depressed or tearful			
Generally liked by other young people			
Easily distracted, concentration wanders			
Nervous in new situations, easily loses confidence			
Kind to younger children			
Often lies or cheats			
Picked on or bullied by other young people			
Often volunteers to help others (parents, teachers, children)			
Thinks things out before acting			
Steals from home, school or elsewhere			
Gets along better with adults than other young people			
Many fears, easily scared			
Good attention span, sees tasks through to the end			

NARRATIVE OF YOUTH CAMP EXPERIENCE

This structured questionnaire is designed to tap the post-program narrative of young people who have attended a NT youth camp, including the young person's (1) experience of the youth camp, (2) the importance and impact of the youth camp in their life and the (3) role and function of the youth camp as a change-factor in their life.

Introductions and consent process

What things come to mind when you think of your time on the_____ (name of camp) program

What activities did you do on the camp?

How long was the camp?

Who were the facilitators (or adults who led the camp) of the camp?

Can (what were the names of) you remember the names of other staff on the camp?

Do you have any ongoing contact with these adults anymore? In what way?

What were the highlights of the camp for you?

What were the things you did not like about the camp?

Would you like to attend the camp again if you could?

What things did you learn on the camp?

What other things would you have liked to have learnt on camp?

Has the camp helped you in your life at all?
If yes, please describe

Did the camp challenge you? If yes, in what ways did it challenge you?

Did you learn anything about yourself "during these challenges"? If so, what?

Has the camp had an impact on the way you feel about being an Aboriginal young man/woman?

Do you think the camp has helped other people?

What have other young people said about the camp?

What could the camp do to help young people more?

What way could the camp be improved for next time?

SECTION 1.

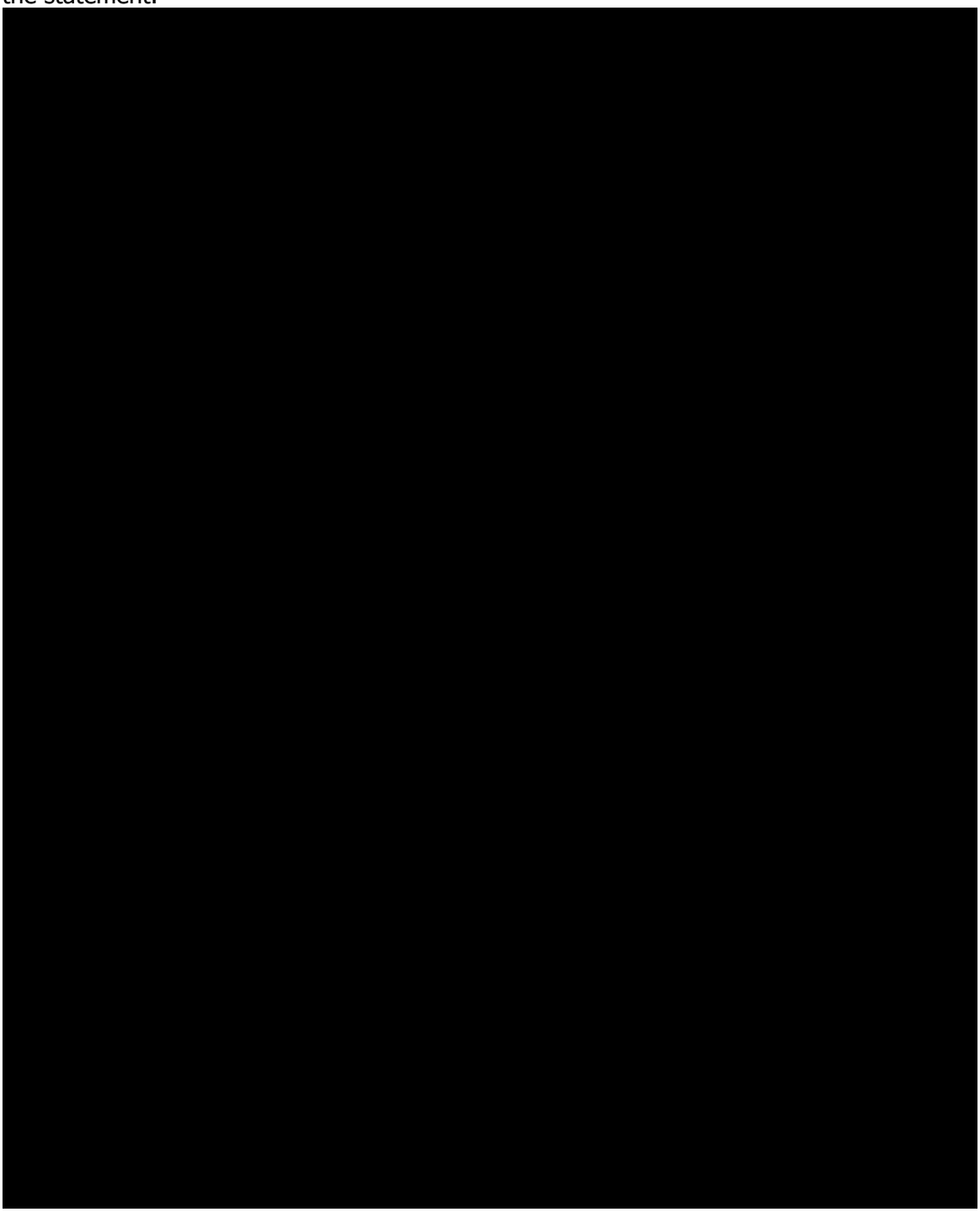
Please rate how often you have had the following thoughts or feelings over the past week. There are no right or wrong answers.

SECTION 2.

Please rate the following statements from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'. There are no right and wrong answers.

SECTION 3

The following are a number of feelings and thoughts you may have about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the number beside the statement.



Semi-structured stakeholder interview template

Broad overview

- What is your current role and responsibilities?
- What role do you have with young people in relation to improving their life and educational outcomes?
- What has been your involvement with the Balunu, Tangentyere and Brahminy youth camps?
- Which camps do you feel confident speaking about?

Understanding of individual camps

- Describe how you see this youth camp working?
- What activities are undertaken? What happens on each day? What is the program timeline?
- How does the program create change?
- What is the program's goal or objective (can it be clearly articulated)
- What are the principles that underpin the program?
- How does the camp impact on: - how does this occur?
    - Improving health outcomes?
    - Reducing offending?
    - Enhancing community connections?
    - Improving connection with school?
    - Improving confidence?
    - Improving mastery?
    - Dealing with mental health issues?
    - Enhancing cultural connections?
    - Promoting spiritual connection?
    - Improving family relationships?
    - Helping to form strong identity?
    - Overcoming boredom?

- What are the camp's strengths?
- What is the camp's area of development?
- How have you related to the camp leadership or management team?

- Do you have any concerns about the way the camp is managed, delivers its services or areas of follow-up?
- What has been your experience of the referral and assessment process? Strengths and areas of development?
- What sorts of things do you think could improve the outcomes for participants involved with this youth camp?

Youth camps as a whole

- What is your perspective of youth camps as a whole?
- Where do you think they fit within a strategy for improving the lives and health of young people?
- How well do you think they are integrated with the broader strategy and the various initiatives that make up the strategy?
- What sorts of things do you think could improve the outcomes for participants involved with the youth camps?
- How well do you think they are integrated with the out-of-home care system? Do the youth camps have a role as an out-of-home care provider?

Young people with complex needs

- Do you have any direct contact with young people disconnected from school, family, community or life in general?
- What do these young people look like? Indigenous over-representation?
- What are the key factors that impact on this disconnection
    - Role of family breakdown?
    - Trauma and abuse?
    - Alcohol and drugs?
    - Lack of activity?
    - Mental health issues?
    - Others?
- What do you think are the critical aspects associated to improve this connection?
    - Improving health outcomes?
    - Enhancing community connections?
    - Improving confidence?
    - Improving mastery?

  - Enhancing cultural connections?
  - Promoting spiritual connection?
  - Improving family relationships?
  - Helping to form strong identity?
  - Overcoming boredom?

- What interventions, programs and services do these young people need?
- What sorts of things are working in your view?
- What are the service gaps?
- What services are available to meet this need? How well are they integrated and work cooperatively together?
- What is the capacity of the services to meet this need?

Policy and program development

- What changes are required in the entire system to enable services and interventions to better respond to the needs of young people with complex needs?
- Is there a need for a change in government policy?
- How well are different government departments, including police, courts and individual agencies, working effectively together?
- Is there a common policy platform. How well is this being applied? How do the youth camps fit within this policy platform?
- What is the impact of public perception, media and public debate have on the application of youth services and the youth camps in particular?

Youth Justice Strategy

- What is your involvement in the NT Youth Justice Strategy?
- Can you explain the current crime prevention strategy with reference to young people? (Indigenous specific? any documentation available?)
- What are the barriers (i.e., structural, social, systems) to effectively working with young people who have offended? Do the youth camps overcome these?
- What are the measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy?
- Can you provide any data in relation to recidivism rates for young people involved in youth justice programs/services (i.e., secure care, various community based initiatives)? Are these available for specific regions across the Territory?

- What do you think are the critical aspects associated with preventing young people re-offending and placing them at-risk? (culturally specific?)
- Can you please provide the costs associated with other relevant programs, i.e., youth detention, various community based initiatives?
- Are there any legislative or regulatory requirements that are particular to youth justice in the Territory?
- What do you think are the critical aspects associated with preventing young people re-offending?
    - Improving health outcomes?
    - Enhancing community connections?
    - Improving confidence?
    - Improving mastery?
    - Enhancing cultural connections?
    - Promoting spiritual connection?
    - Improving family relationships?
    - Helping to form strong identity?
    - Overcoming boredom?
- What sorts of things are working in your view?

Educational focus

- How well do you think the camps are integrated with the education system?
- Are schools, Principals, teachers and school counselors supportive of the youth camps? If so, why?
- Do the youth camps have an education focus? If so, what?
- What role do you see for the youth camps from an educational perspective?
- What educational outcomes have you observed from the youth camps?

Cultural perspective

- What do you think are the critical aspects associated with preventing young people re-offending from Indigenous backgrounds?
- Do you have any direct contact with Indigenous young people disconnected from school, family, community or life in general?
- What are the key factors that impact on this disconnection
    - Role of family breakdown?

  - Trauma and abuse?
  - Alcohol and drugs?
  - Lack of activity?
  - Mental health issues?
  - Others?
- What do you think are the critical aspects associated to improve this connection?
  - Improving health outcomes?
  - Enhancing community connections
  - Improving confidence?
  - Improving mastery?
  - Enhancing cultural connections?
  - Promoting spiritual connection?
  - Improving family relationships?
  - Helping to form strong identity?
  - Overcoming boredom?

- What interventions, programs and services do these young people need?
- What sorts of things are working in your view?
- What are the service gaps?
- What services are available to meet this need? How well are they integrated and work cooperatively together?
- What is the capacity of the services to meet this need?
- How does the youth camp overcome these needs?