

STREETWORK AUSTRALIA

We support vulnerable young people in our community to turn their lives around.



Government Funding Proposal 2021-2023

**SAVING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AND
BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE**

Supporting vulnerable young people



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

StreetWork Australia is a for-purpose, community organisation working with vulnerable young people affected by: crime, mental health concerns including suicide and self-harm, violence, destructive relationships, social isolation, homelessness, school/education disengagement, poor employment opportunities and alcohol and substance misuse. StreetWork's purpose is **to support vulnerable young people, in community, to turn their lives around** and reach their full potential. StreetWork has been operating for over 40 years across the Northern Sydney region and in 2019 the Community Impact Value of StreetWork's early intervention and prevention programs was \$87.6m¹. In 2020, StreetWork supported 124 young people who improved or stabilised the prevalence of youth suicide, self-harm, and general mental health through our KickStart Mentoring Program. We use our evaluation data to drive changes to our early intervention programs which have been validated by PwC which highlights an 92% success rate and return \$16 of community impact for every \$1 invested with StreetWork.

Mentoring involves a caring and supportive relationship between a young person and a non-parental adult. The positive effects of mentoring are generally thought to be derived from the support and role modelling these relationships offer. A mentoring relationship promotes the social and emotional well-being and development of young people. It provides opportunities for fun and escape from daily life stresses and offers the vulnerable participants genuine care and support. The mentoring relationship is often described as a "corrective experience" for those young people who may have experienced unsatisfactory relationships with their parents or carers. It also contributes to the cognitive development of a young person through several mechanisms, including exposure to new opportunities for learning, provision of intellectual challenge and guidance, and promotion of academic success. More generally, vulnerable young people are supported to build both social and cultural capital by facilitating 'community connections' and by opening doors to educational, occupational and specialist clinical opportunities.

This proposal is consistent with Australian Government agenda which is to:

Support individuals, families and communities to achieve greater self-sufficiency; through the delivery of policy advice and high quality accessible social, health and child support services and other payments; and support providers and businesses through convenient and efficient service delivery.

Specifically, supporting communities by ensuring all Australians have access to the support they need. Under this priority area this pre-budget submission for pilot funding to expand services into new communities to support vulnerable young people in community to turn their lives. The program will make a significant difference to enhance the quality of life of young people, thereby making a great contribution to the social and economic fabric of Australia.

The priority areas focus on breaking the cycle of disadvantage and vulnerability amongst young people through tackling:

- **Priority 1: Investing in (youth) Health: Towards Zero (youth) Suicides**
Through the provision of critical frontline services tackling comorbidity factors as part of youth suicide prevention programs.
- **Priority 2: Supporting Stronger Communities: Social Cohesion**
Through the provision of services tackling comorbidity factors as part of social inclusion prevention programs.

¹ PwC – StreetWork KickStart Mentoring Program Community Impact Update (July 2020). Based on improvements and stabilisations of at-risk young people

THE INVESTMENT

The need for increased capacity to meet the demand for services is essential. As such the investment of this proposal is \$2m over the next three years.

THE CONTEXT OF VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

The issues impacting young people is everyone's business and StreetWork is committed to achieving a significant reduction in the number of young people experiencing life-long disadvantage. The breadth and depth of disadvantage experienced by vulnerable young people, and the complex and compounding interactions of these problems, makes StreetWork's mentoring program - *KickStart* - unique in the social need that it addresses. Intervening early in a vulnerable young person's life is viewed favorably by the youth services sector due to the importance of building strong foundations in the early development phases to prevent the cumulative risk factors that are more difficult to address in older life stages.

Young people in Australia are struggling, and they are facing intense challenges in several key areas

1. Suicide is the leading cause of death for young Australians aged 15-24.²
2. 24.3% of young people have a mental health condition, have anxiety, are at greater risk of suicide, self-harm and substance addiction and a variety of other mental illnesses.³
3. 21% of young people who are early school leavers experience life-long financial hardship and poverty including debt, homelessness and housing stress, family tensions and breakdown, boredom, alienation, shame and stigma, increased social isolation, crime, erosion of confidence and self-esteem, the atrophying of work skills and ill-health.⁴
4. 26.5% of young people are without adequate work whether unemployed or underemployed.⁵
5. 'Adolescent limited' offenders, that is, those who exhibit antisocial behaviour only during adolescence, make up 75-80% of juvenile offenders and this is often the result of boundary pushing, peer pressure, impulsive and reckless behaviours, poor decision-making and alcohol and drug abuse.⁶
6. 24.9% of all homeless are young people.⁷

The Mentoring Model: The benefits that occur via the theory of change

Mentoring involves a caring and supportive relationship between a young person and a non-parental adult – who we call a Youth Case Worker (YCW). The positive effects of mentoring are generally thought to be derived from the support and role modelling these relationships offer.⁸ The processes embedded in the StreetWork model of mentoring that bring about positive change include:

1. Enhancing a young person's social relationships and emotional well-being.
2. Improving a young person's cognitive skills through instruction and conversation; and
3. Promoting positive identity development via a role model and advocate service.

A StreetWork mentoring relationship promotes the social and emotional well-being and development of young people. It provides opportunities for fun and escape from daily life stresses and offers the vulnerable participants genuine care and support. From a position of

² Lifeline Australia, Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Committee Inquiry into Suicide in Australia, 'No Suicidal Person Should Be Left Alone'

³ Access Economics Pty Ltd (2019), The economic impact of youth mental illness and the cost effectiveness of early intervention.

⁴ Deloitte Access Economics Pty Ltd, The socio-economic benefits of investing in the prevention of early school leaving, September 2018.

⁵ Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), Early school leaving and 'non-completion' in Australia (2000). LSAY Briefing Reports (LSAY Briefing; n.2).

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness 2011, Cat No. 2049.0

⁷ National Youth Commission, Australia's Homeless Youth: A report of the National Youth Commission Inquiry into Youth Homelessness. 2018, Melbourne, Victoria

⁸ A model for the influence of mentoring relationships on youth development; J. Rhodes et. al; 2006 Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

trust, our YCWs can challenge negative views about self, peers, and other adults in a young person's life. The mentoring relationship is often described as a "corrective experience" for those young people who may have experienced unsatisfactory relationships with their parents or carers. Our YCWs demonstrate that positive relationships with adults are possible. The StreetWork mentoring relationship also contributes to the cognitive development of the young person through several mechanisms, including exposure to new opportunities for learning, provision of intellectual challenge and guidance, and promotion of academic success. In the first case, our Youth Case Workers (YCWs) may introduce experiences that broaden the young person's horizons, from visiting the library, to exploring a cultural institution, to enrolling in a TAFE course together. Regardless of the activity chosen, our YCWs approach each interaction with a young person with the intention of utilising every available "teachable moment." Beyond the quality of the scaffolding provided by the YCWs, the interpersonal qualities of the mentoring relationship contribute to the young person's acquisition and refinement of thinking skills.

By serving as role models and advocates, our YCWs contribute to a young person's positive identity development. That is, they help shift the young person's conceptions of both their current and future identity. More generally, our YCWs help young people to build both social and cultural capital by facilitating their use of 'community connections' and by opening doors to educational, employment and specialist clinical opportunities if needed. Participation in such new opportunities can also facilitate identity development by providing experiences that allow vulnerable young people to construct their sense of self. StreetWork's unique service model seeks to promote social wellbeing among vulnerable young people by building protective factors such as community connectedness and engagement in social norms like education and employment. More specifically, this is achieved through the following strategies embedded in our early intervention and prevention programs:

- Developing healthy relationships – between a young person and a YCW.
- Collaboration – the strategy integrates families, schools, and youth employment services to achieve a more impactful and cost-effective response to a young person's complex situation.
- Strength-based approach – enhancing resilience.
- Capacity building – strengthening capacity and reducing vulnerability.
- Skill building – promoting social and emotional well-being and increasing protective factors associated with self-harm and suicide
- Sustainability – place-based services to enhance a young person's community network.

StreetWork mentoring program adopts a whole-of-community approach to achieve program and organisational success and places emphasis on strong community networks with relevant and specialised youth agencies, employment, and rehabilitation services. As a result, StreetWork's YCWs can assist young people achieve better, positive outcomes for themselves and the local community. Furthermore, improving participant engagement with external service providers throughout our programs, StreetWork can ensure that upon completion each young person has the skills necessary to identify and access services that can support their continuing development, including access to employment, schools/education and safe and secure accommodation.

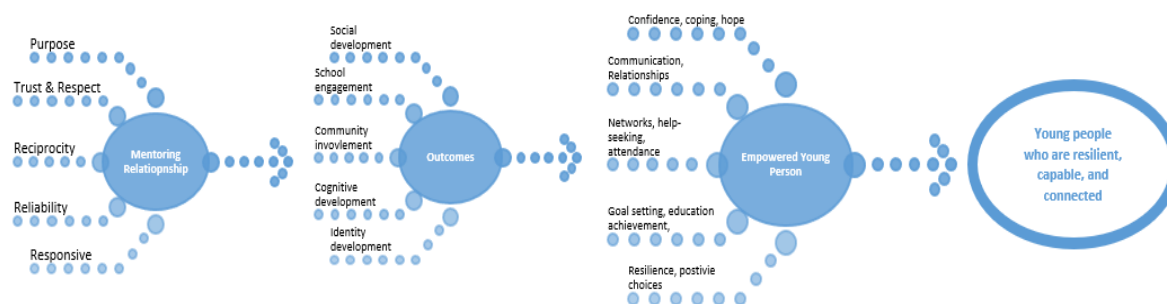


Image adapted from *Influence of mentoring relationships on youth development*; Rhodes et. al, 2006

FUNDING PRIORITY: COST OF YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH INCLUDING SUICIDE AND SELF-HARM PREVENTION

Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which a young person realises that they have the capabilities to cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and are able to make a contribution to their own community.⁹ Even though the causes of mental illness are not clear, there are a range of risk and protective factors thought to influence a young person's mental health. The most common comorbid factors associated with youth suicide, reported in 43.9% of all suicides, includes mood disorders (including depression), followed by drug and alcohol use disorders (29.4%); and anxiety and stress-related disorders (17.6%).¹⁰

We can work to reduce suicide rates by enhancing the things we already know that support young people to improve their mental health. If we agree our aim is to improve mental health, what we now need is to address the balance of prevention and clinical responses, so that we can provide an effective solution to this crisis affecting many young people. By striking the right balance between a clinical response and prevention, which includes the benefits of mentoring programs, we will see improved outcomes.

Research by Duncan¹¹ states that treatment effects for therapy delivered by clinicians account for 13% of factors that make a difference, while 87% are being made up of client and extra-therapeutic factors. The relationships established with young people are far more important than the therapeutic modality used in treating them. Now is the time for a significant shift in how we approach youth mental health. If we want to see real changes, we need to consider how best to implement a broad suite of interconnected and complementary approaches that focus on mental health promotion, prevention, treatment, and ongoing support. Equipping young people with the tools, resources, and skills to support their own mental health, is what is urgently required. For this to be successful, we need to shift attitudes and beliefs about youth mental health in such a way that we inspire our communities to proactively foster positive mental health habits now, and into the future.

Given the effectiveness of mentoring and StreetWork's KickStart program, we support vulnerable young people in the community affected by poor mental health, suicidal ideation and self-harm to build mental fitness through the development of protective factors that help to reduce the likelihood of mental health problems and mitigate the potentially negative effects of risk factors. Building mental fitness requires investment in social connections and building emotional muscle so a young person builds the resilience to handle whatever life throws at them. The protective factors that young people develop with their StreetWork Youth Case Worker (YCW) include:

- Individual factors - such as adequate nutrition, problem-solving skills, and good sleep hygiene.
- Family or social factors - such as family harmony, social support, sense of belonging, developing positive psychological and emotional effects.
- School context - such as a positive school environment and school engagement.
- Life events and situations - such as economic security and good physical health; and
- Community and cultural factors - such as establishing diverse social networks, learning new skills that build confidence, and involvement in community groups through volunteering.

In 2020, StreetWork supported 124 young people who improved or stabilised the prevalence of youth suicide, self-harm and general mental health through our KickStart Mentoring Program delivering \$84.9m of community impact.¹² Our early intervention and prevention mentoring program's primary aim is for the young person to be connected with specialist mental health services, while also being supported while living in community. The mentoring interventions have a positive impact, due to the fact that the relationships between a vulnerable young person and their YCW are characterised by trust and regular mentor input. Our quality mentoring relationships have a positive impact on a young person's social-emotional outlook and because of this, they deliver strong outcomes, for young people with significant behavioural issues or drug dependency. Mentoring also delivers protective influences around risk taking behaviour and depression.

⁹ Responding to the mental health needs of young people in Australia. Discussion paper: principles and strategies, February 2004. Canberra: DHAC.

¹⁰ Young Australians: Their health and wellbeing 2007, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Cat. no. PHE 87. Canberra: AIHW

¹¹ On becoming a better therapist : Evidence-based practice one client at a time. Washington DC, American Psychiatric Association, B. Duncan, 2010, Washington DC, American Psychiatric Association

¹² StreetWork: KickStart Mentoring Program; Economic Impact Update; July 2020, PwC

FUNDING PRIORITY: COST OF YOUTH CRIME

The primary aim of StreetWork's early intervention and prevention program is reducing contact that a young person has with the criminal justice system. Young people who come into contact with the criminal justice system represent a particularly disadvantaged population, characterised by high levels of socio-economic stress, physical abuse, and childhood neglect. In fact, neglect is one of the strongest risk factors of youth offending which includes economic hardship, rough sleepers, poor social support networks, and poor family functioning. Young offenders often have significant physical and mental health needs, and many have engaged in risky behaviours from an early age.

Young people convicted generally have a higher incidence of mental health problems compared with adolescents in the general population. Mental health issues, particularly comorbid presentations, affect the response to, and outcome of rehabilitation and hence recidivism of offending often occurs. A recent study looking at the health needs of young people in juvenile justice custody in NSW found high prevalence rates of psychological disorders, substance use problems, suicide, and self-harm.¹³

StreetWork Youth Case Workers (YCWs) support young offenders who are involved in the juvenile justice system on bail, community orders, court diversion or leaving custody. Staff and volunteers also provide 24/7 court support and advocacy, while our wrap around case management service is designed to suit the individual needs and goals of the young person. The key feature of our mentoring model is to address the eight central criminogenic domains which include antisocial behaviours and thinking, peer relations; alcohol and other drug use; school/education engagement and employment; family function and relationship development; and connection to community.

Through our mentoring program, our YCWs empower the young person to be self-determined when given the opportunity to challenge and change their current pathway towards a more positive set of outcomes. Under this model of service, the main goals are to re-position the young person at the centre of this current situation and to enable them to understand their own role in the community through participation in pro-social activities and behaviours.

StreetWork acts as a community connector promoting to juvenile offenders the importance of specialist community based resources as well as individually tailored capacity building activities supporting their psychosocial development and achievement. This is achieved through the notion of capital development including:

- Economic Capital: Developing the skills of the individuals (*talents, attributes, engagement in education, job readiness, creating emotional intelligence, interpersonal and intrapersonal communication skills*).
- Social Capital: Developing the community to promote cohesion (*using the community to support networking and opportunities for growth and participation through activities with the PCYC or other help-seeking services*); and
- Cultural Capital: Developing organisations and institutions to be responsive – (*valuing contribution and shaping the way in which capital is understood and determined*).¹⁴

In 2020, StreetWork supported 52 young people who improved or stabilised the prevalence of youth crime through our KickStart Mentoring Program delivering \$469k of community impact.¹⁵

Our early intervention and prevention mentoring program's primary aims are reducing contact with the criminal justice system by supporting young people to meet their goals; increase their sense of purpose, self-worth and social inclusion through the creation of capital development. The mentoring interventions have a positive impact, due to the fact that the relationships between the juvenile offenders and their YCW are characterised by trust, with consistency, reliability, and responsive input. Our quality mentoring relationships positively impact a young person because they model pro-social behaviour and build intellectual capacity via the learning of new skills that assist them to positively navigate and interact with their social environment and community. Mentoring also delivers protective influences in risk taking behaviour, including drug dependency. Mentoring helps strengthen a young person's personal identity, which is a protection against reoffending.

¹³ The Mental Health of Young Offenders Serving Orders in the Community; Kenny, Dianna & Lennings, C. & Nelson, Paul. (2007). Journal of Offender Rehabilitation. 45. 123-148. 10.1300/J076v45n01_10.

¹⁴ The role of holistic approaches in reducing the rate of recidivism for young offenders; J Ravulo, 2019, CCRH

¹⁵ StreetWork: KickStart Mentoring Program; Economic Impact Update; July 2020, PwC

FUNDING PRIORITY: COST OF SCHOOL DISENGAGEMENT AND THOSE NOT ENGAGED IN EMPLOYMENT

The primary aim of StreetWork's early intervention and prevention program is reducing the number of young people leaving school or education early, that is before finishing Year 12, as this places the young person at risk of experiencing life-long vulnerability. These early school leavers have not made a successful transition from school into adult life through work and/or study.¹⁶

Disengaged young people are those who do not participate actively in class/school activities; are not cognitively involved in learning; have not fully developed or maintained a sense of school belonging, and/or those that exhibit inappropriate or counterproductive behaviours. All of these risk behaviours reduce the likelihood of school success. Disengaged young people may have entered school without adequate cognitive or social skills, find it difficult to learn basic engagement behaviours, and fail to develop positive attitudes towards education and school. Disengagement has implications for the lives of young people beyond the compulsory school years with school disengagement remaining the most significant risk factor for the intergenerational persistence of disadvantage.¹⁷

For a number of young people, the endpoint of disengagement is dropping out of school. Leaving school too early has implications for a young person's life-course trajectory. It leaves them vulnerable and at risk of:

- becoming and staying unemployed;
- lower average income levels;¹⁸
- social exclusion – this is three times greater to be excluded socially than those who complete Year 12;¹⁹
- increased risky health behaviour including excessive use of alcohol and other drugs, smoking, being overweight, lower activities of physical activity, poorer health, and mental health outcomes;²⁰ and
- increased engagement in criminal activity, and consequently being arrested and incarcerated in juvenile detention.²¹

For young people with significant behavioural issues including drug dependency, mentoring builds protective barriers around risk taking behaviour and depression. Mentoring will not work in isolation, and a coordinated range of other supports for vulnerable young people is critical. Vulnerable young people often have many support needs and require a range of youth support systems, not just to learn, but also to assist their personal wellbeing more broadly.

In 2020, StreetWork supported 71 young people to re-engage with school or find alternative education pathways through our KickStart Mentoring Program. Our service delivered \$1.7m of community impact by reducing the prevalence of early school leavers.²² The mentoring interventions have a positive impact, due to the fact that the relationships between the vulnerable young person and their Youth Case Worker (YCW) are characterised by trust and regular mentor input. Our quality mentoring relationships impact positively on a young person's social-emotional outcomes and improve their attendance and engagement with school. A number of our young people are also connected with specialist mental health providers. Better and stronger outcomes are achieved when these young people also receive regular mentoring sessions. StreetWork's skills as 'community connectors' are well placed to help match these young people with the other specialist services they need to assist them to address and reduce their risk levels by finding employment; sourcing stable and safe accommodation; receiving specialist mental health support including alcohol and other drug counselling.

¹⁶ Students at risk: A review of Australian literature 1980-1994, M. Batten & J. Russell (1995), ACER Research Monograph No. 46, Melbourne: ACER

¹⁷ Children and young people at risk of disengagement from school, K Hancock & S Zubrick (2015), Western Australia

¹⁸ ABS 2019a. Disability, vocation and education training, 4438.0. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

¹⁹ ABS 2010. Are young people earning or learning? Australian Social Trends, March 4102.0. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics

²⁰ Healthy, wealthy, and wise: Socioeconomic status, poor health in childhood, and human capital development. Journal of Economic Literature, 47, 87-122; J Currie, 2009.

²¹ Mass imprisonment and the life course: Race and class inequality in US incarceration. American Sociological Review, 69, 511-536; B Pettit. & B. Western 2014.

²² StreetWork: KickStart Mentoring Program; Economic Impact Update; July 2020, PwC

FUNDING PRIORITY: COST OF YOUTH HOMELESSNESS INCLUDING ROUGH SLEEPERS

Youth Homelessness remains a significant social issue in Australia. When young people are forced to leave home early, they find it very difficult to gain sufficient income to live independently. Family support is crucial for young people during the transition to an independent adulthood and a sustainable livelihood. When family support is weak or non-existent, young people are much more likely to experience homelessness and life-long disadvantage. It is well documented that young people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or are “rough sleepers”, experience negative social and health consequences due to the social, physical and environmental factors that contribute to, or exacerbate, their poor health.²³ The experience of youth homelessness is fraught with insecurity, a lack of safety, exposure to drugs and alcohol, more health and medical issues and the likelihood of greater contact with the criminal justice system. The total costs of health services and the justice system due to young people experiencing homelessness is an average of \$17,868pp/year, which is considerably higher than an unemployed youth. These costs do not include the additional lifetime impact of early school leaving and low engagement with employment.²⁴

StreetWork’s KickStart Mentoring Program, adopts a youth-focused approach aimed at maximising the young person’s connection to family and friends and is based on building the trust and resolving issues by working through a range of tactics involving boundary setting, mediation, and skill development. Our trained Youth Case Workers (YCWs) explore the needs and requirements of every young person in our program and assist them to self-advocate in a responsible and articulate way. StreetWork’s YCWs are also involved in assisting the young person to develop anger management techniques through specialised counselling, while also developing skills on how to set effective limits and de-escalate conflict. Our YCWs engage the young person through an outreach mentoring model that connects via social and creative activities and stages mentoring conversations in non-confrontational venues such as cafes, school meeting rooms, or during car trips to/from specialist appointments. StreetWork’s YCWs encourage the young person to ‘open up’ about their thoughts, concerns, wishes or ambitions. Commitment is given to a plan designed to meet the goals that the young person deems to be important. These goals are time framed, realistic, and achievable, therefore the young person is invested, empowered to be self-determined when given the opportunity to challenge and change their current pathway towards a more positive set of outcomes.

In 2020, StreetWork supported 19 young people who improved or stabilised the prevalence of youth homelessness or sleeping rough through our KickStart Mentoring Program and delivered \$534k of community impact.²⁵ Our early intervention and prevention mentoring program’s primary aim is for the young person to be connected with the specialist services they need, while also being supported in the community. The mentoring interventions have a positive impact, due to the fact that the relationship between the vulnerable young person and their YCW is characterised by trust and regular mentor input. Our quality mentoring relationships impact positively on a young person’s social-emotional outlook and deliver strong outcomes. The programs explicitly address employment, education, health and mental health, life skills, social inclusion, and connection with family and other community services.

²³ Drug Use, Binge Drinking and Attempted Suicide Among Homeless and Potentially Homeless Youth. B. Sibthorpe, J. Drinkwater, K. Gardner and G Bammer. 1995. The Australian and New Zealand journal of psychiatry. 29. 248-56. 10.3109/00048679509075917.

²⁴ The Costs of Youth Homelessness in Australia, 2016, ARC Linkage Research Briefing, project is an ARC Linkage research project undertaken by the Swinburne University Institute for Social Research, the University of Western Australia and Charles Sturt University, in partnership with The Salvation Army, Mission Australia and Anglicare Canberra & Goulburn.

²⁵ StreetWork: KickStart Mentoring Program; Economic Impact Update; July 2020, PwC

ABOUT STREETWORK

StreetWork Australia is a for-purpose, community organisation working with vulnerable young people affected by: crime, mental health concerns - including suicide and self-harm, violence, destructive relationships, social isolation, homelessness, school/education disengagement, poor employment opportunities and alcohol and substance misuse. StreetWork's purpose is **to support vulnerable young people, in community, to turn their lives around** and reach their full potential. StreetWork has been operating for 40 years across the Northern Sydney region, delivering services to nine local government areas including: Ryde, Hunters Hill, Lane Cove, North Sydney, Mosman, Willoughby, Ku-ring-gai, Hornsby, Hills Shire and the Northern Beaches. The 2019 Community Impact Value of StreetWork's early intervention and prevention programs was \$87.6m*. The aim of Streetwork Australia is to expand into each State and Territory over the next 5-10 years through a partnership model with other organisation already in these markets.

*PwC – StreetWork KickStart Mentoring Program Community Impact Update (July 2020).
Based on improvements and stabilisations of at-risk young people

Broadly, StreetWork's early intervention and prevention program involve activities and initiatives designed to alter the behaviour or development of young people who show signs or who exhibit risk factors or vulnerabilities, by providing them with the resources and the skills necessary to combat identified risks. Our programs are designed to intervene early in a young person's life; or as they start the transition phase to adulthood; or as soon as a problem is apparent - to ensure that they are supported in their most formative years. StreetWork's KickStart Mentoring Program, adopts a youth-focused approach aimed at maximising the young person's connection to family and friends and is based on building the trust and resolving issues by working through a range of tactics involving boundary setting, mediation, and skill development. They are empowering and involve voluntary participation and inclusion in decision making. A strengths-based approach involves recognising, fostering, and building on the young person's skills, capacities, and competencies and involve assisting each young person to develop anger management techniques through specialised counselling, while also developing skills on how to set effective limits and de-escalate conflict. Our outreach mentoring model that engages via social and creative activities and stages mentoring conversations in non-confrontational venues such as cafes, school meeting rooms, or during car trips to/from specialist appointments. StreetWork's Youth Case Workers (YCWs) encourage the young person to 'open up' about their thoughts, concerns, wishes or ambitions. Commitment is given to a plan designed to meet the goals that the young person deems to be important. These goals are time framed, realistic, and achievable, therefore the young person is invested, empowered to be self-determined when given the opportunity to challenge and change their current pathway towards a more positive set of outcomes.

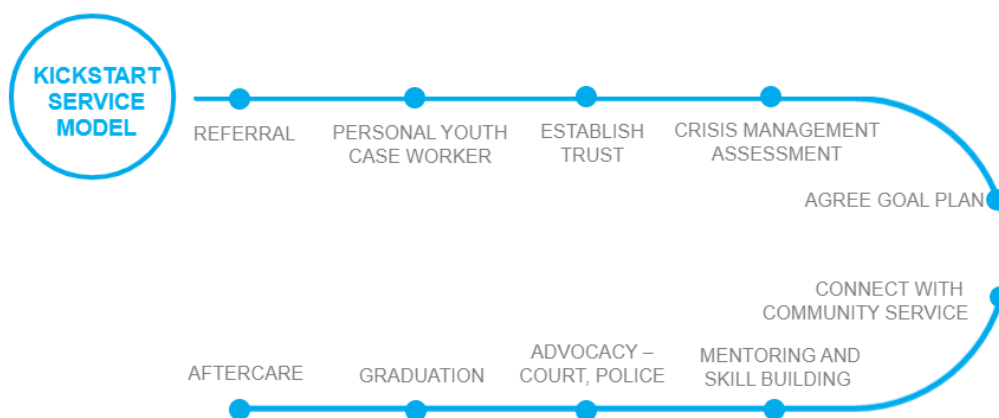
The StreetWork change model is unique because we:

- Start by building and fostering a meaningful and trusted relationship with each young person. We believe that each individual life is unique and has potential.
- Identify and address the specific risk factors impacting a young person's life, in many cases there are multiple factors.
- Individually tailor our support programs so that they address the young person's needs. We do not treat our young people as 'case numbers'.
- Do not supply a 'tick the box' activity list. StreetWork empowers young people to identify the risk factors they want to address as part of their 'contract'.
- Do not limit our support to an arbitrary time period. Our mentoring relationships run for as long as needed reflecting the complexity of the risk factors affecting the young person.
- Work closely with youth agencies and support services. Our Youth Case Workers (YCWs) act as guides, community connectors, who link young people with the specialist services they require.
- Meet our young people in Youth Case Workers (YCWs) - in cafes and shopping malls. These venues are cost effective and help our YCWs to establish trust, engagement, and connection.
- Employ qualified and experienced YCW to ensure professional service delivery.
- Focus our service on young people deemed to be medium - high risk; and
- Achieve strong results - over 90% of our program participants achieve their goals.

StreetWork's key achievements include:

- Operating for over 40 years as a 'self-funded' charity receiving **no recurring government** funding.
- **90% success** rate measured by PwC as young people who graduate from the program having achieved their set goals.
- **Social return on investment (SROI) ratio is \$16 community return** for each \$1 donated or invested with StreetWork (verified by PwC).
- Less than 10% of revenue is spent on administration costs (verified by PwC audit).
- Government agencies trust in the effectiveness of our service. The majority of StreetWork's referrals come from government agencies - 79.8% in 2019 and 69.9% in 2020. Our referral agencies include schools and education providers, community and health services, the Police, and Juvenile Justice; and
- **Huber Social** calculates StreetWork's social impact measurement. Each year from the start of the research this independent authority confirms the significant contribution StreetWork makes to young people, by the creation of new opportunities and the development of life/employment skills.

Our Approach: StreetWork's Flagship Program – the KickStart Mentoring Program



The **KickStart Mentoring Program** provides one-on-one mentoring to vulnerable young people. **The program aims to achieve these key objectives:**

1. Reduce offending/re-offending behaviours as well as substance misuse and other risk taking behaviours.
2. Increase completion of juvenile justice orders and participation in education, training and/or employment.
3. Improve self-esteem and mental health outcomes, social and life skills and personal relationships.
4. Increase re-engagement with school or engagement in alternative education pathways; and
5. Increase engagement with specialist youth services agencies (e.g. psychological, drug and alcohol counselling).

The services we offer may include:

- Counselling and engagement with external mental health services.
- Identifying and developing personal strengths and capabilities.
- Skill building courses including anger management, fitness, and diet.
- Help to find employment opportunities, secure and stable housing, and legal support; and
- Support to re-engage with the education and/or school system and alcohol and drug rehabilitation.

StreetWork partners with vulnerable young people who either cannot or will not work with other youth service providers and/or government agencies. We have a proven history of delivering positive, tangible results for vulnerable young people through the KickStart Mentoring Program. Our unique service model looks to build protective factors such as community

connectedness and engagement in social norms such as education, skill development and employment (Sanson et. al 2002). Positive outcomes are achieved through the following strategies embedded in the KickStart Mentoring Program:

- Developing healthy relationships – between the young person and their YCW.
- Collaboration – our strategy integrates families and schools, youth and employment services to achieve a more impactful and cost-effective response to a young person's complex situation.
- A strength-based approach – improving a young person's confidence and strengths to enhance resilience.
- Capacity building – strengthening capacity and developing coping skills to reduce vulnerability; and
- Sustainability – connection to place-based services to enhance a young person's community network.

Specific Outcomes of KickStart

1. Engage +300 young people in KickStart annually.
2. +65% of participants' final Kessler 10 Psychological Assessment score show an improvement compared to intake assessment.
3. +20% reduction in offending/re-offending offences for participants.
4. +55% of participants re-engage in education/schooling or employment.
5. +75% of participants achieve their stated goals and formally graduate from KickStart; and
6. +60% of participants actively engage in other support activities after completing KickStart (e.g. counselling, workshops).

This proposal is consistent with Australian Government agenda which is to: *Support individuals, families and communities to achieve greater self-sufficiency; through the delivery of policy advice and high quality accessible social, health and child support services and other payments; and support providers and businesses through convenient and efficient service delivery.*

Specifically, supporting communities by ensuring all Australians have access to the support they need. Under this priority area this pre-budget submission for pilot funding to expand services into new communities to support vulnerable young people in community to turn their lives. The program will make a significant difference to enhance the quality of life of young people, thereby making a great contribution to the social and economic fabric of Australia.

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- **Priority 1: Investing in (youth) Health: Towards Zero (youth) Suicides**
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Through the provision of services tackling comorbidity factors as part of social inclusion prevention programs.

THE INVESTMENT

The need for increased capacity to meet the demand for services is essential. As such the investment is \$2m over the next three years.

- Year 1: \$600,000²⁶ – 8 x Youth Case Workers to meet current waitlist demands in NSW
- Year 2: \$700,000 – New branch to meet growing demand for service in Queensland
- Year 3: \$700,000 – New branch to meet growing demand for service on the Victoria

²⁶ This is the cost to employ fully qualified Youth Case Workers

INFORMATION LINKS

- Website - www.streetwork.org.au
- Annual Report, AGM minutes and 2019 Audited Financial Accounts
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/s1bv4hgf0gxvvytm/StreetWork%20AGM%20Minutes%2017%20June%202020.pdf?dl=0>
- Strategic Plan 2020-23
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/d31uhaf3ag3orcu/StreetWork%20Strategic%20Plan%202020%20-%202023.pdf?dl=0>
- StreetWork 2019 Social Impact Report – Prepared by Huber Social
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/j0ebodu3serbp0i/Streetwork%20Annual%20Social%20Impact%20Report%20January%202020.pdf?dl=0>
- StreetWork – 2019 Kickstart Mentoring Program Outcomes
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/d2ko0gkvf1p0ynp/2019%20-%20KickStart%20Mentoring%20Program%20Outcomes.pdf?dl=0>
- StreetWork The Social Case Summary – Prepared by PwC
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/w9kdis11r5lbujr/PWC%20StreetWork%20The%20Social%20Case%20Summary%202015.pdf?dl=0>

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/streetworkpage/>
- Twitter - @streetworkeo
- Instagram - @streetworkaus (primarily used to communicate directly with young people)
- LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/streetwork/>
- YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqO9DwP8cnET8rO-nG2JOog>

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