

# Youth Solutions

## Annual Report 2007 – 2008



creating safer choices



### President – Geoffrey D Ellis



*“Determination, patience and courage are the only things needed to improve any situation.” (Anon)*

There have been a range of changes at the Board level where we said farewell to departing Board Members: Vice President Tim Clancy, Treasurer Wayne Quick, Helen Clancy & Deborah Gander (over 15 years service), Peta Hudson, Jose Drumond and David Michell (over 5 years service). Let me again thank these past Board Members for their commitment and service to Youth Solutions over the years.

Let me formally welcome our new Board Members: Peter Campbell, Emma Macfarlane, Karen Dries, Lisa Hunt, Jenny Gleeson and Damon May. New Board Members bring with them specialist expertise in the areas of Finance, Law, Human Resources, Community Services and Information Technology. The contribution to the Service in the early stage of your appointment has been most welcome.

The Board will continue to focus on the Strategic Management of the Youth Solutions Service and it remains committed to quality improvement and good corporate governance (supported by the CEO's recent achievement in Certificate IV Business Governance).

Thank you for your interest and ongoing support for Youth Solutions – we look forward to continuing to support young people to make safer life choices to achieve their full potential.

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” (Anon)*

2008 was a year in which our Board & Staff showed Determination, Patience & Courage → Determination to make changes, Patience to implement them and the Courage to follow them through!

During a successful (and sometimes challenging) year of change we had cause for both celebration and sadness. We celebrated Youth Solutions' 20 years of Service to the community at our Gala 2008 Annual Charity Event while also feeling the challenge for change as we were going through restructuring the operations of the Service. Of particular note was the sadness we all felt in the farewell to departing CEO Linda Goldspink-Lord (CEO from 1989) whilst at the same time eagerly welcoming our newly appointed CEO Debbie Roberts.

The success of the Service are numerous and our Key Achievements over the past 20 years have included (amongst others): Drug Sense, Youth Drug Forums, Winner of the Ted Noffs Award for Specialist Service, Finalists in National Drug Prevention Awards 2006 and 2007, Participation in the NSW Alcohol Summit, Parent Links Project, Dope EFX u Campaign, Inspiring Resource and presentations at Local, State and National Conferences to name a few.

### Our Mission

*Supporting young people to make safer life choices to achieve their full potential*

### Our Vision

*Creating solutions with young people, families and the community to promote positive life outcomes by preventing harmful drug use*



This is a Quality Improvement Council Accredited Service

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## Chief Executive Officer – Debbie Roberts



Welcome to the 2007 – 2008 Annual Report, which provides a snapshot of our achievements over this 12 month period.

After 15 years of service to this organisation I am extremely pleased to be appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer.

A number of changes have been made to the structure of our organisation and I am especially excited about the appointment of two new Project Support Officers, Tiffany Sullivan and Sally Berry.

I welcome our new Executive Support Officer Nina Blair who shares this new role with Sue Willoughby.

Congratulations to both Rebecca Whitford and Geraldine Dean, newly appointed to their roles of Program and Service Delivery Coordinator and Promotions Coordinator respectively, both of whom are celebrating 5 years of service to Youth Solutions.

Significant challenges during 2007 – 2008 for the Service have included a heavier reliance on fundraising through events as well as collaborative partnerships with other organisations. This has become necessary as the expenditure of the Service has increased in line with the growth and delivery of Service activities.

In light of these challenges, I'd like to acknowledge the continued support of our business community. I'd also like to thank our very committed Board. No community organisation can work alone, partnerships with all sectors of our community are essential in reaching a greater number of our young people. We need the whole community to assist our young people in keeping themselves safe!

Despite these challenges the Service has faced over the past 12 months, we have been committed to implementing the *Youth Solutions Operational Plan 2007 – 2008*.

Youth Solutions' service delivery continues to aim to reduce high risk behaviours associated with drug use; minimise associated harms and delay or prevent the initiation or uptake of alcohol or other drug use by young people, by utilising a range of strategies.

Outcomes implemented throughout 2007 – 2008 have included:

**Dissemination of evidence based health information** to a diverse community including: young people, parents and families, professionals, chambers' of commerce, business community. Information has been delivered via the Alcohol and other Drugs Information Referral Booklet, media campaigns, website, newsletters, information sessions, community events and fundraising activities.

**Implementation of Safer Celebration Strategies** such as the Christmas Safety Campaign, as well as review and dissemination of YS Planning Party Fact File.

**Increasing community awareness and education**, eg National Drug Action Week, Charity Golf Day, presentations to organisations such as Rotary, as well as the distribution of the Service newsletter to schools, local businesses and organisations.

**Training programs** which were tailored to meet needs of specific populations eg young women, parents of teenagers, youth workers and teachers.

**Effective prevention programs** which were promoted to the community through the media and other key marketing activities, eg local media releases and interviews, radio campaigns, conference presentations and workshops.

**Participation of target groups** in the development, planning, implementation and evaluation of programs and services, eg Strengthening Parents Project and Inspiring Youth Solutions.

**Advocacy and consultations** – contribution to the development of policy, programs and strategic plans, eg Community Links Wollondilly, Camden Community Safety Strategic Plan, UWS School of Medicine year 3 – 5 curriculum, SSWAHS Youth Health Plan.

**Establishment and continuation of partnerships** resulting in involvement in local community action.

**Community and capacity building** through skills training and student placement for high school, TAFE and University students as well as supporting community events. Service Volunteers have engaged with the Service in a variety of ways, opportunities have included; involvement on the Strengthening Parents Links Project Advisory Group, Fundraising Committee as well as assisting at community events.

## Service Profile

Youth Solutions is a non Government, community based, youth drug prevention charity:

- Providing the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions of New South Wales, Australia, with a specialist resource in youth drug and alcohol prevention
- Developing and maintaining drug and alcohol health promotion activities, in an effort to prevent or reduce drug related harm among young people

Youth Solutions is a unique service which aims to prevent drug related tragedies. Our Service believes that each young person deserves an opportunity to reach their potential and that drug use takes away that potential.

While young people are our primary focus, we also aim to educate, inform and support others who play an important role in their lives.

## Inspiring Youth Solutions



The Youth Drug Forum Manual CD Rom, was a project funded by the IMB Community Foundation. The CD Rom has proved to be a valuable and comprehensive resource that will enable other communities to implement a Youth Drug Forum.

A Youth Forum is an example of peer led community action. Young people are actively involved in the process of identifying youth related issues of concern relevant to their community and subsequent solutions to address these concerns. Youth Forums provide an excellent opportunity to place young people's issues firmly on a community's agenda and can act as a catalyst for action.

The user friendly resource contains all the necessary background information, comprehensive workshops, slides, handouts and planning tips required to successfully facilitate the entire Forum process. [To obtain a copy of the CD Rom please contact us.](#)

## Training

### Responsible Service of Alcohol

Youth Solutions and Wollondilly Shire Council partnered to provide accredited Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) training to local young people aged 16-25 years living in Wollondilly local government area.

This program was a win-win initiative for the community of Wollondilly. The project proactively informed and improved young peoples' knowledge and understanding of the laws relating to the service of alcohol within licensed venues as well as highlighting the responsibilities of patrons in and around licensed premises.

The program increased participants' knowledge and skills, allowing them to be more self-sufficient in transferring of skills and knowledge to others in their communities as well as providing them with accreditation. [Youth Solutions is looking at opportunities to run future courses in the Responsible Service of Alcohol which will increase employment opportunities.](#)

## Strengthening Parents



The Strengthening Parents Project involved linking parents, community members, services and ultimately young people to produce a social marketing campaign.

As a result of the needs assessment undertaken at the early stages of the project, the projects drug focus was alcohol, however the project also addressed other youth drug related issues.

Parents/carers (parents) of young people 12-17 years living in the Camden and Wollondilly local government areas were the primary target group of this project with a secondary target group being parents in surrounding localities.

A number of resources were produced to support the campaign including: stickers, bags, posters, pamphlets, water bottles and a comprehensive web resource.

## Safe & Pretty



This two day training program focused on providing six young women, 16-18 years from the Macarthur Region, with knowledge on how to present and best represent themselves for interviews particularly in the hair and beauty industry.

The program also focused on personal safety issues and interviewing skills. This was a joint partnership between Morpheus Academy of Hair & Beauty and Youth Solutions.

For more information on all programs and activities phone 4628 2319 or log onto [www.youthsolutions.com.au](http://www.youthsolutions.com.au)

**Corporate Sponsors**

Macarthur Wealth Management  
AMP Foundation  
The Protectors Insurance Brokers  
Rotary Club of Narellan  
IMB Community Foundation

**Corporate Supporters**

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McDonalds Macarthur  
Macarthur Chronicle  
Tri City Trucks  
SNAP Printing  
Globalive

2008 Board Acknowledgement

Geoff Ellis - President  
Tony Ross - Vice President  
Peter Campbell - Treasurer  
Emma Macfarlane  
Karen Dries  
Gordon Hay  
Jenny Gleeson  
Lisa Hunt  
Damon May

2008 Service Acknowledgement

Congratulations to recipients of the 2008 Youth Solutions Acknowledgment Awards for 5 Years Service to Youth Solutions, Rebecca Whitford and Geraldine Dean.



**Youth Solutions Team**

**Debbie Roberts** Chief Executive Officer  
**Rebecca Whitford** Program & Service Delivery Coordinator  
**Geraldine Dean** Promotions Coordinator  
**Sue Willoughby** Executive Support Officer  
**Nina Blair** Executive Support Officer  
**Tiffany Sullivan** Project Support Officer  
**Sally Berry** Project Support Officer



*Sponsors*  
2007 - 2008



foundation



**Rotary Club of Narellan**



*Key Annual Events*

**2007 Charity Event**

Mischiefous elves, Christmas music and mystery Christmas gifts set the scene for a successful 2007 Youth Solutions Charity Event, which raised \$38,000 to support the projects of Youth Solutions.

The event was again held in July at the Campbelltown RSL Club with entertainment by Heroes from Heaven.

The Corporate Event Partners AMP Foundation and Macarthur Wealth Management along with The Rotary Club of Narellan both donated \$10,000, once again displaying their public support to the Service.

**2007 The Protectors Insurance Brokers Charity Golf Day**

The Protectors Insurance Brokers Charity Golf Day held on Thursday 29 November 2007 was a complete success. Over \$20,000 raised on the day has been donated to Youth Solutions. The Service is grateful for the ongoing commitment of David Michell and the team at The Protectors, for their incredible support.

*2008-2009 Dates*

2008 The Protectors Insurance Brokers Charity Golf Day  
Friday 5 December  
Campbelltown Golf Club

2009 Youth Week  
28 March - Sunday 5 April

2009 Drug Action Week  
21 June - 26 June

2009 Charity Event  
25 July  
Campbelltown Catholic Club