

dope ~~EFFX~~ u

YOUR COMMUNITY YOUR RELATIONSHIPS
YOUR FAMILY YOUR HEALTH YOUR JOB
YOUR LIFE

Project Report
May 2004 : October 2005

Funded by the
Australian Government National Illicit Drug Strategy
under their Community Partnerships Initiative

Notation

This project has been funded by the Australian Government National Illicit Drug Strategy under their Community Partnerships Initiative.

As the coordinator of the project, Youth Solutions is solely responsible for the content of, and views expressed in this report and all material associated with this project.

Please note that every endeavour has been made by Youth Solutions to ensure the accuracy of information provided within this report. Positions and organisations referred to in this report were correct at the time of their participation in this project.

Foreword

This report will provide interested parties with an outline of the process used in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the *Cannabis Taking Action – Dope EFX u Campaign*.

It is intended to be a guide that may be used as future reference for parties wishing to duplicate this social marketing process, as well as a source of information for those interested in the issues surrounding young people and cannabis use.

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Executive Summary

The overall aim of *Cannabis Taking Action Project* was to integrate the concepts and methods of *health promotion* and *social marketing* to develop a campaign message about young people and cannabis that did more than just speak to the community – rather for the message itself to be spoken by young people.

The primary objectives of the *Cannabis Taking Action Project* were to:

- Increase knowledge of cannabis related harms among young people aged 15-18 years and the broader community
- Increase knowledge of relevant services
- Develop partnerships between government, non-government and community
- Increase referrals for cannabis interventions
- Raise the profile of cannabis resources and campaigns.

The *Cannabis Taking Action Project* involved the utilisation of a social marketing approach and the development of key messages around young people, cannabis and related harms that were promoted through a diverse range of promotional materials and activities.

These promotional materials were supported through radio and print media messages as well as an interactive web based fact file. In addition to this, a community forum on cannabis was held to address any concerns that have been raised as a result of the campaign, or generally about young people and cannabis use.

A diverse steering committee membership ensured that local services and stakeholders were able to assist in identifying the key target group i.e. universal with the key messages and strategies for campaign implementation being defined by young people within the target group.

The involvement of stakeholders at key points throughout the campaign ensured that a greater number of services were aware of the campaign and the impact that it may have, eg: increased referrals.

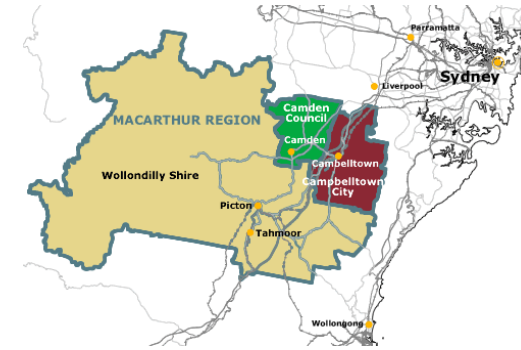
From the outset, Youth Solutions understood that the project needed to model the organisations' philosophies of *youth participation*; *whole of community participation* while promoting *harm minimisation* strategies. Also, that the structure and methodology of the project needed to be flexible enough to meet the needs of the target group and reflect what was learnt through focus testing and evaluation.

The *Cannabis Taking Action Project* was supported by extensive pre and post surveys and focus tests with young people at various stages of the process. A one day *Creative Workshop* was a key component in these consultations.

The campaign slogan ***Dope EFX u***, with by-lines, ***Your Community, Your Relationships, Your Health, Your Job, Your Family and Your Life*** was a derivative of the *Creative Workshop* as well as results of the focus tests and survey results, which determined that young people were overwhelmingly concerned with issues of personal safety around cannabis use: including the general health effects that restricted everyday life as well as violence and sexual assault.

Background & Identifying the Need

The Macarthur region includes the local government areas (LGAs) of Camden, Campbelltown and Wollondilly covering 3067 square kilometres with a total population of approximately 240 000 residents . Located less than an hour drive south-west of Sydney, the Macarthur region is a diverse community embracing rural through to metropolitan living.



(Above: Map sourced from www.macroc.nsw.gov.au)

(Left: Map sourced from Wingecarribee Shire Council)

The Wingecarribee Shire covers 27,000 square kilometres with a total population of approximately 40,839. Approximately one-hours drive south-west of Sydney, the Wingecarribee Region is a diverse community embracing rural through to urban living.

Identifying the Need

The need for the *Cannabis Taking Action Project* was identified at a community forum, held in 2003. The forum was facilitated by Paul Dillon and was attended by; parents, teachers, community workers and young people.

Participants at the forum voiced concerns about a lack of knowledge around cannabis and its harms as well as awareness of services in the **local community** that could address issues specifically in regards to young people and cannabis use.

Increasingly young people participating in Youth Solutions initiatives were alarmingly displaying a lack of knowledge of and concern for cannabis use and related harms.

Applying for Funding

Opportunity arose for these concerns to be addressed, when Youth Solutions applied and received funding through the Australian Government's Community Partnerships Initiative to coordinate a social marketing campaign from **May 2004 – October 2005**.

Coordinating Service – Youth Solutions

Youth Solutions was established in 1988 as Macarthur Drug and Alcohol Youth Project, and is a non government community based charity providing a drug and alcohol prevention service in the south western Sydney regions of Macarthur and Wingecarribee.

Youth Solutions committed a Part Time Project Officer to coordinate the project as well as lending the expertise of the senior staff to plan, implement and evaluate each stage of the campaign.

The Process for Consultation

Delivery of the campaign included:

- Development of a Steering Committee
- Exploring the key issues – asking young people what concerned them
- Developing key messages
- Promoting the messages
- Supporting the messages with resources
- Holding a community forum, promoting the process and addressing concerns

Steering Committee

The project sought substantial involvement from a diverse steering committee membership including other drug and alcohol services (treatment and prevention), youth services, local governments, state departments, university, non government organisations, young people and the general community. Representatives from key service providers across both regions were approached to be members of the *Cannabis Taking Action Steering Committee*.

This project was fortunate to recruit steering committee members with rich and diverse expertise, specifically in the fields of *Alcohol and Other Drugs* as well as *Youth Workers*.

The collective experience and network contacts of steering committee members informed and shaped the nature of the project at each stage, and in particular enabled the greater distribution of materials to young people.

Due to the large geographic nature of the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions, recruitment of committee members representing the Wingecarribee region in particular proved difficult. Reasons for this could have included: travel to meetings and the limited availability of services within this region from which to recruit from. Strategies to address these issues included direct consultation with a school and youth centre in this region though the consultation process as well as the dissemination of promotional material.

Post evaluation of *Steering Committee Members* concluded:

- Knowledge of cannabis and related harms improved
- Involvement of young people throughout the process was a positive aspect of the project
- Resources were well designed ‘young people friendly’ and well received
- Demand outweighed supply

Overall, comments regarding the organisation of Committee Meetings concluded that they:

- Were well organised
- Were appropriate length
- Provided valuable information
- Enabled members to contribute in a positive manner

Comments about the positive aspects of involvement on the *Steering Committee* included:

- *Being listened to*
- *The use of my ideas*
- *Hearing other ideas*
- *Hearing young peoples ideas and working with them*
- *Running the workshops*

Recommendations

- 1) The establishment of a Steering Committee, as described, is important to support and guide the project.
- 2) Representation from a broad range of key service providers, government and non-government, is crucial to the success of a localised social marketing campaign, demonstrating whole of community commitment.
- 3) Participation on the steering group by the target group, ie young people, would be ideal, particularly to provide input into and assist with the implementation of surveys and dissemination of the campaign promotional material.
- 4) Alternatively, a formalised subcommittee of young people may be helpful in maintaining commitment from young people throughout the various stages of the project.
- 5) Design, implement and collate pre and post surveys for Steering Committee members to establish the individual goals of committee members, levels of knowledge and participation, as well as communication between members and the Project Officer.

Setting the target

Originally, the primary target was set as those young people 18-25 years of age living, working or recreating in the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions, with the secondary target as general community members exposed to the message. However, as determined by the Steering Committee, comprehensive literature reviews, and negotiation with the funding body, the primary target was reset to those young people between the ages of 15-18 years. This is a more realistic age group when considering the prevalence of first time cannabis use.

Consultations with young people

Prior to this project, no research had been conducted specifically in the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions about the main issues of concern surrounding cannabis use and young people. To ensure that the project met the needs of young people, it was imperative to consult with them about what their concerns were.

The process of developing the campaign included:

- Consultations
- Focus testing the message
- Holding a one day *Creative Workshop* with young people
- Defining the key elements of the campaign message
- Delivery of the campaign message through a number of mediums
- Evaluation throughout the process as well as post campaign

Pre Campaign Surveys and Focus Groups with Young People

Although there are a host of 'recognised' immediate, short term and long term effects of cannabis use, the campaign called for an understanding about what the 'real issues' for young people in our region were.

The initial consultations were carried out with 165 young people in the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions in November 2004.

The surveys and focus groups had two primary objectives to:

- Provide an opportunity for young people in Macarthur and Wingecarribee to have their say in relation to issues that affect them, their friends and/or peers regarding cannabis and related harms
- Inform the steering committee about the key issues of concern in relation to young people and cannabis use.

Focus group and survey questions were structured to gain key information about:

- Location of use
- Context of use
- Activities associated with use
- Perceptions of harms
- Modification of behaviour in relation to harms
- Perceived positive and negative effects
- Cannabis education and campaign knowledge
- The elements of effective health promotion messages
- Suggested campaign distribution

Process

Where and how *Steering Committee Members* engaged with young people was carefully considered, with consultations taking place at:

- A community event (this was a local music event, that is traditionally well attended by young people within the target group)
- 3 high schools
- Community youth centre

The average age of participants was 16 years of age. The young people represented a broad range of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

Focus groups were held over a period ranging from 40 minutes to 1 hour, with approximately 12-15 young people per group. To ensure consistency with responses, all focus groups were facilitated by a Youth Solutions staff member along with a *Steering Committee Member* in the presence of a supervising adult eg teacher or youth worker.

Questions were put forward allowing participants to answer voluntarily. Young people were asked to think of 5 of their friends and give responses that the majority of the group (including themselves) would answer. Questions were posed in this way, so that responses didn't require young people to give specific examples of an individual's drug use. All responses were recorded, as were general observations eg number of participants who agreed or disagreed with comments or discussion. Responses were made in general non-specific terms ie "I know someone who..." or "Young people our age..."

It should be noted that the presence of a supervising adult and/or the group mix might have influenced the participation of some young people and the type of response given.

Overwhelmingly, issues about **personal safety** (including their health, violence and sexual assault) were commented on throughout surveys and focus groups. Not only were we able to determine what the important issues were, but how young people wanted health messages delivered to them.

Key points from the focus groups and surveys included:

- The average age of respondents was between 15 and 17 years
- There was a slightly higher representation of females than males
- Messages about the harms associated with cannabis use seem to be getting through in relation to: driving, operating machinery and going to work but not so - for going to school
- The majority of responses for 'why young people would use cannabis' related to: peer pressure or friends, to be cool or for fun. Other reasons included: stress, to escape and boredom
- The main reasons 'why young people would not use cannabis' were directly related to: the health effects/ general effects and outcomes. Other reasons included: parents and family, it is illegal and that young people simply didn't want to use it
- No real link was established with cannabis use and other drugs, other than alcohol (spirits being identified more so than beer)
- Patterns of use were as expected and included: at parties, with or around friends and family
- The top three negative consequences linked issues 'under the umbrella' of personal safety including: health, sexual assault and violence
- Predominantly, information about the harms associated with cannabis use were heard at school and or from a teacher
- Help was sought about related harms associated with cannabis use from friends, parents and then health services

- 15-20% of respondents could recall public health messages re cannabis related harms
- Suggested key methods to distribute messages included: local events, local radio, major shopping centres and posters.

Outcomes of Focus Groups

- As a result of the consultations, the Steering Committee was extremely well informed of the issues important to the young people in Macarthur and Wingecarribee in relation to young people and the harms associated with cannabis use.
- Following each focus group, participants were provided with a variety of written information including:
 - » Youth Solutions service brochure
 - » NSW Health Drug Smart *Z-card*
 - » Planning Parties Fact Sheet (compiled by Youth Solutions)
 - » Marijuana Information for Students (2001 Department of Education and Training)
 - » An information sheet regarding the *Cannabis Taking Action – Dope EFX u Campaign*
- Participants had the opportunity to discuss cannabis or other drug issues with the facilitators
- Additional resources were available on request including the ‘*What’s the deal on grass*’ Booklet series (National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre)
- And were advised that further opportunities were available for young people to be involved in the campaign.

Recommendations

- 6) Conducting focus groups and surveys with young people provides insight into the issues that concern them. This information is imperative to inform any action that takes place aiming to address cannabis issues.
- 7) Young people chose to fill in the survey or participate in the focus groups for a variety of reasons. It is important to offer incentive for engaging young people i.e., refreshments, saying thank you and importantly providing further information or opportunity for involvement where possible.

Focus testing the message

Following the participation of 165 young people through focus groups and surveys, a further 189 young people were then consulted with, about what campaign messages would be relevant to them.

A clear response/decision about the campaign message was undetermined through these surveys; however key trends were established, including the need for:

- Clear and concise message
- A message that didn't dictate to young people
- A message that was realistic

Recommendations

- 8) Providing 'areas for comment' or an option for 'none of the above' on surveys increases the opportunity for respondents to give a 'truer' response (one that hasn't already been determined by the survey designer).

Creative Workshop

Program and participants

Informed by knowledge from the initial consultations and then the message surveys, 12 young people participated in an intensive one day *Creative Workshop*.

The *Creative Workshop* had three primary objectives, those being:

- Increase the participants knowledge in regards to cannabis and related harms
- Determine the key message for the campaign
- Determine the key elements for distribution and design.

The program was written and facilitated by members of the *Cannabis Taking Action Steering Committee* and in particular, representatives from *The Drum*, *Burnside*, *Mission Australia's Drug and Alcohol Awareness Program*, *The Ted Noffs Foundation*, *Drug Health Services-Sydney South West Area Health Service* and *Youth Solutions*. The *Creative Workshop* included guest speakers from the radio and graphic design industry, which meant that ideas could be transformed into campaign elements – immediately.

Outcomes for the *Creative Workshop* determined the key:

- Message of the campaign
- Elements for distribution
- Elements to begin the design process.



Young people participating in the Creative Workshop

Evaluation of the *Creative Workshop* concluded that there was:

- Substantial increase in knowledge by participants about cannabis and related harms
- Increase in understanding by participants about harm minimisation.

Interestingly, all young people who attended indicated that they would like to be further involved in the campaign.

Defining the key elements of the campaign message

Participants unanimously agreed with one group that ***Dope EFX u***, should be the campaign message. Elements from other groups factored into the final design – including the by-lines ***Your Community, Your Relationships, Your Health, Your Job, Your Family*** and ***Your Life***.

Recommendations

- 9) The *Creative Workshop* was crucial in harnessing commitment from young people. A subcommittee involving young people could have evolved from participants on this day.

Campaign Resources

Outcomes from the *Creative Workshop* and the previous consultations were specific in how the campaign message was to be disseminated. The following methods were chosen by the young people, with distribution and media promotion beginning **21 April 2005**.

Campaign resources included:

- 1000 T-Shirts
- 1000 Wristbands Promotional Products
- 300 Posters
- 3 weeks of ½ page newspaper advertisements as well as various editorial coverage
- 2 weeks of radio advertisements on two commercial radio stations
- Letterbox drop of postcards promoting the message and the community forum to over 40,000 residents
- Web based fact file.

T-Shirts

T-shirts were chosen as the primary method to distribute the campaign message. The concept for the t-shirt design originated at the *Creative Workshop*. Young people wanted it to look fashionable enough so that they could promote it among their friends. The final t-shirt design was voted upon on line on the Youth Solutions website by interested young people. The final design included ladies and men's fittings.



T-Shirt Options

Recommendations

- 10) Involve the target group in the design and dissemination of the key promotional products, as this dramatically increased its demand.



Wristband Artwork

Wristbands

It was suggested at the *Creative Workshop* that the campaign include the concept of producing wristbands with the website printed on it. 1000 wristbands were produced and easily distributed among school networks, participating young people, services, and through local events.

Recommendations

- 11) Wristbands were just becoming popular as general street wear, this increased the demand for the product i.e. Research and take advantage of current trends

Posters

In early consultations, young people identified that posters displayed at school were an effective way of getting 'health promotion' messages across. This was due to their prominence within the school and that students constantly walked past them.

It was because of this recommendation that the campaign included the print of 500 posters (300 x A4 and 200 x A3) displaying the campaign message, image, website and Service phone number.

Posters were distributed to services within the local region, steering committee members, and all high schools.



Postcards

50,000 postcards were produced, displaying the campaign message, image, website and Service phone number, as well as promoting the *Community Forum*. 49,000 of these postcards were letterbox dropped 2 weeks prior to the *Community Forum* distributed on a weekend.

Distribution per postcode/ regions as follows:

LGA	Suburb, Postcode	Distribution
Campbelltown	Campbelltown 2560	13 716
	Macquarie Fields 2564	1 586
	Ingleburn 2565	2 915
	Minto 2566	5 842
Camden	Camden 2570	4 687
	Narellan 2567	6 975
Wollondilly	Picton 2571	1 629
	Thirlmere 2572	783
	Tahmoor 2573	1 356
	Bargo 2574	1 009
Wingecarribee	Mittagong 2575	2 807
	Bowral 2576	3 276
	Moss Vale 2577	2 419
Total		49 000

Newspaper Advertisements/ Editorial

The media reach focused on local print and radio which was possible through the existing contacts of Youth Solutions. Target group included young people 15-18 years as well as parents and general members of the community, primarily promoting the website.

Paid ½ page advertisements for a three week period were placed in local newspapers: *The Campbelltown Advertiser*, *The Camden Advertiser*, *The Wollondilly Advertiser* and *The Southern Highlands News*. Editorial was also achieved within these newspapers, primarily as part of Drug Action Week coverage.

Radio Commercials & News Coverage

Following the *Creative Workshop* 12 young people volunteered to be involved in providing the voices for the radio commercials. This 3 hour workshop included a tour of the radio station and a meet and greet with the ‘stars’ followed by a session in the recording studio.

Prior to arriving at the studio, a script was drafted by the creative writer who was in attendance at the *Creative Workshop*; the script was reworked through consultation with representative young people, until a final version was produced.

The *Recording Session* was a positive experience for all participants, with comments received on the day including:

- *It was an awesome experience*
- *I now want to do something in radio*
- *Thanks, had a great time*
- *I am a star!*

The 110 x 30 second radio commercials were placed breakfast, radio, afternoon, drive and evening were played over a 2 week period on local radio station C91.3FM.

Due to interest in the campaign message, additional radio commercials were played on Illawarra’s local radio station i98FM with free placement. Radio interviews were also recorded with 2ST, Macarthur Community Radio and C91.3FM during general news.

Further Message Delivery

Launch

The campaign was launched as part of a youth week activity at the *Minto PCYC Bands Night*, Thursday 21 April 2005. Two key young people spoke at the event and launched the project, while other young people volunteered to distribute campaign material.



Recommendations

12) When deciding on promotional products it is essential to research the target group and take advantage of current trends. *Wristbands were just becoming popular as general street wear, this increased their demand.*



Young People at the Launch

Events

Following the *Minto PCYC Bands Night*, Steering Committee Members were approached by a number of band/gig organisers looking to distribute further material at subsequent gigs. This was extremely successful and highlighted the importance of having the target group disseminate material amongst their peers.



Wristbands and postcards were also distributed and radio ads played at the *Eureka Rock Eisteddfod* (a battle of the bands competition held over 3 nights and attended by 4000 parents and young people).

Due to relationships with local NRL team Wests Tigers as well as Wests Leagues Club Campbelltown, campaign materials were also distributed by volunteer young people at ½ time of an NRL football match (Wests Tigers versus Cronulla Sharks, June 10 Campbelltown. Promotional material for the campaign was also displayed on the field monitor viewed by the 12,000 people in attendance.

Publications

Youth Solutions has been approached by a number of organisations to provide editorial for their publications including:

Youth Safe Newsletter *Social Marketing Issue*, Dope EFX u, Conception, Implementation and Beyond

Drug Info Clearinghouse *Prevention of Cannabis Related Harms*, Dope-EFX u – a message for young people, p12

Campbelltown City Council's Health Matters Newsletter, Dope-EFX u – Younger Residents Address Real Issues, p8

Youth Solutions Newsletter *Solutions*, Dope EFX-u – Cannabis Social Marketing Campaign, p3

Presentations

In an effort to promote the project, campaign message and the process, a number of presentations/workshops have been conducted, including:

- 28 April 2005 Youth Solutions Board Meeting at Youth Solutions (*attendees included Youth Solutions Board of Directors*)
- 21 June 2005 Milton Luger Forum at Odyssey House during Drug Action Week (*attendees included treatment and prevention workers*)
- 22 June 2005 Community Forum at Camden Civic Centre during Drug Action Week (*attendees included service workers and community members*)
- 23 August 2005 Alcohol and Other Drug Link, network meeting for Drug and Alcohol Agencies in South West Sydney (*attendees included service workers*)
- 18 October 2005 NADA '2005 Rising to the Challenges Conference' (*attendees included treatment and prevention workers*)

Recommendations

- 13) Prepare media releases, presentations and editorial information in advance to take advantage of opportunities that come up throughout the project to further promote the campaign message.

Youth Participation

Youth participation has been a key component to the campaign being embraced by the target group and wider community. Examples of their involvement include:

- Consultations
- Creative Workshop
- Dissemination of material
- Speakers at the launch
- Providing the voices for the radio ads
- Choosing the t-shirt design
- Website design.

We learnt through the *Creative Workshop* that young people wanted to be communicated with via text messages and over the web. So we used this medium to focus test the designs. The final t-shirt design was determined by a collection of text message and email voting.

Recommendations

- 14) Ask participants how they want to be communicated with: either by mail, electronically, mobile or home/work phone.
- 15) Consider the time in which you contact young people i.e. during schools hours is not appropriate if you are contacting them via mobile.

Supporting the Campaign

Community Forum

The *Dope-EFX u Community Forum* provided an opportunity for community members to meet local services, learn about the campaign and listen to information about current trends in cannabis use.



Younga People at the Community Forum

The forum was held on Wednesday 22 July (Prevention Day of Drug Action Week) at Camden Civic Centre with approximately 50 people were in attendance on the evening. The program included a presentation about the project, and an engaging information session by Dr Adam Winstock.

Introductory Notes for Dr Adam Winstock

Dr Adam Winstock is the Area Clinical Director of Drug Health Services - Western Zone, for Sydney South West Area Health Service. He is a Conjoint Senior Lecturer at UNSW and Chair of the Education Committee Chapter of Addiction Medicine. Dr Winstock was trained both as a Physician and a Psychiatrist in the United Kingdom. He spent 4 years as Clinical Lecturer in Addictions at the National Addiction Centre, Institute of Psychiatry.

He has considerable clinical and research expertise in the area of substance use particularly in the area of opiate, stimulate and cannabis use and in the area of young people and 'dance drugs'.

Dr Winstock is also currently conducting some cannabis research in SSWAHS and has written the NSW Health Cannabis Detoxification Guidelines.

The evening concluded with a meet and greet with local services, including: *The Department of Education and Training, Youth Solutions, Missions Australia's Drug and Alcohol Awareness Program, Ted Noffs Foundation, Uniting Care Burnside, Drug Health Services Western Zone SSWAHS, Campbelltown Youth Advisory Sub Committee* as well as information provided by from *Nar-anon* and *Parents Line*.

The *Community Forum* was actively promoted as an activity of Drug Action Week – and was included on the national calendar, it was promoted through local media, young people, schools, the local alcohol and other drug network, Steering Committee members and the distribution of postcards. Despite the amount of promotion involved in preparation of the Community Forum, attendance numbers could have been greater. Strategies to address this included information for the community to access on the web based fact file.

On a positive note, a number of referrals were made at the *Community Forum*. The Forum also provided another media opportunity to promote the campaign message.

Post evaluation of the Forum by attendees concluded that:

- The guest speakers presentation was informative and engaging
- Having someone with a clinical background was important
- Young people in attendance was a positive attribute although their could have been more young people
- 80% of attendees increased their knowledge in relation to cannabis ‘Slightly’ or ‘Greatly’
- 100% of attendees thought the resources were either ‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’

Recommendations

- 16) Generate interest for attendance at community forums or information evenings by promoting through a variety of means. Additionally, consider time of day and the different target groups in attendance when preparing the program so that a greater number of people attend.

Web based fact file

The web based fact file contains information about cannabis and related harms as well as local services which can assist young people and interested people in our region. It also provides as a reference point for further information

Originally the fact file was going to be printed, however initial evaluations concluded that there was a need to reach all members of the community in both the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions. And a web based resource was the most cost effective way to reach members of the community.

Since the website went live on the 21 April 2005 up until the conclusion of the project on 31 October 2005, **1095** people logged onto the website, averaging **5.64** sessions per day.

The website has been actively promoted through all campaign resources.

Youth Solutions was contacted by the Australian Drug Information Network (ADIN) to include the details of the Dope-EFX u website on their search engine.

Youth Solutions has committed to the ongoing maintenance and promotion of the website after the conclusion of this project.



Cartoon Figure for online quiz

Project Evaluation

Evaluation has taken place throughout the campaign, including a change in the original target group as well as extra consultations including:

- Literature reviews
- Consultation with key stakeholders
- Pre and Post *Steering Committee* Evaluations
- Focus groups and surveys with 165 young people
- Focus testing the message with a further 189 young people
- Pre and Post *Creative Workshop* Evaluations
- Post *Community Forum* Evaluations
- Post *Campaign* Evaluations with young people and general community
- Website feedback forms
- Website hits.

Through these evaluation processes, we can conclude that we have met the objectives set out at the commencement of the project:

- Increase knowledge of cannabis related harms among young people aged 15-18 years and the broader community
- Increase knowledge of relevant services
- Develop partnerships between government, non-government and community
- Raise profile of cannabis resources and campaigns.

Anecdotally from discussion with local services we believe that through achieving the objectives as listed above and through the continual promotion of the project, there is every possibility that services will see increase referrals for cannabis interventions.

“I have received informal feedback from numerous service providers and young people about the effectiveness of the t-shirts and posters in raising the issues related to cannabis use both for those young people who are experimenting with use, and also for young people who have been using cannabis for some time and now want to address it” Alexis Taylor, Caseworker, Uniting Care Burnside

Post Campaign Evaluations with Young People

60 respondents ranging in ages 15 -18 years completed surveys. There were slightly more male than female respondents. The majority of respondents, lived, worked or attended school in Campbelltown, with the remaining respondents equally representing the local government areas of Camden, Wollondilly and Wingecarribee. Surveys were distributed for dissemination by Services, Steering Committee Members and high schools.

Key points from the focus groups and surveys included:

- 97% of respondents recalled the message
- 85% of respondents recalled the message via t-shirt with approximately ½ of these respondents receiving a t-shirt through a variety of means during the course of the campaign i.e. events, young people and school

- Similar numbers of respondents recalled the messages and received wristbands
- Radio recall was fairly limited with 18% recall – *this should be assessed in the context of the positive effect on the young people who participated in the radio commercials*
- Approximately 50% of respondents recalled the posters; predominantly at school
- Few young people recalled the postcard – 15%, with only 5% recalling the newspaper advertisements – *a number of referrals were received via these means for young adults outside the primary target group*
- Over 50% of respondents recalled the message at a variety of events including: the Campaign Launch at Minto PCYC Bands Night, Sweeney’s at Scenic Hills Gig Night, NRL Wests Tigers versus Cronulla Sharks game at Campbelltown Stadium as well as in school forums
- 25% of respondents had logged onto the www.dope-EFXu.com.au with comments about the positive attributes on the site included the interactive quiz as well as information
- 40% of respondents could recall some or all of the by-lines attached that went with the campaign message i.e. your; community, relationships, health, job, family and life
- 62% of respondents stated that the campaign message changed the way they felt about young peoples cannabis use
 - » ¼ of the remaining respondents said they already agreed with the message prior to the campaign
 - » 3% of respondents felt strongly that the message was ineffective i.e. cannabis use was ok in moderation
- Additional comments received included:
 - » *I feel determined to help make this campaign known and accepted*
 - » *It (this campaign) shows the effects of cannabis use on the community*
 - » *It (this campaign) is an effective way to realise how bad it (cannabis) is. It is a serious problem that needs more attention*

Youth Solutions Commitment to Dope-EFX u

The outcomes of the project have already been promoted through presentations and publications. Youth Solutions will continue to take advantage of opportunities to promote the project and the project report through internally produced publications: the service website www.youthsolutions.com.au, and service newsletter *Solutions* and service *Annual Report*.

Youth Solutions is also committed the ongoing maintenance of information from the website www.dope-EFXu.com.au.

Conclusion & Reflections

A number of people have reflected on the successes and challenges of this social marketing project, including: participating young people, Steering Committee Members, local services and the coordinating organisation, Youth Solutions. Intrinsically important to the entire process was the participation and input of the target audience in designing the message and campaign materials.

Also imperative to the design was the ability to be flexible enough to meet the needs of the target audience. Although in some instances the recall of individual campaign components poster and postcard was relatively low, it was due to the diverse variety of ways in which the project was promoted that contributed to its success. The ability to be flexible with the budget in how the campaign message was disseminated, also meant that a greater number of resources were able to be purchased.

Summary of Recommendations

- 1) The establishment of a Steering Committee, as described, is important to support and guide the project.
- 2) Representation from a broad range of key service providers, government and non-government, is crucial to the success of a localised social marketing campaign, demonstrating whole of community commitment.
- 3) Participation on the steering group by the target group, i.e. young people, would be ideal, particularly to provide input into and assist with the implementation of surveys and dissemination of the campaign promotional material.
- 4) Alternatively, a formalised subcommittee of young people may be helpful in maintaining commitment from young people throughout the various stages of the project.
- 5) Design, implement and collate pre and post surveys for Steering Committee members to establish the individual goals of committee members, levels of knowledge and participation, as well as communication between members and the Project Officer.
- 6) Re evaluate or reinforce project objectives and target group, following current literature reviews, consultation with key stakeholders and review of current resources/campaigns.
- 7) Conducting focus groups and surveys with young people provides insight into the issues that concern them. This information is imperative to inform any action that takes place aiming to address cannabis issues.
- 8) Young people chose to fill in the survey or participate in the focus groups for a variety of reasons. It is important to offer incentive for engaging young people i.e., refreshments, saying thank you and importantly providing further information or opportunity for involvement where possible.
- 9) Providing 'areas for comment' or an option for 'none of the above' on surveys increases the opportunity for respondents to give a 'truer' response (one that hasn't already been determined by the survey designer).

- 10) Prepare media releases, presentations and editorial information in advance to take advantage of opportunities that come up throughout the project to further promote the campaign message.
- 11) Ask participants how they want to be communicated with: either by mail, electronically, mobile or home/work phone.
- 12) Consider the time in which you contact young people i.e. during schools hours is not appropriate if you are contacting them via mobile.
- 13) Illicit interest for attendance at community forums or information evenings by promoting through a variety of means, consider time of day and the different target groups in attendance when preparing the program.
- 14) Ask participants how they want to be communicated with: either by mail, electronically, mobile or home/work phone.
- 15) Consider the time in which you contact young people i.e. during schools hours is not appropriate if you are contacting them via mobile.
- 16) Generate interest for attendance at community forums or information evenings by promoting through a variety of means. Additionally, consider time of day and the different target groups in attendance when preparing the program so that a greater number of people attend.

Appendices

- 1) Advertisements & Editorial
- 2) Article - Drug Info Clearinghouse
- 3) Article - Health Matters
- 4) Article - Solutions Newsletter

NEWS



HEALTH RISKS: Pat Farmer, Linda Goldspink-Lord and Debbie Roberts, of Youth Solutions, welcome the new drug education funding.

New program to show drug risks

DRUG experimentation among teenagers has long been recognised as a sign of emerging independence and a product of peer pressure.

But there is always a danger with any drug use. Under a new program announced last week, Macarthur area youth will be educated about the risks and dangers of cannabis use.

Macarthur Federal Liberal MP Pat Farmer announced an \$80,000 grant to Youth Solutions, a Campbelltown-based not-for-profit organisation focused on reducing drug use among young people.

Youth Solutions will develop an advertising campaign and marketing program, with a key element a forum to address community concerns about drug use among young people.

Youth Solutions chief executive officer Linda Goldspink-Lord said a Cannabis Forum last May noted "alarming and compelling" results.

"Issues highlighted included participants' low-level knowledge of cannabis and related harms, as well as current patterns in cannabis use," Ms Goldspink-Lord said.

Details: 4628 2319.



TAKING ACTION . . . Macarthur Federal MP Pat Farmer with Youth Solutions chief executive Linda Goldpink-Lord and community programs manager Debbie Roberts. **Photo: JEFF DE PASQUALE**

Risks of pot use

A project that aims to reduce cannabis use among youth in the Macarthur region has been given \$80,000 in Federal Government funding.

Cannabis Taking Action, a project to be run by Youth Solutions, will educate young people about the risks and dangers of cannabis use.

"Illegal drug use is not only dangerous but it has a damaging effect on our local community, especially when it involves young people," Federal Member for Macarthur Pat Farmer said.

"Cannabis is often a gateway for young people to move into taking more dangerous drugs and programs like this one help send out the right message to our kids about the dangers of all drugs."

The project will include an advertising and marketing campaign to highlight the dangers of cannabis use, and a community forum on the issue.

Word on the street is: don't be a dope

THE effects of marijuana on young people's lives is the focus of a new campaign called Dope-EFXu.

Linda Goldspink-Lord, chief executive officer of campaign organiser Youth Solutions, said the campaign was a message from young people to other young people.

"This innovative campaign will attempt to raise young people's understanding of the potential harms related to their own, or someone else's cannabis use, as well as to increase the awareness levels of the community at large," she said.

Youth Solutions and a steering committee put together the social marketing campaign thanks to funding from the Federal Government's National Illicit Drug Strategy. A website, dope-EFXu.com.au, was launched on Friday.

The target group for the campaign is 15- to 18-year-olds who live in the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions.

Project officer Geraldine Dean said the message was relevant for many people beyond that age group.

"As workers in the drug and alcohol field, we understood what the harms were, but we didn't completely understand what

the real issues for young people in our region were, so through surveys and focus groups we asked 165 young people what concerned them," she said.

"Overwhelmingly, issues about personal safety including their health, violence and sexual assault were commented on through the surveys and focus groups. Not only were we able to determine what the important issues were, but how young people wanted health messages delivered to them."

Mrs Dean said that after the first consultations, 189 young people were asked what campaign messages would be relevant to them and 12 participated in a one-day creative workshop to choose the mediums for the campaign.

These included radio and newspaper ads, postcards, stickers, arm bands and posters and 1000 free T-shirts to be distributed through April and May to young people.

A community forum would be held during Drug Action Week in June.

**Details: 4628 2319 or
info@youthsolutions.com.au.**

**The Camden, Campbelltown and Wollondilly Advertisers &
The Southern Highland News**

27 April, 4, 11, 29 May and 6 June 2005

½ Page Advertisements

dope EFXu

YOUR COMMUNITY YOUR RELATIONSHIPS
YOUR FAMILY YOUR HEALTH YOUR JOB
YOUR LIFE

www.dope-EFXu.com.au
Phone: 4628 2319

Funded by the Australian Government National Illicit Drug Strategy under their Community Partnerships Initiative

Dope-EFX u — a message for young people

by Geraldine Dean, Communications Project Officer, Youth Solutions

A community forum held by Youth Solutions in 2003 for young people living in the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions highlighted issues of concern about young people's cannabis use and identified a long list of associated harms. This resulted in a response to provide a locally relevant campaign that involved young people and the general community.

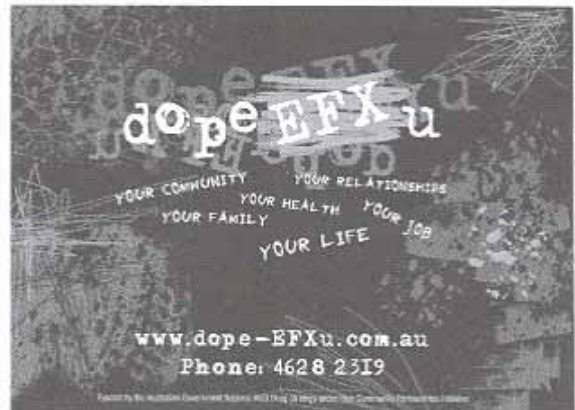
The campaign called for an understanding about the "real issues" for young people in the region, so 165 young people were asked about their concerns through focus groups and surveys. Issues about personal safety (including health, violence and sexual assault) were predominant in the surveys and focus groups. This made it possible to determine what the important issues were and how young people wanted health messages delivered to them.

A further 189 young people were then consulted about the types of campaign message that would be relevant to them.

Following this, 12 young people participated in a intensive one-day "creative workshop", enabling young people to increase their knowledge about cannabis use and to choose the mediums/designs for the campaign, including: radio and newspaper advertisements, postcards, stickers, wrist bands, posters (for schools and community spaces) and T-shirts.

Dope-EFX u is a pretty clear message designed by young people for young people. Although the messages are directed at 15–18 year olds, they really are universal.

The ever-evolving website resource www.dope-EFXu.com.au aims to support the campaign and includes information about cannabis as well as a host of



local services that can assist young people and the general community (without replicating the fantastic resources already on offer).

For further information about Youth Solutions or the Dope-EFX u campaign, contact Youth Solutions, tel. (02) 4628 2319, or log onto www.youthsolutions.com.au.

Dope-EFX u is funded by the Australian Government National Illicit Drug Strategy under the Community Partnerships Initiative.

What is Youth Solutions?

Youth Solutions (formerly known as the Macarthur Drug and Alcohol Youth Project) is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation that aims to prevent and reduce drug use and related harm among young people in the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions.

While young people are the primary focus, the Youth Solutions team aims to educate, inform and support others who play an important role in the lives of our younger residents.

Youth Solutions is a unique service based on the belief that each young person deserves the opportunity to reach his or her potential and that drug abuse, homelessness, poverty and unacceptably high levels of youth suicide prevent that potential from being realised.

Youth Solutions helps young people to realise that keeping themselves and those close to them safe should be a major priority for every one of them.

For further information, contact Youth Solutions on 4628 2319 or log onto www.youthsolutions.com.au.

“These days I find myself pondering how to reconcile my net income with my gross habits.”

John Kirk Nelson.

“Dope-EFX u”

-Younger Residents Address Real Issues

As part of its work supporting young people to make safer life choices, the local health promotion organisation Youth Solutions (see accompanying story) conducts community forums to help develop youth health promotion initiatives.

In 2003, one such forum highlighted issues of concern around young people's cannabis use and identified a long list of associated harms. The response to this information has been to develop a locally relevant campaign that involves young people as well as the general community.

The Australian Government's National Illicit Drug Strategy (under their Community Partnerships Initiative) funded Youth Solutions and the Cannabis Taking Action Steering Committee to develop a social marketing and media campaign addressing the harms associated with cannabis use.

Although there are many recognised immediate, short term and long term effects of cannabis use, the campaign called for an understanding of the real issues that confront local young people.

Surveys and focus groups involving 165 young people were conducted and, overwhelmingly, the issues identified related to personal safety, including not only health but also violence and sexual assault. This research also revealed how young people wanted health messages delivered to them.

A further 189 young people were then consulted to determine what campaign messages would be relevant to them. Following this consultation, a dozen young people participated in a intensive one day Creative Workshop, where they refined their understanding of all the issues surrounding cannabis use and chose the designs for the campaign as well as the media to be utilised.

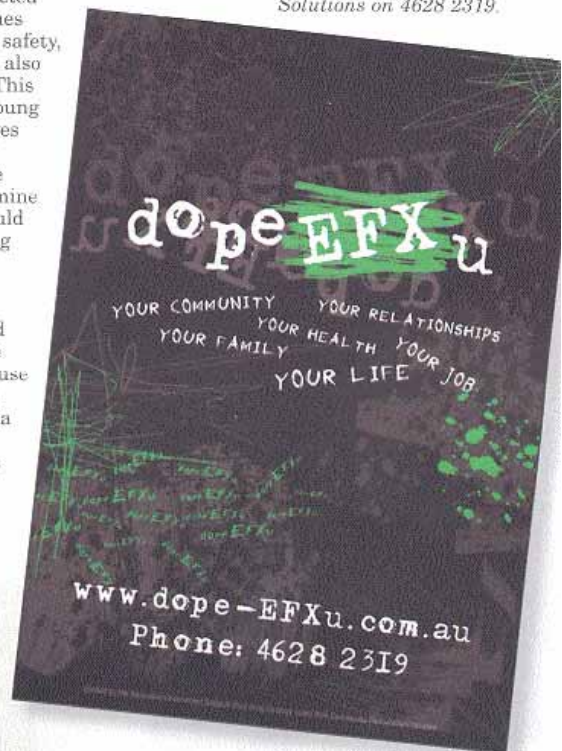
As a result, the campaign's promotional components include radio and newspaper advertisements, 50,000 postcards delivered to households, stickers, wristbands, posters for schools and community spaces, and 1000 t-shirts.

The campaign slogan, “Dope-EFX u” encompasses not only the impact of cannabis use on the user's health but also the way it can affect all areas of life, including employment prospects and relationships with family and others.

The campaign's messages have been designed by young people for young people but, while they are directed at 15-18 year olds living in the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions, the messages really are universal.

An additional campaign component is a website, www.dopeEFXu.com.au. It provides information about cannabis and identifies the services that can help young people and the general community to understand the issues surrounding cannabis use.

For further information about the Dope-EFX u campaign, contact the specialist team at Youth Solutions on 4628 2319.



Helpful Phone No.s

ADIS (Alcohol Drug Info Service)
24 hour free service
1800 422 599

For Emergencies
000

After Hours Counselling
Lifeline 13 11 14

Helpful Websites

Information about Cannabis,
young people and local services
www.dope-EFXu.com.au

Comprehensive drug information site
www.druginfo.adf.org.au

Provides accessible counseling
service to all Australian children
www.kidshelp.com.au

Online service for young people
looking for support through
difficult times
www.makeanoise.ysp.org.au

Dope-EFX u

Cannabis Social Marketing Campaign



Young leaders at the Dope EFX u Campaign Launch at Minto PCYC

Dope EFX u, and it doesn't stop there; it can also affect your community, your relationships, your family, your job and your life. This multi level message was recently voiced by young people, through what they could wear, what they could hear and what they could read.

The overall objective of the project was to integrate the concepts and methods of *health promotion and social marketing* to develop a campaign message that did more than just speak to the community rather for the message itself to be spoken by young people.

From the outset, Youth Solutions understood that the project needed to model the organisation's philosophies of *youth participation; whole of community participation while promoting harm minimisation strategies*. Also, that the structure and methodology of the project needed to be flexible enough to meet the

needs of the target group from what was learnt through focus testing and evaluation basically talking and listening to young people.

Overwhelmingly, through surveys with 165 young people, issues about **personal safety** (including their health, violence and sexual assault) were commented on through surveys and focus groups. Not only were we able to determine what the important issues were, but how young people wanted health messages delivered to them.

A further 189 young people were then consulted with, about what campaign messages would be relevant to them. Following this, 12 young people participated in a intensive one day Creative Workshop, enabling young people to increase their knowledge in regards to cannabis use as well as choose the mediums/designs for the campaign including: radio and newspaper advertisements, 50,000 postcards delivered to households, stickers, wrist bands, posters (for school and community spaces) and 1000 t-shirts.

Check out the ever evolving website resource www.dope-EFXu.com.au which aims to support the campaign, it includes information about cannabis as well as a host of services that can assist young people and the general community about issues around cannabis use.

