



# Queensland Youth Alliance 2014 Youth Forum

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## REPORT

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*An official 2014 National Youth Week activity*



# “Our Voice. Our Impact”

# Queensland Youth Alliance

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## Volunteer youth organisations:

- Girl Guides
- Leos
- Scouts
- St John Ambulance Cadets
- Surf Lifesaving

## Church-based youth groups:

- Boys' Brigade
- Girls Friendly Society
- Girls' Brigade
- Pathfinders

## Government-funded youth programs :

- Air Force Cadets
- Army Cadets
- Emergency Service Cadets
- Police Citizens' Youth Clubs
- The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme

## The 2014 QYA Youth Forum participants



# Forword

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The Queensland Youth Alliance took the opportunity to address the Queensland Government's "Queensland Youth Strategy" as part of the 2014 National Youth Week. The theme of the week was "Our Voice. Our Impact" which aligned with the idea of running a youth forum to provide a youth voice to discuss a range of relevant topics to the youth organisations represented.

The forum was hosted by The Scout Association on Saturday 12 April 2014 and was attended by 19 young people aged 14 – 18. They represented Scouts, Girl Guides, Leos, St John Ambulance Cadets, Emergency Services Cadets, Girls' Brigade and Boys' Brigade. Adult observers attended from all these organisations and the Police Citizens' Youth Clubs (PCYC). Young adults from the organisations assisted as facilitators, masters of ceremonies and recorders. The feedback in this report from the youth forum has been prepared by the youth participants selected from the groups.

The agenda of the forum focused on the Queensland Government's *Queensland Youth Strategy*. The forum aimed to identify and has provided recommendations on:

- ways the QYA organisations can address the strategies,
- whether the QYA organisations and the Queensland Government could work more collaboratively and provide support to each other, and
- mechanisms to inform the Queensland Government on the value of the QYA organisations and the role that they play.

The Youth Forum was carefully designed to promote collaboration between youth organisations and gave individuals an opportunity to help improve the society in which we live.

The participants should be commended for their contribution to the forum and commitment to providing feedback on the Queensland Youth Strategy for the QYA organisations and the Queensland Government.

Yours sincerely

Ian Lightbody

Chairman  
Queensland Youth Alliance



# Introduction

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The Queensland Youth Alliance (QYA) is the peak body for youth organisations in Queensland. It was established in 1996 and has the following aims:

1. To foster better understanding and cooperation amongst members of the Alliance, and between the Alliance and the Government so as to enhance the delivery of the Alliance's services to the young people of the community;
2. To pursue issues/activities of mutual interest for youth; provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and an opportunity for networking; and
3. To gain and foster recognition of the important role that members of the Alliance play in supporting youth and the community.

The QYA serves to unite the kindred spirit of Queensland's major youth organisations and their shared ideals to the promotion and delivery of opportunities and experiences for the positive development of youth. In essence, these organisations agree to share their special talents and resources in the conviction that a united body will advance the cause of positive youth development to higher levels.

The QYA is seen as a partnership whereby appropriate information can be freely exchanged, and joint ventures and other matters of mutual interest and benefit can be pursued collectively. The QYA is committed to contributing constructively to the development of worthwhile government policies and positive community values particularly where youth related.

With these aims and vision, the QYA is keen to engage in discussions with the Queensland Government on areas of mutual interest. The Government's *Queensland Youth Strategy* (2013) has been a useful resource to focus discussions and identify areas of mutual interest between the QYA organisations and the Queensland Government.

The QYA organisations have agreed that it is in the best interests of their organisations, government and youth in Queensland to work collaboratively in addressing the Queensland Youth Strategy. To date, a planned process of review has been undertaken with the goal of presenting recommendations to each QYA organisation and to the Queensland Government. The evolving process follows an action research model.

**Reflect:** QYA organisations reflected on the Queensland Youth Strategy and the significance to their organisations and the QYA.

**Plan:** A plan to gather and collate ideas on the relevance of the Queensland Youth Strategy was developed.

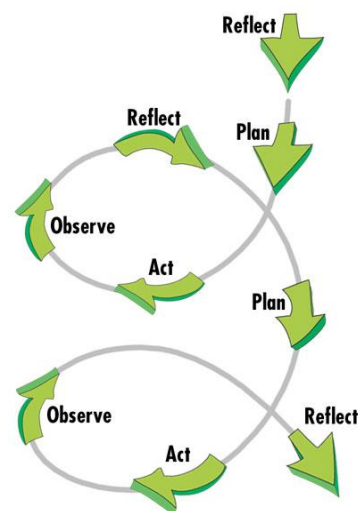
**Actions:**

1. Relevant strategies were identified by senior QYA organisation representatives and documented.
2. Common agenda discussed.
3. Youth forum designed to gather further input.
4. Report provided to Queensland Government.

**Observations:** Response from the Queensland Government.

**Reflect:** Consider the responses from the Queensland Government.

**Plan:** Operational plan developed to implement.



Senior QYA organisation representatives have reviewed the Queensland Youth Strategy and identified that of the six areas of connection, in terms of the Queensland Government's planned responses, the first two were not so relevant to the QYA organisations:

Area 1: Connecting to family, friends and social networks

Area 2: Connecting to education, training and employment

It should be noted that the QYA organisations do consider that they play an important role in these areas of connect, although not featured in the Queensland Government's plans. These aspects are addressed briefly in this report.

The four areas of connect that feature closer links between the Queensland Government's strategy and the activities of the QYA organisations are:

Area 3: Connecting to health and well-being

Area 4: Connecting to volunteering and participation

Area 5: Connecting to supports and services

Area 6: Connecting to arts and culture

These are the four areas that were addressed by representative youth at the QYA Youth Forum and form the basis of this report. It should be noted that in order to preserve the authenticity of the youth voice, youth representatives have prepared the responses which appear verbatim in this document.

The QYA organisations have reviewed the ideas and endorse the recommendations.

# Summary of findings

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## Introduction

The Queensland Youth Strategy has been used as the focus to investigate the manner in which QYA organisations and the Queensland Government can work together in the future. Responses from senior QYA representatives (refer to QYA Request for information) and the input from the QYA Youth Forum (refer to the following Appendix) form the basis of these findings and recommendations.

Whereas the QYA Request for information reviewed all six areas of connection, the QYA Youth Forum addressed only Areas 3 to 6.

## Area 1: Connecting to family, friends and social networks

The Queensland Youth Strategy describes the approach to connecting with family, friends and social networks.

The Queensland Government recognises that family and friends are the most important influence in a young person's life. Families influence a young person's self-esteem, wellbeing and safety which in turn affect school performance and later, participation as active citizens in our society.

For some young people the transition from adolescence to adulthood is challenging. Families will be able to easily access information and advice, including apps to prepare young people for this transition, wherever they live.

The Queensland Government will provide early intervention and support for those families who need it. Where young people are at risk of harm in their family, funded services will work with them and their family to keep them safe.

The Queensland Government will measure the success in connecting young people to family, friends and social networks by:

- Young people and families will more readily find the information they need to support them.
- Fewer young people will experience homelessness.
- More parents needing information or assistance with parenting will get the help they need.

The QYA organisations need to indicate that they see that they play a significant role in connecting families and friends with the development of young people, and that they form an important supportive and safe social network within the community.

In one form or other, youth organisations aim to be an important positive influence in the lives of young people and to play a constructive place in society. It needs to be said that most QYA organisations have a holistic view of young people and provide a program of diverse activities to achieve these goals. The ethos of most organisations provides a clear direction in the life of a young person through a set of explicit principles, rules and teachings.

### QYA Recommendations:

- 1.1 The Queensland Government develop closer links with community youth organisations as agencies to provide a positive influence for young people self-esteem, well-being and safety.
- 1.2 The Queensland Government Departments develop a better understanding of the benefits of community youth organisations and explore ways in which these services can be supported.
- 1.3 QYA organisations explore ways in which they can support the Queensland Government's youth strategy, even in areas not currently identified.

## Area 2: Connecting to education, training and employment

The Queensland Government recognises the importance of education, training and employment for young people and society. The QYA organisations share this view and provide education and training for young people, in a range of delivery methods, many of which are replicated by the school education sector. Furthermore, they consider that involvement in their programs will enhance a young person's employment prospects.

The government identifies that a young person's participation and achievement at school, training or university impacts on their long-term economic and social wellbeing. The Queensland Government wants young people to be better informed about their study and job opportunities. The longer young people can be engaged with school and learning, the better start they have in entering the workforce and building a secure future.

The Queensland Government is committed to providing young people with vocational information, training opportunities and pathways to jobs. The Queensland Youth Strategy does not recognise the education and training provided by youth organisations, some of whom are also Recognised Training Organisations (RTOs).

### **QYA Recommendations:**

- 2.1 The Queensland Government develop closer links with community youth organisations as agencies to provide education and training opportunities for young people.
- 2.2 The Queensland Government Departments develop a better understanding of the educational and training benefits of community youth organisations and explore ways in which these services can be supported.
- 2.3 QYA organisations explore ways in which they can support the Queensland Government's youth strategy, particularly in the areas of education and training.

## Area 3: Connecting to health and well-being

The Queensland Government identifies that fitness, healthy eating and body image are critical for young people's good health, now and in later life. Young Queenslanders also need access to supports and services that promote positive mental health. Furthermore, young people should be able to participate in both their local communities and in the digital world, knowing they are safe from anti-social behaviour, abuse and violence. The Queensland Government believes young people must be held accountable for their actions when they have committed a crime and they should receive assistance to help make positive changes in their lives.

The QYA organisations support this philosophy and see that they play a very important part in providing an environment and program to support the health and well-being of young people.

The QYA organisations are already aligned closely to the health and well-being strategies in the Queensland Youth Strategy, namely:

- More young people to be active.
- More young people to have improved physical health.
- More young people to have better mental health.
- More young people to feel safe.
- More young people will act responsibly and lawfully.

It is well-accepted that the focus in government has been on promoting sport to young people. This has been to the detriment of youth organisations that offer a holistic approach to health and well-being since sport participation has been increasingly on the rise, whereas many youth organisations have significantly dropped in youth membership over the past one and two decades.



The perception from the youth organisations has been that government does not understand or appreciate the extent to which many QYA organisations are involved in sport and active recreation, and also encourage participation in sporting clubs. For example, a number of the QYA organisations will involve their members in a range of sporting and active recreational activities such as hiking, abseiling, canoeing, sailing and team games, but since they do not offer one sport as their primary function, they have not been included in the Government's agenda.

There is also perception that the Queensland Government does not support youth organisations which have broad programs, including the spiritual development of young people. A number of QYA organisations are aligned to church, such as Girls' Brigade, Boys' Brigade, Pathfinders and GFS, and therefore have not been able to receive support from government, despite their long-established tradition of developing citizenship and a healthy lifestyle in young people.

#### **QYA Recommendations:**

- 3.1 For the Queensland Government to recognise and promote youth organisations as providing valuable contributions to the health and well-being of young people.
- 3.2 Church-based youth organisations be included in 'Get in the Game' funding opportunities.
- 3.3 QYA organisations explore ways in which they can support the Queensland Government's youth strategy, particularly in the areas of health and well-being.
- 3.4 QYA organisations and the Queensland Government work closer together for the benefit of youth in Queensland, this includes collaboration between organisations and also between organisations and Government.

## **Area 4: Connecting to volunteering and participation**

The Queensland Youth Strategy states that:

Getting young people involved is good for them and good for Queensland. By participating in volunteering, sport and other community activities young people develop their character and resilience, as well as decision-making and leadership skills and make an important contribution to their community.

Volunteering gives young people the opportunity to have fun and acquire new skills. It can also be an important path to employment.

The state government believes young Queenslanders are responsible for making the most of the opportunities in their community, respecting others and voicing their opinions constructively on issues that matter to them. We need to provide access to contemporary digital channels to help this happen effectively.

Most of the QYA organisations are volunteer based, and all support increased involvement of young people in taking on leadership roles and having their voices heard which are similar to the goals of the Queensland Government.

The QYA organisations would like to engage closer with Government since a number of the strategies to connect young people to volunteering seem relevant but are described without reference to volunteer community organisations. The organisations would appreciate assistance in promoting and supporting greater participation in their programs.

In many respects the Government is supporting and initiating programs that duplicate activities undertaken by the QYA organisations. For example, many organisations operate their own award schemes and do not necessarily require subscribing to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, although it is offered as an optional extra for the members of some organisations. Many of the organisations offer their own tailor-made leadership programs; however, there is interest in knowing more about the Government's CAPS leadership program.



The Queensland Youth Strategy includes a number of programs and events, such as the annual Youth Parliament, special ANZAC Day services, digital technologies to promote participation and wetlands program, which could be integrated into the programs of the QYA organisations.

There are specific strategies to develop and support youth programs and youth organisations, and a need to coordinate expert advice on young people. The QYA has already done a great deal of work in this area, including an identified need to develop a program creation tool (called “Eurekit”) for the benefit of other youth organisations, and to build on the body of research already in existence and sponsored by the QYA. In particular, the QYA has supported a research-based framework of good practice and suggest that this be used by the Queensland Government to inform policy and strategy.

#### **QYA Recommendations:**

- 4.1 The Queensland Government further recognise, support and promote the activities of QYA organisations, including volunteer involvement and participation within the program and the wider community.
- 4.2 QYA organisations explore ways to support each other for the betterment of youth and the community, particularly in better utilising resources and addressing the needs of disadvantaged youth (through disabilities, socio-economic and cultural boundaries, isolation, etc).
- 4.3 The QYA organisations and the Government engage in more youth forums, increasing participation and encouraging a greater say in youth matters. This may also include involvement in the Youth Parliament and greater participation in National Youth Week (and improving the lead time on activities and events to allow more involvement).
- 4.4 The Government needs to discuss ways to further improve the Blue Card system.
- 4.5 The Government engage in conversations with the QYA on the types of digital technologies that would support the delivery and participation of the QYA organisation programs.

## **Area 5: Connecting to supports and services**

The Government's has identified that young people need to be connected to relevant supports and services. The Queensland Youth Strategy states that:

Some young people need extra help. We will provide them with access to high quality, effective support services that meet their individual needs. For example, those young Queenslanders who cannot live at home will be assisted to access safe, stable accommodation. Youth services will work with young people in ways that make a difference – by assisting them to achieve their personal goals, and stay connected with their family and community, as well as with education, training and employment.

The QYA organisations, whether community-based, church-based or government-based, identify that they play an important part in assisting young people develop their own personal goals, and foster strong connections with families and the community, and are often better placed than traditional government agencies to do this, and achieve better results at less economic cost.

QYA organisations need assistance and support in connecting with isolated and disadvantaged youth, and specialist services when required. The QYA organisations need to be more aligned with support networks that exist for youth that need help and may be able to assist in promoting these services to the wider population. Ways to achieve this need to be further investigated but may involve links from member websites and the organisation of guest speakers at combined information and training sessions.

The Government has made a commitment to making sure “young people have information about youth services in ways that will work for them” and that “more young people will have their say on issues that affect them”. The QYA organisations see themselves as part of the community support services for young

people and need to be considered and involved in conversations on the roles they play for individuals and the community.

**QYA Recommendations:**

- 5.1 The Queensland Government use the QYA network to help connect youth with youth services, through the provision of guest speakers at information sessions and training courses, and through links on QYA websites.
- 5.2 The Queensland Government Departments develop a better understanding of the benefits of community youth organisations in supporting young people to have a purposeful direction in life, strong support networks and a sense of community.
- 5.3 The Queensland Government work with QYA organisations to provide youth activities to disadvantaged youth, including youth with a disability, those living in remote and rural Queensland, and those in low socio-economic communities.
- 5.4 The Queensland Government and QYA organisations investigate the possibility to coordinating resources to enable better use of expertise and assets for youth organisations.

## Area 6: Connecting to arts and culture

The Queensland Government's recognises that is important to connecting young people to arts and culture. Furthermore, young people's participation in arts, culture and creative expression has a range of benefits for them and their communities.

The transmission of culture across generations is vital for all young people, including young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and young people from culturally diverse backgrounds. Participating in cultural activities inspires pride in heritage and identity. These factors contribute to the development of resilient, healthy and socially connected young people.

Engagement in the arts provides positive opportunities for young people to creatively express themselves and their culture. The Government and some QYA organisations want to ensure that young people's contributions to the arts in Queensland are recognised and supported.

The Queensland Youth strategy aims for:

- Young people will join in cultural events and activities.
- More young Queenslanders will be recognised for their creative achievements.

Some QYA organisations specifically engage young people in connecting with the arts and cultural activities, such as Scouts and Girl Guides, and therefore are closely aligned with this strategy, others are not. A number of youth forum representatives expressed an interest in developing their programs in these areas. The youth forum suggested that sharing ideas and the development of arts and cultural programs could be a collaborative approach between QYA organisations.

**QYA Recommendations:**

- 6.1 The Queensland Government develop closer links with community youth organisations as agencies to provide arts and cultural activities for young people.
- 6.2 The Queensland Government develop a better understanding of the arts and cultural program and activities already offered by QYA organisations and explore ways in which these activities and services can be supported.
- 6.3 QYA organisations explore ways in which they can develop a program of arts and cultural activities for the benefit of youth across Queensland, and that this could involve input and expertise from the Government.

- 6.4 The QYA organisations explore their needs and plans to provide arts and cultural activities for their members (youth and adult) and, where appropriate and feasible, work collaboratively with each other and Government to make this possible.

## Conclusion

This section summarises the position and recommendations of the QYA organisations with reference to the Government's *Queensland Youth Strategy*. The QYA sees that it needs to play a significant contribution to initiating and maintaining dialogue between Queensland youth organisations and the Queensland Government for the betterment of youth in this state.

Senior QYA representatives and youth forum participants have contributed to the recommendations contained in this document. Although the recommendations cover a wide range of issues and needs, there is a common theme emerging. The overwhelming message is that all parties should work collaboratively to ensure that the *Queensland Youth Strategy* is fully implemented and supported. To this end, the youth representing the QYA organisations clearly demonstrated that there is more in common between organisations than differences. There QYA Youth Forum demonstrated the mutual respect between organisations and the desire to work together and to embrace the Government's youth strategy.



# QYA Youth Forum Participants

	Youth members	Adults
<b>BOYS BRIGADE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royce Danam</li> <li>• Joshua Lowe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dave Allen (QYA)</li> </ul>
<b>GIRL GUIDES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tessa Marinelli-Clarke</li> <li>• Isabella Tennent</li> <li>• Rachel Gould</li> <li>• Emma Bunzli</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caitlin Rovere</li> <li>• Dot Dalglish</li> <li>• Amanda Nicholls</li> <li>• Phillipa Jacomb</li> <li>• Paul Nicholls (QYA)</li> </ul>
<b>GIRLS BRIGADE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kathryn Wrigley</li> <li>• Julia Hayes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glenda Brooks (QYA)</li> <li>• Kate Jurd</li> </ul>
<b>LEO'S CLUB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lotta Ruutu</li> </ul>	
<b>PCYC/DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stacey Clift</li> <li>• Patrick Pyke</li> <li>• Lori Cramer</li> </ul>
<b>SCOUTS QLD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charlee Howard-Osborne</li> <li>• Mitch Rumler</li> <li>• Tamara McGettigan</li> <li>• Alex Doyle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nathan Swaffer</li> <li>• Ian Lightbody (QYA)</li> <li>• Denica Gorman</li> </ul>
<b>ST JOHNS AMBULANCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Casey McDermott</li> <li>• Emma Josey</li> <li>• Jayden See</li> <li>• Scarlett den-Bakker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alan Cunningham</li> </ul>
<b>ST LAURENCE'S COLLEGE - EMERGENCY SERVICES CADET UNIT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• James Pollicina</li> <li>• Max Zils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michael Hudson</li> </ul>
<b>Total</b>	19	16

Notes: QYA = QYA Committee member

# Appendix: Topics and feedback

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## Key topics:

- Improving the health and well-being of young people in Queensland  
(Based on Queensland Youth Strategy 3)
- Connecting young people to volunteering and increased community participation.  
(Based on Queensland Youth Strategy 4)
- Promotion and access to support and services for young people  
(Based on Queensland Youth Strategy 5)
- Connecting young people to creative and cultural activities  
(Based on Queensland Youth Strategy 6)

## Relevant Queensland Youth Strategy details:

### 3. CONNECTED TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Fitness, healthy eating, mental wellbeing and healthy body image are critical for young people's good health, now and in later life. Young people should be safe in their communities. They should be able to participate in both their physical communities and in the digital world, knowing they are safe from anti-social behaviour, abuse and violence.

## What will Government do to improve the health and wellbeing of young people in Queensland?

The Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing's actions include:

- The \$47.8 million Get in the Game initiative will support sport and recreation at the grassroots level, encouraging greater participation of children and young people through:
  - Get Started program, which involves giving eligible young people aged 5 to 17 the opportunity to join a sport and recreation club by providing up to \$150 for membership/participation fees.
  - Get Going program, which encourages more young people to join clubs by giving clubs one-off grants of up to \$10,000 for equipment, training and activities.
  - Get Playing program, which provides up to \$100,000 in funding to assist local sport and recreation organisations with facility development.
- One-off commitment funding for sport and recreation organisations for facility development, to increase participation opportunities for young people and other groups.
- Healthy eating programs will be promoted under the National Partnership Agreement on Preventative Health through clubs with junior members across Queensland.
- A framework for improved coordination of current and future initiatives will advance youth participation in sport and recreation, including a strategy for closer ties with schools.
- The Indigenous Community Sport and Recreation Program and the Deadly Sports Program will continue.

The PCYC in partnership with Queensland Police Service's actions include:

- Queensland's 54 Police Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYCs) will work statewide to deliver a range of crime-prevention and youth development initiatives including the PCYC Emergency Services Cadets Program.

### QYA Youth Forum Response to Strategy 3:

This strategy is relevant to all QYA organisations because the health and wellbeing of our youth members are important. Improving the health and wellbeing of young people are one of the core values of QYA organisations.

QYA organisations already have well established programs that improve the health and wellbeing of youth members. For example, all organisations incorporate regular outdoor/recreational activities such as sport, hiking, canoeing, camping, etc.

QYA organisations programs include leadership and personal development courses/camps that members can participate in to improve health and wellbeing. Boys' Brigade, Girl's Brigade, (Girl Guides) and Scouts Australia have a large emphasis on outdoor education, sport and recreational activities in programs. For example, Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade companies aim to have an annual expedition that incorporates camping, hiking, etc. Scouts also have annual camps that members can participate in. PCYC implements several programs that encourage young people to participate in sport and recreation activities.

Each organisation has frameworks and initiatives to educate young people about health and wellbeing, including leadership and personal development courses and badge achievement systems in some organisations. QYA organisations also aim to develop a supportive environment so that youth can connect with trustworthy mentors and rely on a close knit community and friendships to support them through individual issues.

QYA organisations agree and support most actions planned to implement Strategy 3; however, there were several concerns about the actions that were raised. The main concerns raised during the discussion about this strategy were:

- Some organisations such as PCYC, Scouts Australia, (Girl Guides), Leos etc. receive government funding for their organisations, whilst others are not eligible to receive funding such as Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade although the core activities, purposes and programs of the organisations are essentially the same. For example, Boys' and Girls' Brigade programs are very closely related to Scouts Australia (and Girl Guides) programs, yet Scouts (and Girl Guides) receive funding (Get in the Game) whilst BB and GB do not.
- 'Get in the Game' funding could greatly support organisational activities related to sport and recreation, give opportunities for financially disadvantaged members to participate, enable organisations to better outreach non-member youth to participate in organisational run sport and recreation activities, develop organisational resources, infrastructure, equipment for sporting and recreational activities.
- Government funding could better enable organisations to develop programs and attract more youth to become members so as to benefit from programs with the purpose of improving health and wellbeing. Funding removes barriers due to financial cost for non-members to join QYA organisations and participate in activities.
- Some QYA organisations currently receive little or no contact from government organisations. QYA organisations feel that because of limited communication between the government and the organisations that the government does not fully recognise the extent of the positive impact that organisations are making to youth and communities they are based in. Therefore, all QYA organisations desire a closer relationship with government organisations so as to enable collaborations and partnerships with regards to improving the health and wellbeing of young people in Queensland. The majority of

many organisations did not know and fully understand the Queensland Youth Strategies before the forum. This would enable organisations to pool resources and mutually benefit from each other through various partnerships, e.g. publicising youth strategies such as 'Get in the Game' initiative so as to inform a larger number of young people. For example, regular meetings such as youth forums between the QYA organisations and the government can work together to achieve improved health and wellbeing for young people in Queensland.

- QYA organisations also desire closer relationships with other organisations so as to achieve greater collaboration and partnerships in related activities. Such as fundraising, promoting common interests, striving to better develop and support the youth of Queensland to become successful adults, leading fulfilled lives and making a positive impact in their communities.

#### **4. CONNECTED TO VOLUNTEERING AND PARTICIPATION**

Young Queenslanders need to find their place in society so they can engage with — and participate in — civic life, volunteering, sport and community activities. Through volunteering and participation, young people develop their character and resilience, as well as decision-making and leadership skills.

##### **What will Government do to connect young people to volunteering and participation?**

The Department of Education, Training and Employment and Department of Environment and Heritage Protection's actions include:

- The Queensland Plan school program will encourage principals and teachers to foster discussion between students and the wider community about their hopes for the future.

The Department of Education, Training and Employment's actions include:

- Over three years, 50 young Queensland delegates will be sponsored to attend ANZAC Day ceremonies at Gallipoli and across the Western Front in Europe, encouraging their interest in our nation's history.
- More young Queenslanders will be encouraged to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award, presenting a range of positive youth development activities, leadership and community engagement.

All agencies, informed by the Office for Youth, Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' actions include:

- New and emerging online and multimedia communication technology and tools will be used to encourage young people to get involved.

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services in partnership with Queensland Parliament's actions include:

- The annual Youth Parliament will build young community representatives' skills to influence public decision-making.

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' actions include:

- The Office for Youth will work collaboratively with young people and community organisations to develop appropriate services, programs and resources.

The Department of Community Safety's actions include:



- Volunteering opportunities for young people will be promoted through the Queensland State Emergency Service
- Volunteering opportunities for young people will be promoted through the Queensland Rural Fire Service

The Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing's actions include:

- Young Queenslanders will be encouraged to volunteer to support their local community sport and recreation clubs through participation in the Challenge, Achievement and Pathways (CAPS) leadership program

#### **QYA Youth Forum Response to Strategy 4:**

1. Very relevant to QYA organisations as all services are available to groups. It gives:

- Recognition of groups and their volunteering,
- Self-fulfilment and –development,
- Greater employment prospect,
- Organisational awareness.

2. Different organisations have different methods such as:

- Information sessions,
- Fundraisers,
- Badge work (gaining badges),
- Billboards/newsletters/flyers.

3. There's always ways to improve such as:

- More government recognition,
- More promotion,
- Easily accessible,
- Communication between organisations,
- Back to basics (e.g. flyers instead of Facebook),
- More involvement with public events,
- Fresh, original marketing.

4. More meetings like the QYA forum,

- More government involvements,
- More promotions of volunteering activities,
- Eliminate barriers like Blue Cards or age barriers.

5. More information on government leadership programs is needed.

- General: Duke of Edinburgh award is already in place to promote volunteering.
- Technology could help programs run.
- Youth Parliament – contact local government to get involved.
- Contact throughout National Youth Week with Department of Youth.
- All organisations could run development programs.

### **Further comments made after the forum by the St John Ambulance Youth Council Chair:**

There could be benefits from defining the word **volunteering**, it is a broad field and with sport and community activities being nominated categories various interpretations of the term **volunteering** could mean that maximum participation is inadvertently diminished.

The 'Get in the Game' and 'CAPS Leadership' projects are excellent initiatives, expanding the scope of these schemes to give opportunities for those not involved in sport would be worth consideration.

Government as a central reference point has the potential to assist and promote volunteering organisations - in the case of youth, perhaps through the QYA. Entries on up to date websites and search engines would be a valuable endorsement, listing organisations under the various categories with a short description of their function and web references for further contact would be simple but effective.

An ever present challenge is the inclusion and integration of regional, rural and remote centres throughout Queensland, sadly this is no different for youth programs and youth organisations. Owing to the concentration of population in urban areas it is logistically and economically more viable to convene forums and conduct face to face consultations in these hubs, however having mechanisms for expanding into smaller centres would have extensive benefits.

With reference to recommendation 4.3, perhaps some of the additional youth forums could focus on targeted youth issues outside the existing structures. The QYA research based framework could be used to determine optimum use of resources (topic, time, location, stakeholders etc). A reasonable assumption would be that such events and reported outcomes would help to raise the profile of youth engagement in volunteering.

## **5. CONNECTED TO SUPPORTS AND SERVICES**

Young people who need extra help require access to high quality, effective support services that meet their individual needs, at a time and place right for them. We will ensure young people are front and centre of youth supports and services. This means ensuring that key information and support is available in a way that is meaningful to them.

### **What will Government do to connect young people to supports and services?**

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' actions include:

- Practical guidelines, tools and resources will be developed to support youth programs and organisations that work with young people.
- The Office for Youth will coordinate expert advice on young people and implications for policy and service delivery.
- Social media, as well as more traditional forms of community engagement, will be used to get young people's opinions on issues that affect them.

### **QYA Youth Forum Response to Strategy 5:**

1.

- Reward for joining a group
- Yes, it is relevant as all youth require support services for a helping hand and these services are essential in this
- More relevant to schools, rather than QYA organizations; however, the organizations can provide social and some mental/emotional support in a safe environment
- Yes – equipment, material and financial resources and tools; network between government organizations e.g. Kids Helpline, Headspace, Lifeline etc to integrate with QYA organizations so that we can better work together to help youth
- Organizations should contact other services such as Police, Fire and Rescue, Ambulance and support services

2.
  - Reasonably relevant because there is no expert who can find the right help
  - QYA organizations initiate services such as counselors and disability funds, and use social media effectively to communicate these issues
  - They are helping to further support young people who may be struggling with different circumstances
3.
  - Yes – structures/uniforms/badges; philosophy; program; connected
  - Yes – more professionals should be involved in the organizations e.g. Girl Guides must rely on each other; promote services such as “Beyond Blue” etc; don’t need to be in the organization
  - More promotion of organizations; teaming up with schools; more professionals involved; promote help services (e.g. Kids Helpline); more support services
4.
  - Education about support services to refer to
  - More promotion and communication needed for these services; most youth don’t know these exist; Government should help in broadcasting these services
  - Government promotion and support of organizations; positive support from the government (e.g. grants)
  - More promotion between services
5.
 

More physical help; overall more services; guest speakers as opposed to on-line; more promoting of services; volunteers for these support services? e.g. soup kitchen, Kids Helpline

## 6. CONNECTED TO ARTS AND CULTURE

Young people contribute to all facets of creativity and culture. Cultural and creative participation has a range of social benefits for young people including improved problem solving and creative thinking, increased self-esteem and confidence, and the development of social and emotional skills. We want to ensure that young people’s contributions to culture and the arts in Queensland are recognised while supporting their continued involvement in creative activities.

### **What will Government do to connect young people to creativity and culture?**

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services’ actions include:

- National Youth Week events and activities will promote and celebrate young people’s achievements.

The Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts’ actions include:

- Funding programs and other initiatives will actively encourage young people’s involvement in Queensland’s cultural life — as artists, participants and audiences.
- Artist-facilitated workshops and programs related to exhibitions and collections at the Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art will target 13 to 17 year olds.
- Queensland Museum will collaborate with youth organisations and groups to expand young people’s access to the museum spaces and collections.
- The biennial Queensland Music Festival will help grow young people’s engagement with music as audiences and participants.
- The Queensland Theatre Company’s range of programs will encourage young people’s engagement with theatre as audiences and participants.
- The State Library of Queensland, through The Edge, will provide opportunities for young people to explore creativity across the arts, technology, science and enterprise (e.g. introductory digital workshops).

The Department of Education, Training and Employment’s actions include:

- Young Queenslanders will be provided with social, cultural and intellectual benefits through agreements with international counterparts, preparing them for their place in the global community.

### **QYA Youth Forum Response to Strategy 6:**

Youth Strategy 6 – connected to arts and culture

1. the strategies are relevant and important to QYA organisations as these organisations already have strategies in place which co-inside with the arts and culture, those such as;

- badges which allow individuals to learn about different cultures and expression through art
- Art/craft programs which give individuals a chance to experience art for themselves
- QYA organisations allow individuals to accept a culturally expanding society which makes one realise that society is becoming extremely diverse
- there are international programs and volunteer programs which let us travel all around the world and experience culture or some programs which allow us to do this from the comfort of our own community

What needs to be identified is that the strategy is relevant however the focus is on a more cultural basis rather than being shared equally with the arts.

These organisations need to go more in depth with the information presented as it merely skims the surface of the arts and culture – indigenous studies really need to be discussed in organisations especially with younger individuals

2. QYA organisations should do more relating to connecting to the arts and culture things such as;

- celebrating the differences within society
- taking more time to learn about the indigenous people of Australia
- focusing more on educating individuals about historical moments and places all around the world (so as to expand pre-known knowledge)
- more organisational involvement in Australia's past – those such as ANZAC
- don't just focus on the stereotypical arts and culture but instead have more involvement in the culture and art interests of individual people

All organisations need to go more in depth with cultural and art programs but it needs to be kept in mind that it should remain open to each organisation as its own entity

3. QYA organisations and the Queensland government can work together and support each other more thoroughly to achieve an art and culture strategy by;

- giving equal opportunities for everyone no matter their age, race, sexuality, background ect (anti-discriminatory)
- give people the opportunity to research cultures that aren't generally Australian surrounded

- have mentoring programs for people who need to experience a certain culture, learn a language or even to further their knowledge of the arts
- allow individuals a chance to have an interest in art and display it in possible culture/art specific galleries
- show interest in each organisation beliefs and vice versa
- Work together to help one another grow as people and organisations, learn about the arts and or culture and mainly to make it enjoyable and fun!

4. other thoughts on the connecting arts and culture strategy is to continue to provide an ever growing education bank about the arts and culture even at older ages in organisation

As an example guides, scouts, cadets etc all have the opportunity to do arts and culture badges when they are under the age of 18 however once they are 18+ the opportunities to continue learning and experiencing the arts and culture awareness ceases – this needs to be prevented.

Also it can be identified that not only do the government and QYA organisations have to work together but QYA organisations need to work with one another to help shape the future for a better society.

