

YOUTH LAW

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011



ABOUT YOUTHLAW

Youthlaw is Victoria's state-wide community legal centre for young people. Youthlaw works to address the legal issues facing young people through legal services, advocacy, law reform and preventative education programs, within a human rights and social justice framework.

Youthlaw is based in CBD Melbourne and is co-located with Frontyard Youth Services. Frontyard offers housing, medical, education and training, family mediation and counselling services.

Youthlaw provides free and confidential legal advice for young people up to 25 years of age.

- **Drop-in clinic:** Monday–Friday 2.00pm– 5.00pm, Frontyard, Melbourne CBD
- At the **Braybrook Youth Enterprise Hub** – Tuesday 2.00pm– 5.00pm
- From a **youth bus in the Melbourne CBD** – Wednesday 6.30pm– 8.30pm
- By **Skype** from seven rural and regional locations
- **Telephone** advice: Monday–Friday 9.00am–5.00pm
- By **email** info@youthlaw.asn.au

We can answer questions about:

- Debts and buying stuff
- Employment
- Relationships
- Family
- Violence and abuse
- Fines
- Police
- Security guards
- School
- Discrimination

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→ In 2010/2011 Youthlaw provided legal services to **1196** young people

→ **658** legal cases and court representation

→ **262** young people provided advice

→ **71** young people assisted via Skype

→ **23** young people at the Youth Bus

→ **41** young people at the Braybrook Youth Hub

→ **518** young people and adults received legal information over the phone and by email



FROM THE YOUTHLAW BOARD

2010–2011 has been a positive year for Youthlaw, and one in which we have, once again, taken an innovative and collaborative approach to our work, in an effort to meet the needs of young people on their terms, and in a manner that works for them.

We continued to provide legal advice from the Salvation Army youth bus each Wednesday evening. The bus is always busy and lawyer Jordana Cohen multi-tasks, getting to know the young people, sharing legal knowledge with the youth workers and volunteers, and discretely providing legal advice.

At Braybrook, lawyer Katrina Wong has been working closely with a new program operating out of the Youth hub. The youth diversion program is an initiative of the hub, local councils and local youth police officers. The aim of the program is to identify young people who are displaying at risk behaviours or are offending, and to connect them with support and activities, so that they feel more positive about themselves and get the help they so often need.

Our Skype legal service, Youthlaw Online, is now connected to seven rural and regional locations across Victoria. The feedback has been extremely positive, both from young people and youth services, as the service is incredibly versatile and cost effective. We have received a number of requests to connect with Youthlaw Online from a diverse range of youth and other community services, including a youth refuge, a health service youth group, a mobile youth bus, and via an outreach youth worker using his laptop. As we move into the new technological era with more hand held devices and with the National Broadband Network improving speed and quality, the opportunities for Youthlaw Online are endless and exciting.

This year we embarked on a new area of legal service provision to international students. In partnership with Western Suburbs Legal Service (WSLS) we successfully tendered for a 12-month government funding grant, to pilot an International Students legal service. Our contribution has been to hold legal education workshops with students to inform them about Australian law, as well as providing support with some law reform activities. Our lawyer James Fleming and Gillian Davy of WSLS came up with some innovative ways to deliver this information including salsa dancing and a Public Transport quiz!

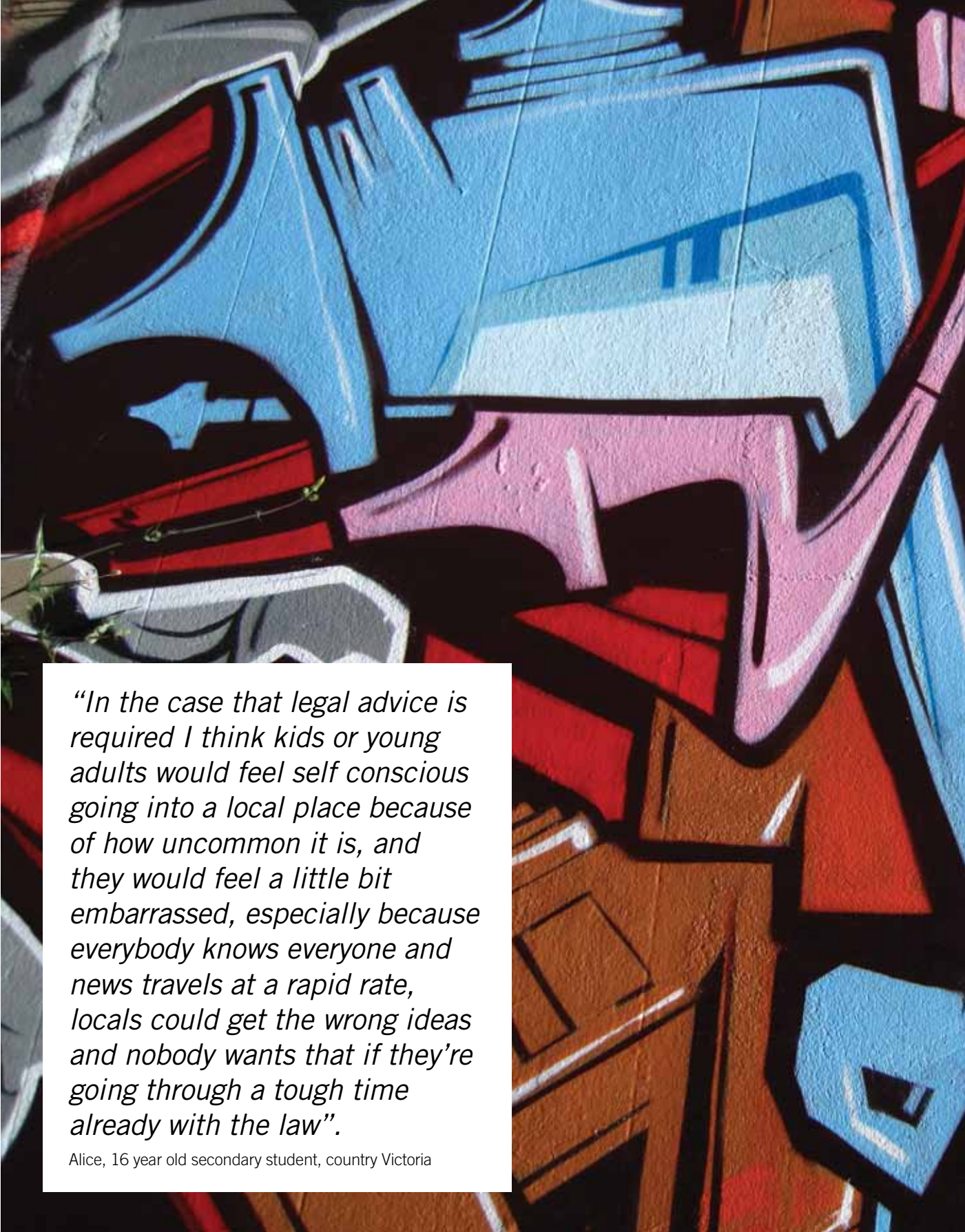
This year funding from the Victorian Legal Service Board enabled us to contract a consultant Helen Rosenbaum to assist us to develop a practical and proactive three year strategic plan for Youthlaw, particularly to direct our policy and advocacy work. This has been fantastic and we are already seeing the results including regular requests for comments from the media, and the development of in-depth expertise and influence in regard to a number of key legal issues impacting on young people. We are now focused on three campaign areas over three years, police interactions with young people, diversion, and infringement reform. We also respond to up to five emerging and topical issues, and this years issues included government plans to introduce minimum mandatory sentences for young people, cyber bullying and community concern about youth crime.

In the lead up to the 2010 state election, Youthlaw actively contributed to community debate about youth crime, which became a key issue in the media and for the major electoral parties. We also held a number of youth election forums with the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, to actively encourage young people to raise their issues with candidates.

As always the energy, commitment and professionalism of our staff, Board and volunteers was at the core of another great year. With our limited funding we also rely heavily on pro bono and in kind support and once again this was forthcoming from the business sector and the public.

I encourage you to support Youthlaw to bring about positive change in young people's lives.

Michelle Marven
Chairperson



“In the case that legal advice is required I think kids or young adults would feel self conscious going into a local place because of how uncommon it is, and they would feel a little bit embarrassed, especially because everybody knows everyone and news travels at a rapid rate, locals could get the wrong ideas and nobody wants that if they’re going through a tough time already with the law”.

Alice, 16 year old secondary student, country Victoria

OUR VISION, VALUES AND OBJECTIVES

VISION

A just and equitable society for, and by, young people.

VALUES

Youthlaw is a fearless advocate for young people. Youthlaw works within a social justice and human rights framework. Our work is based on principles of community development and we work together with young people to realise our shared vision. We recognise and value the diversity of young people and we strive to reflect that diversity in our work. Youthlaw works collaboratively to stimulate and create systemic change in the community for the benefit of young people.

OBJECTIVES

Our objectives for 2010 – 2013 are:

1. To increase the profile of young people's human rights amongst key stakeholders and community organisations, in particular in relation to at least two and no more than five emerging issues per annum.

2. Victorian law, policy and public authorities will take steps to respond to the experiences of young people and actively protect their rights in Youthlaw's three key focus areas ("Campaign areas") being infringements, police and young people, and diversion from the criminal justice system.

3. Young people are involved and informing the work and direction of Youthlaw.

4. Young people with formerly unmet legal needs are accessing high quality, free and accessible legal services.

5. Young people, particularly those most vulnerable and marginalised, are better able to identify and assert their human rights.

6. By 2013 Youthlaw secures ongoing sustainable funding that enables Youthlaw to operate efficiently and effectively on a day-to-day basis.

LEGAL SERVICES

“The lawyer I saw [at Youthlaw] was really helpful, nice, and not intimidating’.”

“I needed someone who knows what they are on about.”

“It is hard sometimes to talk about things, so I needed somebody who I could trust.”

“Nothing is more stressful than being endlessly referred’

The location and type of Youthlaw services responds to what we know about young people. As young people generally don't know about legal services and don't access them, we meet them halfway using innovative and flexible models of delivery such as locating them where young people are and using Skype.

We also know they are more likely to seek advice from friends, family, school staff and youth friendly services so we also resource and train up these people in their lives.

OUR SERVICES

Drop In Legal Clinic – at Frontyard Youth Services

We have a drop in legal clinic every week day at Frontyard Youth Services in the Melbourne CBD which assists homelessness and very vulnerable young people.

Youth workers at reception are welcoming and help young people work out which services they need.

We work closely with the other services so that multiple important concerns are picked up and responded to. Many of the young people coming in have emotional, mental health, housing and financial problems.

By phone and email 9am -5pm, weekdays

This suits younger people who can't get in to see us. It's also anonymous. We receive a high number of sexual abuse and family violence related queries through this service.

We also respond to legal queries from adults who are assisting a young person, including family members, youth workers, teachers and professionals.

Complimenting our service is LAWSTUFF a national email legal service run by the National Youth and Children's Law Centre (NYCLC) based in Sydney. Private lawyers at Mallesons, a large corporate firm volunteer their time to answer email queries from children and young people. Youthlaw contributes to the training of the lawyers in Melbourne.

Some of the queries we have received:

- *‘I was just wondering, when I turn 17 and decide to leave home do I need to sign any legal documents?’*

- *‘Could you tell me does verbal abuse count as abuse?’*

- *‘My son is 16, has left school and is working. He works in a store that makes him cover any shortages in the till at the end of the day. Is that legal?’*

- *‘I have a friend in Year 8 who is being threatened by people over Facebook I have seen the threats and they are scary. What advice can you offer? I hate seeing him feel powerless and hate me feeling powerless to help him’*

- *‘My daughter is currently in year 10 and has been bullied for about 5 months. I have taken this up with the school and little has happened. She doesn't want to go to school. I would like to know what steps the school should be taking about this.’*

- *‘I have a friend who is in his fourth year of a plastering apprenticeship and is 19 years old. He has not received any pay slips for the past two years and has no idea how much he is being paid.’*

At the Salvation Army Youth Bus

In early 2010, we teamed up with the Salvation Army to reach an even broader range of young people through their AXA 614 bus in the Melbourne CBD. The bus is a fully-equipped youth centre with wireless internet, Xboxes, a plasma TV, hang-out areas, a mini kitchen and a private counselling room. While the kitchen serves up nutritious meals, the Salvation Army volunteers and our Youthlaw lawyers use the opportunity to engage the young people who attend. Lawyer, Jordana Cohen has provided legal advice from the youth bus each Wednesday evening.

Lots of young people use the bus. Many are homeless and extremely vulnerable, living in out-of-home care or on the streets, in squats or in temporary accommodation. These young people are often reluctant to seek help from professional services, particularly lawyers, and often don't know that a lawyer could assist them with the problems they experience. Having a Youthlaw lawyer at the AXA 614 bus allows Youthlaw to en-gage with these young people in a friendly and relaxed environment, build client confidence and trust and ultimately, allows us to assist an even wider range of young people.

→ *Our youth bus lawyer met 17 year old Harry at the bus one night. He was highly anxious because he had at least one court date coming up in Shepparton but he could not afford to travel back and he was scared to return having run away from an environment of violence. He has also lost contact with his Youth Justice worker and was worried about being breached on his Probation. Youthlaw was able to reconnect Harry with Youth Justice, and help move all his court cases to Melbourne and provided him with a lawyer to represent him in court.*

→ *15 year old Sarah spoke to the Youthlaw lawyer at the bus. Normally she just spoke about social things but this time Sarah told the lawyer that she had a court case coming up and needed help. Sarah didn't trust lawyers but she felt she could speak comfortably to the Youthlaw lawyer. Sarah had been going through a difficult and unstable time, living out of home, mostly on the streets or with much older friends. She was drinking frequently and things were spiralling down hill. Through court, Youthlaw helped Sarah engage with services that could support her return to her family and provide her with alcohol and drug counselling. In the end, Sarah improved so much that she received a good behaviour bond when she went to court.*

At the Braybrook Youth Enterprise Hub

In November 2008 we started an outreach legal service at the Youth Enterprise Hub ("YEH") in the main street of Braybrook in the western suburbs. It has a high population of young people from African backgrounds, many who are newly arrived and who have experienced significant trauma in their lives. We began this outreach in response to concerns held by local youth workers and council staff that young people were increasingly getting in trouble with the law and that there were increasing negative interactions between police and young people.

Since starting this outreach, the outreach lawyer, combined with the staff at the YEH, has fostered strong relationships with young people and with other local services.

This year saw the introduction of new crime prevention project Diversion Diversity- Connecting with Young People funded by the Department of Justice (Victoria) in partnership with Melbourne City Mission. Youthlaw worked closely with the program youth worker Aaron Jackson at the YEH to provide joint legal sessions for the young people informing them of their rights, involving them in activities with local services and improving relationships between police and young people.



Youth Bus



Having Youthlaw present in our program activities has enabled the young people in our area to build trusting relationships for accessing legal support and services. This is especially meaningful, given that most young people have previously had negative experiences with 'the law' and tend to group all legal services (police, courts, lawyers) into this category.

Aaron Jackson – Diversity Diversion Youth Worker, YEH

The YEH and Youthlaw secured funding from the Maribyrnong City Council to skill up young people to participate and have their views heard and acted upon at a local community level. This will also support the YEH youth committee comprised of young people using the YEH. They meet regularly to identify key issues for young people using the YEH.

The main legal issues that young people sought advice for from the YEH included:

- Criminal matters (including being charged to appear at Court);
- Complaints about interactions with police;
- Fines; and
- Debt

Youthlaw Online through SKYPE

In 2008, Youthlaw Online through SKYPE was established in five locations around Victoria after Youthlaw received one off funding from the Federal Attorney General's Department. The aim of this service is to make legal services accessible to young people residing in regional, remote and rural ("RRR") areas. Youthlaw have partnered with a number of youth services to allow young people to have a 'face to face' appointment with our outreach lawyer, Katrina Wong, at Youthlaw's Melbourne office using SKYPE. Youthlaw Online is available at:

- The Yarra Junction area in partnership with the Upper Yarra Community House at:
 - Yarra Junction
 - Ringwood (newly established in 2011)
- The Cobram area in partnership with Uniting Care Cutting Edge
- The Shepparton area in partnership with:
 - The Bridge Youth Services (newly established in 2011)
 - Uniting Care Cutting Edge
- The Seymour area in partnership with The Bridge Youth Services
- The Mornington Peninsula area in partnership with Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Services at:
 - The "Y Lounge" in Rosebud
 - "Shed 11" in Hastings

This year saw the establishment of a new onsite area in Ringwood (through Outer East Youth Connections) and in Shepparton (through The Bridge Youth Services). The partnerships made with local youth services have been invaluable in referring young people to seek assistance from Youthlaw. It is often with the involvement of a youth worker that allows young people from the most vulnerable backgrounds to get legal assistance.

- David (21 years old) was employed as a casual worker in a labour-hire company. After 2 weeks of working there, he fell at work and injured his shoulder. He was forced to take a couple of days off work to recover from his injury. When he was ready to come back to work, his boss told him not to bother coming back in as they had other people available to replace him.
- Ange (19 years old) has a young child who is 6 months old. Ange had broken up with the father of her child and heard nothing from the father until she gave birth to her child. Since this time, her ex-partner has been calling her up threatening to take away her child, and has been stalking her.

Partnerships with other local legal services have also been integral to the community development process in delivering the Youthlaw Online service. Once a young person speaks to a lawyer, warm referrals can then be made to local legal services who are already familiar with the Youthlaw Online service.

- Kim was 14 years old and sought legal advice about an intervention order that had been issued against her by two other students in her class. One of the conditions of the Intervention Order was not to be within 2 metres of the protected persons. This condition was too onerous for Kim and effectively forced her to leave her school. With no other school close by, Kim sought advice about what she could do.

The outreach lawyer routinely visits all the sites and conducts community legal sessions with both young people and youth workers. Youth workers are then better able to identify legal issues and refer young people. Providing legal information to young people also allows them to be aware of their legal rights and responsibilities, reducing potential conflict with authorities.

The Youthlaw Online service has enabled Youthlaw to identify particular legal issues specific to each region. This has been important in providing input to Youthlaw's campaign work. A big issue in these RRR areas is a lack of diversionary programs and options.



1. Outer East Youth Connections (Upper Yarra Community House), Ringwood. 2. Uniting Care Cutting Edge, Cobram. 3. Uniting Care Cutting Edge, Shepparton. 4. The Bridge Youth Services, Seymour.

LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDED

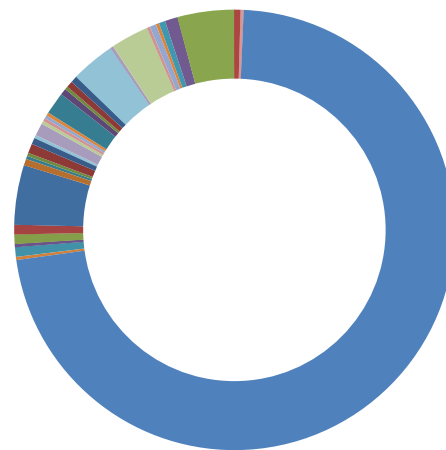
PROFILE OF YOUNG PEOPLE WE ASSISTED THIS YEAR.

GENDER



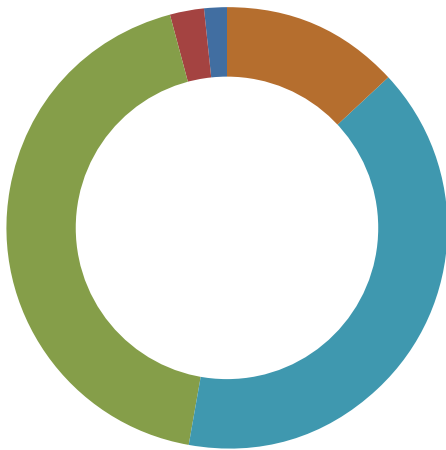
Male 247
Female 183

COUNTRY OF BIRTH



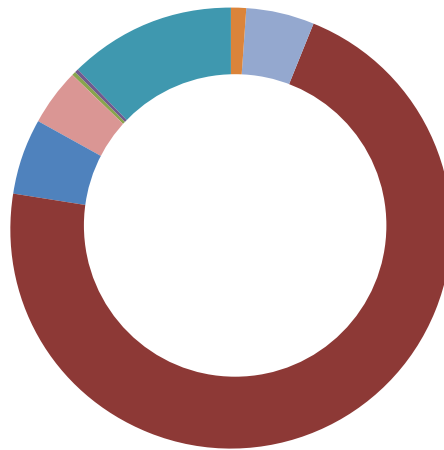
Afghanistan	2	Liberia	1
Aruba	1	Malaysia	1
Australia	310	Mauritius	1
Chile	1	Morocco	1
China (excludes SARs and Taiwan)	3	New Zealand	7
Djibouti	1	Philippines	2
Egypt	3	Saudi Arabia	1
England	3	Sierra Leone	2
Ethiopia	19	Singapore	2
Fiji	2	Somalia	14
Greece	1	Sri Lanka	1
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	1	Sudan	12
India	3	Thailand	1
Iran	2	Turkey	2
Israel	1	Uganda	1
Kenya	4	USA	2
		Viet Nam	4
		Not stated	18

AGE



12 – 17 years old	57
18 – 20 years old	171
21 – 25 years old	185
Other	11
Not stated	6

INCOME SOURCE

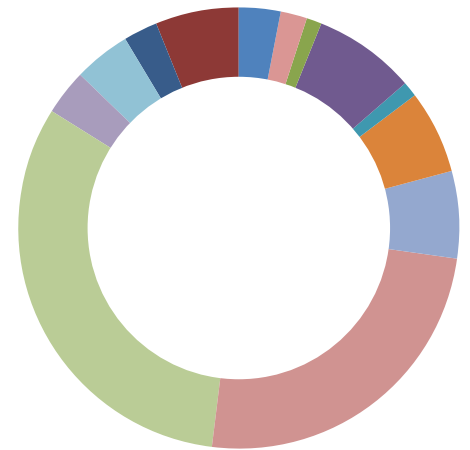


Disability Pension	5
Earned†	22
Government pension/ benefit/allowance‡	307
Newstart	24
Other	18
Parent Payment (partnered)	1
Parent Payment (single)	1
Youth Allowance	52

† eg wages and salary,
commissions and bonuses

‡ eg family payment, rent
assistance, age pension etc

PROBLEM TYPE



Government/Administration	20
Car Accidents	12
Consumer	7
Debt	46
Discrimination	7
Other Civil	38
Driving Offences	40
Other Crime	155
Fines	199
Crimes Compensation	20
Intervention Orders	26
Family	15
Other	38

TYPICAL CASES AND QUERIES

Family issues

'I am a 17 year old girl living at home. I'm having big problems at home. I'd like advice on whether I can move out of home? '

'I'm 16 and want to live with my mum but my dad won't let me. Do I have a say about who I live with? '

'Hi I've got a friend I'm trying to help. Her step dad really hurts her. I've heard him going off a lot. I think he has hit her a lot. She told me he smashed her into the kitchen table one night. My family is willing to take her in but don't want any trouble. Can she come and live with us? '

Violence and abuse

'I'm not feeling safe living at home. I will be 18 in December. I have a part time job and would like some advice on how and when I can leave home and what to do if my family won't let me leave home.'

'When I was 5 I was sexually molested by my mother's stepfather. I recently found out he also sexually molested my sister. I want to have him charged. Can you tell me what to do? '

'I am 14 and a number of girls at my school are spreading rumours about me and putting lies up on Facebook. I would like to know if I can do something to stop them'.

'A website is using a photo I took. Someone has taken it from my Facebook page. I have contacted the website and they said they won't take it down unless I give them proof of copyright or I send them a cease and desist order. I don't know how to do this?'

At School

A mother called about an incident her son was involved in at school. Her son was taped and she wanted to know what the law is on taping a minor without a parent being present.

A mother of a 14 year called about her son being suspended a number of times and the school pressuring her to remove him from the school. She wanted to know if the school was allowed to tell her to look for another school and what could they do.

At work

'Hi could you give me some advice. I'm 17 and I was working at a café. The owner told me the business wasn't going well so he can't pay me for the past 6 weeks. He then told me he hasn't got any more work for me. How can I get the pay I'm owed? '

'I worked for a cabinet maker as an apprentice but have had several problems with him. After not paying me overtime, withholding a week's pay and other things he sacked me. He is now not answering my calls. I would like to know what I can do about getting my pay and overtime from him'

Accommodation/tenancy

Yin a 22 year old international student from China, sought our advice. She was originally staying with a host family then decided to move into private rental. She signed a one-year lease and her landlord took a bond without a receipt. The landlord charged for internet but didn't give her the passcode to the account. He started coming over late at night, sometimes as late as 9pm or 10pm, just to collect rent or conduct inspections. Yin wasn't sure what her landlord was or wasn't allowed to do but she started to get scared and wanted to move out.

'A youth worker called about a homeless young woman who had paid money to stay at a rooming house for a week but was told it was no longer available and they wouldn't give her back her money. '

Buying stuff, contracts and debts

'I'm just inquiring as to the minimum age to sign a phone contract '

'I'm on a direct debit plan to pay off a debt. It's supposed to be \$20/fortnight but sometimes they don't take the payments out of my account. For the last 5 fortnights, no payments were taken even though I had money in there. Then today, I saw that they took out \$100 all in one go. Are they allowed to do that? '

Cars and Driving

"I am 22 and have just been in a car accident. No one was hurt. I am a learner and was driving my friend's car. My friend has a full licence and was in the car with me at the time. I crashed at an intersection, then found out my friend's car is uninsured. Now my friend is telling me I have to pay for all the damage done to his car. What about the other car? I'm a student and have little income. Do I have to pay all these people?"

Katie a 17 year old had been unemployed for almost a year and had been suffering from depression. She drove her friend's car and ran into the back of another car. Both Katie and the owner of the car were uninsured. Katie came to Youthlaw with demand letters from the other party's insurer demanding she pay over \$1000.

'I am 20 years old and have been charged with drink driving. I understand I will be disqualified for a period of time but how do I get my licence back? I've heard from friends that I'll have an interlock but the car I drive I share with my sister. '

Administrative law

A youth worker called to clarify whether youth workers are mandated to report child abuse

A youth worker called to refer a young woman who has had her Centrelink payments stopped and she is desperate as she has no income and is unable to live at home.

A youth worker called about a young person who is not living with his parents and needs a guardian to sign for a school trip.

Fines

'I am 20 years old and I received a notice of a hearing date for a shopping centre parking ticket. I would like to plead guilty so that I can just pay the fine but I am worried about the consequences for future employment'

"I was wondering if you could give me some advice. I recently received a ticket infringement notice from the Metro. The amount is \$172, which I can't afford to pay given that I am a student and only work part-time. I do not fare evade. After boarding the tram I realised that I had run out of tickets. Can you tell me what I can do."

Criminal offences

'I am 17 and a student and my boyfriend is 24 and works at a school. We are worried about things like dating and other legal issues that may arise. Our parents think it's fine but I would like some advice on possible legal issues'

"I am 20 years old and have been charged with shoplifting. This is my first ever offence and the police said they will recommend a diversion to the magistrate. I was hoping you might be able to advise me as to what is going to happen while in court and whether it is likely I will end up with a criminal record? Also is there any chance that the magistrate will rule a jail term? "

"I am enquiring about a police caution that I got when I was 16. It was a one-off offence. Would this show up on my police background check as I am currently looking for employment?"

"A friend was arrested for alcohol-related offences. He was arrested in the car and told his rights. He was searched, had his finger prints taken and put in a cell. Are the police allowed to do this?"

"I got arrested for shoplifting and was told by the police officer that if I just go to court and fill in a form pleading guilty then I don't need to appear in court. Is that true?"

"I am enquiring on behalf of my son. He is 13 and had a fight with a student at school. The police have told me that the easiest way to handle this is to accept a five year caution. Two adults have told me that their cautions were read out in court later in life, in spite of being told they would disappear from their records."

TEST CASES

Investigation of police mistreatment

Youthlaw is currently assisting a young person from an African background to appeal a decision by the Office of Police Integrity (OPI) who declined to investigate his complaint regarding the excessive use of force by a police officer. With pro bono assistance from the law firm Maddocks and Legal counsel the young person has since sought judicial review of the OPI's decision not to investigate his complaint and it is currently being heard in the Supreme Court. The arguments in support of the young person is that the OPI had an obligation to investigate the complaint under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 as the young person had a right to an independent, effective investigation. The Attorney General and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission have joined as intervening parties.

Homeless young people to be treated with respect and discretion to fine

We assisted a young woman who had been homeless for over a year. When approached by ticket inspectors she produced ID with a number of addresses, she explained her situation and that she used a homeless service to receive mail. She was nonetheless arrested for failing to provide an address. A complaint was lodged with the Public Transport Ombudsman. The Ombudsman reviewed and reinforced policy that there is discretion to not fine homeless

LEGAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION

In the 2010–11 year Youthlaw provided over 44 education sessions to young people and 24 legal training sessions and presentations to 1,464 participants. In addition we offer a number of printed publications and resources on our website.

OBJECTIVES

- Legal education to young people.
- Improving the level of understanding within the community about how the law affects young people.
- Training of professionals and adult members of the community to assist young people in the legal system.

EXAMPLES OF LEGAL TRAINING

Youth Referral and Independent Person Program (YRIPP)

This year we travelled throughout Victoria to provide legal training to over 300 local volunteers of YRIPP. YRIPP is a community organisation that trains and co-ordinates adult volunteers to be with young people being interviewed at police stations, where they don't have a parent present. Many very vulnerable and disadvantaged young people do not have a parent present at these interviews. YRIPP also refers the young person to programs and services they may need. The program is now throughout Victoria and receives funding from the state government.

Apprentice support workers, Skills Victoria

This year Youthlaw provided legal training to 20 Apprentice support workers. These workers support young people to stay in apprenticeships. The training gave them a good basic understanding of the legal system, and awareness of common legal issues their young people may approach them about.

Youth Support Service

Last year the state government funded the Youth Support Service to employ 55 youth workers across Victoria to work with young people aged 12–14 who they identify as at risk of offending and engaging in risky behaviour (e.g. knife carrying).

Youthlaw supported the professional preparation of these youth workers by providing initial legal training and will continue to train up and support these workers.

Centre for Adolescent Youth, Royal Children's Hospital

Youthlaw was invited to the Royal Children's Hospital Adolescent Health unit to speak with a group of medical specialists and allied health staff about youth legal issues and professional challenges in working with young people.

Some of our sessions with young people

- STREAT (social enterprise for disadvantaged youth)
- Sunshine Technical College students
- Bendigo Secondary College students participating in Foundation for Young Australians WOW program to provide mentorship to disengaging secondary students
- Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (students with intellectual disability)
- Young Parents Support Group-Seymour
- Stonnington Youth Drop-In Service
- WHEELS program for disadvantaged young people
- Yarra Valley Grammar year 9 students
- Cobram Senior High School students
- CALD leadership course for young women at Phoenix Youth Centre, Footscray
- Northland Secondary College students
- Sunbury Secondary College students
- VCAL students - Cobram
- Sunbury Moving Forward Program participants
- WAYOUT (rural suicide prevention gay youth support) group
- Holmesglen Institute of TAFE Work Education students
- Bayside Secondary College Year 11 Legal Studies class
- Hume City Council Street Art Youth Group (at risk young people).
- Victoria University Hair and Beauty Students
- Swinburne Secondary College Students
- Warburton VCAL students
- Alkira Secondary College students



International students

James Fleming of Youthlaw and Gillian Davy of Western Suburbs Legal service were employed part-time this year to provide legal sessions to international students.

They spoke to over 400 students on topics including employment, fines, consumer issues, and car accidents. Sessions at education providers included:

- Box Hill TAFE;
- Carrick Institute;
- Chisholm Institute;
- Hales Institute;
- Gordon Institute of TAFE;
- Monash University; and
- Victoria University.

Many took place at 'The Couch' a Salvation Army drop in centre for international students, in Burke St, Melbourne. This centre is a buzzing place with at least 40 to 50 students dropping in each night.

This legal education was delivered in interactive and engaging formats such as a public transport quiz and use of salsa dancing.

In addition they also produced:

- Online information for students and support workers
- Brochures on the following topics: tenancy, employment rights, college disputes, driving offences, family law, family violence, public transport offences and discrimination. These are available online at <http://islac.org.au/Education> .



Gillian and James, dancing and quizzing students at 'The Couch'.
Opposite page: ISLAC Bus

POLICY, RESEARCH AND LAW REFORM

YOUTHLAW ACHIEVEMENTS 2010/2011

This year with the assistance of a grant from the Victorian Legal Services Board we contracted a consultant Helen Rosenbaum to assist us to develop a 3 year policy and advocacy strategic plan with a focus on achieving real impacts. Already we have seen the benefits of planned and focused advocacy. We are regularly sought by media for comment and bring to our advocacy much greater depth.

Legal Services BOARD

STATE ELECTION 2010

With the help of youth justice expert Nadu Dove, Youthlaw released 5 election fact sheets to convey our policy objectives. In partnership with the Youth Affair Council of Victoria we also held two election forums in Morwell and Melbourne to encourage young people to participate in the election process.

Our key election message was:

“Most young people don’t get in trouble with the law. Some do, but there are many reasons why. Early intervention, prevention and diversion do work.”


Our factsheets covered:

- Present the facts about youth crime.
- Tough on the cause of crime
- Protect vulnerable young people
- Model Respect
- Consequences that reduce youth crime


These were distributed to all major party candidates in the lead up to the election, and to key organisations in the community.

Victorian State Election 2010

Marginalised young people



Youthlaw - Reduce youth crime: Support young people




Most young people don't get in trouble with the law. Some do, but there are many reasons why. Early intervention, prevention and diversion do work.

Is it ok to breach their human rights?

Protect vulnerable young people

New laws have broadened and increased the powers of police and authorised officers without ensuring adequate safeguards.

POWERS	CONCERNS
Move on powers	No obligation to keep written records Monitoring and ensuring consistency of approaches impossible Interstate research suggests disproportionate impact on disadvantaged and marginalised
Stop and search powers	Violates the rights of children No requirement for independent person to be present during searches of children (under 18) Limited recording of searches—impossible to review if working
Police photographing of under 18s	Photographs being taken without full consent at the station and on the street Photos being used for profiling young people
Police questioning on street	Questioning that is beyond power or intimidates Possible targeting and discriminatory practices Potential to escalate from 'bad attitude' to charges
Public Transport Authorised Officers	Minimal training yet substantial powers Reports of being mistreated and lack of respect Potential to escalate from negative interaction to conflict Monitoring of Authorised Officer conduct Young people don't make complaints



recommends...

- Increased monitoring, checks and balances for legislation that increases/broadens powers, including the Summary Offences Act, Graffiti Prevention Act and Control of Weapons Act
- Protections to ensure young people's rights are maintained and respected.
- Establish an independent body to investigate complaints against police.
- The legislative requirement for a trained and independent person to be present at every police interview and search of a young person under 18.
- Clear law to inform of right to refuse photo and if no consent Magistrate approval required

State Election Fact Sheet

CAMPAIGN AREAS

In 2011 Youthlaw is actively campaigning in 3 key areas:

- Interactions between police and young people
- Diverting young people from the criminal justice system (“diversion”)
- Infringements reform

Interactions between young people and police

The potential for an escalated confrontation between police and young people is an ongoing concern for Youthlaw, as is the potential of police mistreatment, particularly of vulnerable and marginalised young people.

The past year saw the introduction of steadily increasing powers available to police including stop and search, move-on notices, and the introduction of Protective Service Officers with weapons, on railway stations.

In mid 2010 Youthlaw lobbied against amendments to the Control of Weapons Act which introduced new stop and search powers and street offences. Our concerns were:

- An expansion to police random stop and search powers
- Inadequate monitoring and accountability of searches, recording being limited to strip searches and where charges are to be laid.
- Not requiring an independent person to be present when a child is searched by police.
- 1st time offenders aged 16 facing a serious and excessive \$1000 on-the-spot fine, for knife carrying.

Over the past year we have campaigned for adequate monitoring and accountability of these new powers and called for policy, training and laws that will ensure respectful and professional treatment of young people and prevention of misuse of powers. We have commented on a range of policing issues for young people, including mistreatment, the lack of an independent complaints process and over-policing of young people, particularly those who are newly arrived, homeless or indigenous.

Aware that many other stakeholders are equally concerned by police-youth relations, in May 2011 we brought together interested parties to address these issues through coordinated campaigning and the empowerment of young people. Smart Justice for Young People was established with membership of close to 20 organisations. It is the youth-focused arm of Smart Justice, a group campaigning for evidence-based solutions to legal issues in Victoria. A campaign webpage will be developed on the Smart Justice website and host a series of evidenced based fact sheets that coalition members will use in their media and advocacy work on these issues.

Youthlaw has continued to engage in campaign work on policing issues, including:

- Meeting with Deputy Commissioner Kieran Walsh of Victoria Police in relation to the need for youth-appropriate policing and training in these tactics;
- Providing comment to media outlets, such as The Age, Herald Sun, 774 ABC radio and Channel 7 on PSOs, the use of capsicum spray on children, and the need for youth-specific training for Victoria Police;
- Meeting with a number of politicians, including James Merlino MLA (Member for Frankston) and Sue Pennicuik MLC (Member for the Southern Metropolitan Region), to discuss the proposed deployment of Protective Services Officers (PSOs);
- Participating in a number of network meetings and roundtables on police issues relevant to children and young people, including the Police Issues Working Group and the Steering Committee of Smart Justice.



Tense Times Ahead, Saturday Age March 26, 2011

Diversion Campaign

With research clearly showing that imprisonment is not an appropriate or effective way of dealing with young people in the criminal justice system, there is an ever increasing need for diversionary options to be available in the community.

Currently access to these programs is very limited due to inadequate funding.

Examples of current programs include ROPES and the Right Step. ROPES is considered for a first offence stage and brings police and young offenders together in physical and educative activities. It is simple but in our view highly effective. Another program is The Right Step and is aimed at young people further into of-fending and at risk of re-offending. It is recommended by police or the court and diverts a young person 'at risk of further offending' to intensive counselling and support for an extensive period.

Currently in Victoria, there are significant gaps in availability of diversionary programs. Young people residing in rural, regional and remote areas are even less likely to have access to the current diversionary pro-grams. The Right Step is only a pilot and is only operating out of one court in Moorabbin.

Youthlaw is currently advocating for:

- Legislation that sets out when diversion is to be considered and recognises it as an appropriate response to young people in the criminal justice system;
- Adequate funding to properly resource diversion programs
- Emphasis also on pre-offending, early intervention programs.

Our advocacy has included:

- Meeting with the Attorney General, Robert Clarke and Minister Mary Wooldridge.
- Consulting other stakeholders in strengthening our campaign (such as: Victoria Legal Aid, Youth Justice, council youth services and the Children's Court);
- Building an evidence base of diversion programs operating throughout Victoria; and
- Lobbying for inclusion in Government budget processes

Young people and infringements

The aim of this campaign area is to achieve affordable, fair and effective fines for disadvantaged young people, and equitable outcomes for children and young people whether in the children's or adult's infringement systems.

Currently young people receive no discount for being young, are subjected to an antiquated fines system called CAYPINS, and those who are most vulnerable face major hurdles in having their circumstances taken into account.

In addition government policy over the past 5 years has been to increase the number of offences dealt with by fines, many of which are behavior type offences.

To date the main chunk of campaign work has been around advocating for improvements to the CAYPINS and monitoring the net-widening impact of an increasing number of offences being dealt with by fines. Last year saw the introduction of a knife carrying fine of \$1,000. Challenging or having such a fine reduced in court results in a police criminal record.

VICTORIA TO GET A SWEAR JAR

Liz Hobday reported this story on Tuesday, May 31, 2011 World today program, ABC radio. An expert from transcript:

"LIZ HOBDAY: But Tiffany Overall from Youthlaw says young people feel they're being targeted.

TIFFANY OVERALL: The reality is that, you know, young people are more commonly using public spaces and sort of other groups in the community and what we find with lots of these sorts of on the spot type of-fences is that young people are feeling targeted by police and so that they will probably be the ones that cop the fine."

For the full transcript go to <http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2011/s3231752.htm>

EMERGING AND TOPICAL ISSUES

Additionally we also worked on a number of emerging and topical issues including:

- Ticket inspectors treatment of young people;
- Disengagement from education including schools discipline processes ;
- Youth offending statistics (in the lead up to election 2010);
- Minimum mandatory sentencing; and
- Legal issues facing international students.

Minimum mandatory sentencing

In May 2011, the Victorian Attorney General requested the Sentencing Advisory Council ("SAC") to provide advice on the introduction of a statutory minimum penalty for the offences of intentionally/recklessly causing serious injury when committed with gross violence. The minimum recommended sentence is 2 years for 16 and 17 year olds and 4 years for those over 18.

Youthlaw is extremely concerned with the proposed changes, and in particular:

- The effectiveness of imprisonment as an option for young people and its impact on recidivism;
- Failure to take into account the developmental capacity and maturity of young people;
- Shifting focus away from rehabilitation, regarded as the primary consideration under current Children's Court sentencing principles;
- Loss of judicial discretion where a Magistrate or Judge is able to look at all the circumstances of the offence, including the particular circumstance of the offender;
- Breach of our international obligations under the Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (VIC);
- Lack of consistency in sentencing;
- Increased costs to courts and in building new prisons

Youthlaw prepared an extensive submission to the Sentencing Advisory Council which is available online at: www.youthlaw.asn.au. Youthlaw also engaged in advocacy and law reform activities in opposing these proposed introductions. This included meeting with the Attorney General, Robert Clarke, working in partnership with a number of key stakeholders including: VCOS; Victoria Legal Aid; Victoria Aboriginal Legal Service; Jesuit Social Services; Centre for Multicultural Youth and Youth Affairs Council of Victoria and media comment.

JAILING CHILDREN WILL JUST MAKE THEM BETTER CRIMINALS

Jordana Cohen

Opinion, National Times, The Age, 3 June 2011

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/politics/jailing-children-will-just-make-them-better-criminals-20110602-1fi6e.html>

EXERT FROM "CONCERN AT PLAN TO JAIL TEEN THUGS"

The Age, May 30, 2011

....Jordana Cohen, a lawyer at young people's legal centre Youth Law, said that while the proposed changes might be a "short-term fix to make people happy that there are harsher sentences being doled out, is it going to make the streets safer at the end of the day? Unlikely."

Ms Cohen said the proposal was at odds with the current Children, Youth and Families Act's provisions of sentencing juveniles, which stated that punishment and general deterrence were not relevant sentencing factors.

"It's really hard to conceive how mandatory minimum sentences, which don't take account of any individual circumstances of a particular offender, could possibly be seen to fit within those sentencing principles," she said.

"What we see happening with these mandatory minimum sentences is none of those rehabilitative factors are going to be taken into account."

This story was found at: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/concern-at-plan-to-jail-teen-thugs-20110529-1faxu.html>

MANDATORY TERMS 'WILL BREACH RIGHTS'

Adrian Lowe, The Age, 31 May 2011

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/mandatory-terms-will-breach-rights-20110530-1fd26.html#ixzz1WUghRdHu>

Others said the exceptional circumstances provision under which a mandatory jail term could be avoided needed to be broadened. "We would be very concerned if issues like mental illness, disability, the role of the offender in the circumstances of the offence ... weren't taken into account," said Jordana Cohen, a lawyer at legal clinic Youth Law.



In October 2010 the Victorian Government announced 12 month funding to Western Suburbs Legal Service in partnership with Youthlaw to pilot a legal service for international students. The International Student Legal Advice Clinic (ISLAC) was officially launched by the Honourable Peter Hall, Minister for Higher Education and Skills on Tuesday 8 March 2011.

ISLAC provides free specialist community legal services to Victoria's international student community including legal and migration casework and advice, community legal education and law reform work.

LAW REFORM

ISLAC is consulted by clients facing multiple and intersectional injustices, arising from their status as inter-national students. International students are often afraid to seek assistance or speak up about legal problems for fear of having their visa revoked, being subject to retaliation by their education provider, landlord or employer.

Tiffany Overall of Youthlaw has been supporting ISLAC one half day per week to conduct law reform activities. A Community Directions Panel consisting of international students and members of other representative bodies, has assisted with the direction of law reform activities.

ISLAC has received reports from students of erroneous reporting of non-compliance from their education providers to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, triggering a notification of intended cancellation by DIAC under section 20 of the Migration Act 1958 ('Migration Act').

Two key issues ISLAC has been focused on are:

1. The need for greater consumer protection of international students in their dealing with "rogue" education providers. In this regard we made submission to the Review of Education Services for Over-seas Student Act (ESOS), and
2. Exploitation of international students in the workplace. At the heart of the workplace exploitation for many students is the condition of their student visa that they are restricted to 20 hours of work. If they exceed this amount under the Migration Act their visa must be cancelled and they will be de-ported.

In this regard ISLAC made submissions to the review by Michael Knight into the Student Visa Pro-gram calling for this work restriction to be removed or made more flexible and the mandatory cancellation abolished.

ISLAC has formed a coalition of organisations who also wish to see the work restriction altered and the mandatory cancellation removed from the Migration Act.

CHILD RIGHTS IN VICTORIA – A REPORT TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Every 5 years or so the Australian Government is required to submit a report to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child detailing its compliance with the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CROC). Each time the Government submits its report, Australian non-government organisations (NGOs) submit a Shadow Report or NGO report to provide the Committee with further information.

This year Youthlaw worked with a number of Victorian NGOs to prepare a Victorian contribution to the Shadow report. It presented an opportunity to document many of the child rights issues Youthlaw has done significant work on over the last few years.

It is hoped this paper will provide the sector with an overview of Victoria's compliance with the CROC, as well as a collection of useful resources on a variety of children's rights topics.

Adelaide Rief a Melbourne University law student assisted with the research and production of this report as part of her internship with Youthlaw.

"Listen to Children", the 2011 Child Rights NGO Report Australia was released by the Child Rights Taskforce in May 2011.



THE REVIEW OF THE CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Youthlaw made a submission to the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee, Victoria Parliament in their review of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

We included some case studies of Youthlaw using the Charter in its advocacy especially with public authorities such as Victoria Police, and Department of Transport.

Cultural change is hard to achieve within any public office, let alone across a number of government departments, and it is a process that can take generations. Youthlaw feels that these changes would not have occurred so rapidly were it not for the Charter.

The Charter also provides a clear and accessible framework within which disadvantaged young people can seek to have their voices heard, become familiar with their legal rights and advocate for fairer outcomes and gain a sense of empowerment through this knowledge and process.

YOUTHLAW MEDIA HITS

“Jailing children will just make them better criminals”

“Sending a boy to a man’s punishment”

- Channel 10 news – new searches by schools of students and parents
- Channel 7 news – increased school expulsions and suspensions
- Channel 7 news – UN report on treatment of young people by authorities
- The Age – Graffiti law
- The Age – minimum mandatory sentencing of juveniles
- ABC Radio/PM – minimum mandatory sentencing,
- SYN FM – minimum mandatory sentencing
- National Times online opinion piece on mandatory sentencing, Sunday Age – Deterrence in sentencing of young people under 18 years
- SYM FM on youth sentencing
- 774 ABC Radio – police use of capsicum spray on young people
- 3CR Radio – police powers/public order offences
- The Age (letter to editor) – need for youth specific police training
- 774 ABC Radio – protective service officers on railway stations
- SYN Radio – protective service officers
- ABC Radio World Today Program – fines for indecent language
- Radio Adelaide – fines for indecent language
- 2SER (Sydney) – fines for indecent language



Do we really need a human rights charter?
Sunday Age, 14 August 2011

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

We are very thankful to a continuing grant from the Helen MacPherson Smith Trust and funding from the Victorian Legal Service Board to undertake this work.

We are connecting with young people in their own communities to support them to address issues of concern to them. We are also finding ways to involve a diverse range of young people including those who the law most impacts on to influence changes to laws and policies that affect their lives.

We undertook a number of activities and projects this year:

YOUTH ELECTION FORUMS “MARGINAL NOT MARGINALISED” (NOVEMBER 2010)

With the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria we organized two youth election forums in the marginal seats of Melbourne and Morwell in the lead up to the Victorian state election in late November 2010.

The forums provided local young people with the opportunity to ask questions of the local member and candidates in their electorate, learn more about the candidates’ policies on youth specific issues, and raise issues of importance to them.

Secondary school teacher, Kezia Easter from Kurnai College in Churchill said; *“It was good to see the candidates really consider the students’ questions and answer them as if they were adults, not simply a group of school kids.”*

Thanks to Bonnie Gray-Healey and the team at headspace, Morwell.

This year we continued our peer research program funded by the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust.

Peer research involves young people investigating other young people. Peer research allows young people to learn and to have input in what questions are asked. They develop rapport with those interviewed and come up with amazing insights.

YOUTH CHALLENGE CANDIDATES

By Jarrod Whittaker

15 Nov, 2010 08:21 AM

CANDIDATES for the state seat of Morwell may have faced their toughest challenge yet after answering questions about youth affairs at a forum on Friday.

About 30 people attended the ‘Marginal, Not Marginalised’ forum where students questioned the candidates about issues which affect them such as education and public transport.

During the forum the candidates spoke about the role of youth in politics and the impact their own upbringings had on their views....

Exert from Latrobe Valley Express
<http://www.latrobevalleyexpress.com.au/news/local/news/general/youth-challenge-candidates/1997183.aspx>



TREATMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE BY TICKET INSPECTORS

Campaign Respect

Campaign Respect was started up by a group of young people here at Youthlaw concerned about the experiences of young people. They were keen to hear other young people's stories and bring about cultural, social and political change in the way ticket inspectors interact with young people.

They conducted an online survey last year about treatment by ticket inspectors. 274 young people responded.

- 18% had been physically handled
- 37% witnessed some other young person be physically handled
- 35% had personally experienced aggressive or rude language
- 30% had personally experienced aggressive body language
- 13% were personally shown racial or cultural insensitivity
- 35% had witnessed another young person being shown racial or cultural insensitivity
- 1 in 5 young people made a complaint, but nearly 80% didn't feel their complaint was responded to satisfactorily.
- 4 out of 5 did not complain, 28% saying they couldn't be bothered and 37% feeling there was no point making a complaint because they wouldn't be listened to anyway.

In December 2010, the Victorian Ombudsman released a report along with disturbing footage of ticket inspectors assaulting and abusing young people. The Ombudsman concluded that 'inspectors clearly are not aware of the limitations imposed on these powers, and use excessive not reasonable force. This inevitably leads to confrontations'.

The Government has shown a willingness to respond to the Ombudsman's recommendations and the feed-back it has received from young people through Campaign Respect. DOT has done significant work in this space including:

1. Strengthening formal disciplinary processes - improved and quicker notification processes of incidents by private operators;
2. Expansion of introductory and refresher training; and
3. Introduction of CCTV monitoring at more stations.

Interactions between police and young people

Since March this year project officer Sarah Segal has met with many organisations to discuss opportunities for consulting with and documenting young people's interactions with police. This has included; YACVIC, Youthworx, Migration Information Centre, City of Darebin Youth Services, Boroondara City Council, Springvale Community Aid and Advice Bureau (Youthlinks), Hume Youth Services Street Art Program, Centre for Multicultural Youth and the Visioning Justice Radio Project.

Currently Youthlaw is working in partnership with the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria's, Youth Reference Group (YRG) by providing the YRG members with basic research skills. Essentially this project will look at young people's experiences and perception of law enforcement officers. The YRG members would like to host workshops at youth centres around Melbourne and produce a survey to distribute to different organisations via the internet.



Beyond Appearances

A DVD, entitled Beyond Appearances, was produced in 2011, through collaboration between Youthlaw, Frontyard Youth Services, and Victoria Police, and funded by the City of Melbourne. It was launched by Minister for Crime Prevention Andrew McIntosh in August 2011.

The genesis for the film dates back to 2008 when members of Victoria Police (West Melbourne station) approached Frontyard Youth Services and Youthlaw to discuss how to improve interactions between police and marginalised and homeless young people and how to help police officers to provide consistent, positive, non-judgmental and supportive services to young victims of crime.

Two members of Victoria Police reflect in the film on how to overcome these barriers and improve, at times, strained relations.

A number of young homeless people developed the concept of the film, with several young people being cast members who share their stories and experiences with police.

The film is being distributed amongst Victoria Police and may act as a valuable training resource for officers who have frequent interactions with young people, particularly those experiencing homelessness or disadvantage. The film will be used in the training of Protective Service Officers.



ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

OBJECTIVE

By 2013 Youthlaw secures on-going sustainable funding that enables Youthlaw to operate efficiently and effectively on a day-to-day basis.

YOUTHLAW ACHIEVEMENTS 2010/2011

Blake Dawson – We have maintained our strong community law partnership with Blake Dawson. They provide a secondee lawyer on a 6 month rotation, administrative assistance including transcribing tapes and use of meeting rooms. They provide a significant financial donation each year and assistance with printing the Annual Report. This year they organised and hosted a Trivia night to raise money for Youthlaw. They also provide pro bono legal assistance to clients, test case assistance, legal research and legal advice on operational issues.

This year we also trialled a shadowing program whereby Graduates (1st year lawyers) from Blake Dawson shadowed our secondee for a day. This year we hosted Huw Watkins, Gabrielle Metherall and Jill Robertson. Activities included observing court cases such as a County Court appeal, and assisting with the client drop-in service in the afternoon. We also welcomed a number of secondary students of Blake Dawson staff on school placement.

FUNDING

We receive core funding per year of \$190,000 from the Commonwealth/State government Community Legal Service Program (CLSP). Apart from one-off funding grants this core funding has not increased over the past 7 years.

The Commonwealth has provided a number of one-off grants for our Skype legal service Youthlaw Online. Despite non-inclusion of a further one-off of grant in the 2010 Federal Budget, Youthlaw successfully lobbied the Attorney-General's office once again for a one-off grant to maintain Youthlaw Online. The Attorney-General Robert McClelland visited our office in July 2010 for an hour and we were able to share with him the effectiveness of the service and he spoke to a youth worker Rosebud Y-Lounge, about Skype and about the issues young people are facing in the Mornington Peninsula.

In 2010-11 we secured additional funding from the following sources

- Helen McPherson Smith Trust – \$25,000
- Maribyrnong City Council – \$3,000
- Blake Dawson – \$50,000
- Blake Dawson Trivia Night – \$4,019
- Legal Service Board of Victoria – \$100,000
- Lance Reichstein Trust – \$10,000
- Youthlaw generated income (training, supervision of legal clinic students, legal costs) – \$15,338

Youthlaw extends enormous gratitude and thanks to our financial supporters.

CORPORATE STRATEGY

In 2010 The Youthlaw Board embarked on development of a corporate strategy to take the good work of Youthlaw to private business to secure their financial and in kind support. From 2011 this strategy is being implemented and we are confident of private sector support.

IN KIND SUPPORT

Each year professionals donate their time and expertise for free or highly subsidised. We thank the following:

- Blake Dawson – Pro Bono legal advice and test case legal assistance
- Maddocks (and in particular Stephanie Tomkins) – Pro bono test case assistance
- Legal Counsel Jason Pizer and Emrys Nekvapil – Pro bono test case representation
- Lucia Marin – Design of 2011 Annual report
- Kevin Brianton – Media and communications assistance – Corporate strategy
- Aaron Claringbold – Photography for promotions and Annual report
- David Short – Development of website for the International Student Legal Advice Clinic

OUR VOLUNTEERS

As we don't have paid secretarial or administrative staff we rely heavily on volunteers. We receive requests to volunteer everyday. Most volunteers stay for at least 6 months and come in half a day a week. Each week we have up to 10 volunteers assisting us.

In addition we host a number of tertiary institution students on placement. They usually undertake re-search or project work. Each university semester we also supervise 2 law students from Deakin University Law School as part of their legal clinic program.

Many of our volunteers are studying law and youth justice. We see it as part of our job to supervise and mentor them as potential professionals in the legal and youth justice systems.

Volunteers

Tony Cooke, Patrick Donovan, Iman Elcheikh, Anita Das, Melissa Molloy, Nicole Jee, Olga Fishman, Lisa Thien Huong Nguyen, Sylvia Varnham O'Regan, Laura Flanagan, Elizabeth Budd, Daniel Opere, Elizabeth Margonis, Vanessa Delle-Vergini, Patrick McLennan, Anna Innerebner, Aimee Pomogacs, Michelle Fineberg, Lisa Morstyn, Dave Bourbon, Frances Barbour, Adela Woliensky, Daniella Sessarego, Alexa Segerius, Tiernan Seth, Adam Just, Monica Lillas, Stuart Butterworth, Thasha Warshap-peruma, Alicia Simonds, Kimberly Jagula, Jazeer Nijamudeen, Katherine, Joanna Liu-Huang, Lindel Hoskins, Mary-Monica Kamel

Student placements and internships

Adelaide Rief and Preethi Vergis (Melbourne University), Alice Cooney, Jeremy Stewart, Liam Murray, Raymond Ng, Dimitri Klonis and Elizabeth Budd (Deakin University), Mayra Morales (Copperfield College, Sydenham), Brittani Walsh and Elisa Manga (The Pavillion School), Jessica Ramsay (Catholic Ladies College, Eltham), Angela Nguyen (Kolbe College), Richard Amendola, Jordana Maycock, Arthur Apo

YOUTHLAW BOARD 2010-11

- Michelle Marven, Chairperson
- Daniel McQuilken, Treasurer
- Anoushka Jeronimus, Secretary
- Simon Gauci
- Joanna Huang
- Monica Lillas
- Sophie Osborn (Blake Dawson)
- Meribah Rose (Blake Dawson)
- Chian Kee (Blake Dawson)
- Noelle de Clifford (non-voting member)
- Sarah Kemeny
- Megan Trethowan (Blake Dawson)

YOUTHLAW STAFF 2010-11

- Ariel Couchman, Co-Director
- Tiffany Overall, Co-Director and Policy Officer
- Anna Radonic, Principal Lawyer
- Jordana Cohen, Lawyer
- Annie Davis, Online lawyer
- Katrina Wong, Outreach Lawyer and Policy Officer
- Emma Breheny, Policy Officer
- James Fleming, Lawyer, International Students Legal Advice Clinic
- Sarah Segal, Youth Engagement Project Officer
- Sally Goldner, Finance Officer
- Megan Trethowan, Secondee Lawyer
- Georgina Molloy, Secondee Lawyer

EXTERNAL SUPPORT

- Blake Dawson
- Lucia Marin
- Meghan McBain (Design Bus)
- Justin Hoogenraad
- FINREA Computing Services
- JL Collyer and Partners
- Helen Rosenbaum, consultant



YOUTHLAW FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

CONTENTS

- Balance Sheet
- Income Statement
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Notes to and forming part of the accounts
- Audit Report

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 JUNE 2011

	Note	2011 \$	2010 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash	7	449,666	360,919
Receivables		4,301	3,794
Prepayments		1,951	2,176
Total Current Assets		455,918	366,888
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	5	5,393	6,657
Total Assets		461,312	373,545
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Payables		8,639	19,855
Provisions		50,206	53,476
Grants in advance	6	149,625	76,974
Total Current Liabilities		208,469	150,304
NET ASSETS		252,842	223,241
EQUITY			
Committed Fund		252,842	223,241
		252,842	223,241

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

INCOME STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	Note	2011 \$	2010 \$
Revenue from ordinary activities	2	537,861	514,614
Employee expenses		(346,460)	(332,948)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		(4,304)	(5,306)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(157,496)	(118,717)
Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities	3,4,8	29,601	57,643
Increase/(decrease) in reserves from prior year adjustments			
		29,601	57,643

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	Note	2011 \$	2010 \$
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	7		
Receipts			
Operating grants		358,814	265,444
Donations		4,019	50,000
Interest Earned		13,831	6,355
Other receipts		173,241	71,344
Payments			
Payments to suppliers and employees		(458,118)	(376,434)
Cash Flow from Operating Activities		91,788	16,709
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(3,040)	(2,000)
Cash Flow from Investing Activities		(3,040)	(2,000)
Net increase/ (decrease) in cash held		88,748	14,709
Cash at the beginning of the year		360,919	346,209
Cash at the end of the year		449,666	360,919

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	2011	2010
	\$	\$
NOTE 2: REVENUE		
Operating activities		
Commonwealth/State funding	321,292	295,736
Commonwealth/State funding – other funding	-	3,429
Legal Services Board	92,906	
Reichstein Foundation – Access to Justice	10,000	-
Helen McPherson Smith Trust – Peer Research	25,000	25,000
Marybyrnong City Council – Speak Out	3,000	-
Victoria Law Foundation	-	13,000
City of Melbourne	-	5,000
Department of Justice	-	5,000
Adjustments re grants carried forward	(35,129)	32,416
Donations	-	50,000
Donations other	4,019	-
Donations in kind (Blake Dawson secondee)	60,100	58,350
Interest received	13,831	6,355
Management fees	19,054	2,696
Cost recoveries	9,758	10,641
Community Legal Education	1,980	2,091
Other income	12,049	4,900
Total revenue	537,861	514,614
NOTE 3: SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES		
Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities has been determined after		
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	4,304	5,306
Remuneration of auditor		
– Audit services	1,072	995
– Other services	-	-
Total remuneration	1,072	995
NOTE 4: INCOME TAX		
The Association is specifically exempt from tax under s(50)10 of the <i>Income Tax Assessment Act</i> , and in accordance with the restrictions imposed by exempt status, no asset or income of the Association may be transferred to any member of the Association.		
NOTE 5: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Furniture and fittings – at cost	34,952	31,912
Less Accumulated depreciation	(29,559)	(25,255)
	5,393	6,657

	2011	2010
	\$	\$
NOTE 6: GRANTS RECEIVED IN ADVANCE		
City Of Maribyrnong	1,251	-
City Of Melbourne	-	5,000
Department of Justice	4,883	13,062
Helen Mcpherson Smith Trust	34,450	-
Legal Services Board	27,608	-
Reichstein Foundation	10,000	25,000
Victoria Legal Aid	71,433	33,911
	149,625	76,974
NOTE 7: CASH FLOW INFORMATION		
A) Reconciliation of cash		
Cash at the period's end as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet as follows:		
Cash	449,666	360,919
	449,666	360,919
B) Reconciliation of net cash provided by operating activities to operating surplus		
Operating surplus	29,601	57,643
Non cash flows in operating surplus		
Depreciation	4,304	5,306
Provisions	(3,270)	9,077
Changes in assets & liabilities		
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(11,216)	7,521
Increase/(decrease) in grants received in advance	72,651	(62,708)
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	(507)	(413)
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	224	284
	91,788	16,709
NOTE 8: STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY		
Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities	29,601	57,643
Net increase/ (decrease) in Equity	29,601	57,643
Equity at the beginning of the year	223,241	165,598
Equity at the end of the year	252,842	223,241



J L COLLYER & PARTNERS
ACCOUNTANTS & AUDITORS

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the members of YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEGAL RIGHTS CENTRE INC

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of **YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEGAL RIGHTS CENTRE INC** which comprises the balance sheet as at 30th June 2011, and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The management of **YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEGAL RIGHTS CENTRE INC** are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The management's responsibility also includes designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

DIRECTORS
JANET L. COLLYER FCPA
LIONEL R. ARNOLD CA B.BUS
RAELENE LAI CPA B.COM



Chartered Accountants

LIABILITY LIMITED BY A SCHEME APPROVED
UNDER PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS LEGISLATION

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the Management's financial reporting requirement. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the relevant independence requirements.

Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion the financial report of **YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEGAL RIGHTS CENTRE INC**

- (a) gives a true and fair view of **YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEGAL RIGHTS CENTRE INC's** financial position as at 30th June 2011 and of its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1.


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Janet Collyer
J L COLLYER & PARTNERS

26th September 2011

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