



**ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2012**



ABOUT YOUTHLAW

Youthlaw is a not for profit, independent, state-wide community legal centre for young people.

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

Youthlaw is based in CBD Melbourne and is co-located with Frontyard Youth Services.

Youthlaw addresses the legal issues facing young people through legal services, advocacy, law reform and preventative education programs, within a human rights and social justice framework.

We can answer questions about:

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

YOUTHLAW

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FROM THE YOUTHLAW BOARD

2011 – 2012 has been another great year for Youthlaw. Youthlaw continues to strive to meet the needs of vulnerable and marginalised young people, while also continually improving the organisation's governance and seeking to stabilise our funding base.

This year the Board has focused on strengthening the Board's governance; we undertook a tailored training session with PILCHCONNECT, followed by a Board planning session. We also established sub-committees on employment and finance.

Without these strong underpinnings of governance, support, and reliable funding, Youthlaw would not be able to provide the essential services that so many young people need.

Youthlaw has pioneered innovative ways of connecting young people with legal services. This year we continued our Skype service to locations across Victoria. We successfully tendered to provide legal services to RMIT students at the Melbourne city campus and to two other campuses by Skype. We also undertook a complete rebuild of our website, and established a presence on Facebook and Twitter (please feel free to add us as a friend!).

With funding from the Legal Service Board we continued to build our policy and advocacy program. This year minimum mandatory sentencing for young people was on the government's agenda and we lobbied the State Government to progress their review of diversion for young people. We responded to the introduction of Protective Service Officers on train stations as we were concerned about their training and powers and the potential for an escalation in conflict in interactions with young people. We also lobbied for youth specific focused police training, and initiated a test case about independent investigation of police complaints.

We revamped our Community Legal Education to sharpen the focus on delivering sessions to young people, and with funding from the Victorian Law Foundation (VLF), produced training DVDs which can be accessed from our website. With VLF funding we also produced three videos for young people about Youthlaw, featuring young people who have used the service.

This year we welcomed Guy Donovan in the position of lawyer at our RMIT service. We also welcomed Marlena Pitrone and Annie Davis in the position of co-ordinator of our legal education and training pro-gram. From April, Katrina Wong took over as Principal Lawyer in Anna Radonic's absence (12 months leave), and this year Tiffany Overall and Ariel worked together as Co-Directors of Youthlaw. We also said farewell to lawyer James Fleming in November 2011 due to funding ending for international student legal education. And of course we welcomed many new volunteers and secondees from Ashurst.

We were immensely grateful for the generous support from Ashurst, in the form of funding, hosting the trivia night, providing pro bono advice on governance issues, and the hosting of many events including our 10th anniversary.

Youthlaw depends on the energy, commitment and professionalism of our staff, Board and volunteers. I would like to thank everyone involved in another successful year, particularly Tiffany Overall, for the contribution she made this year as co-director in addition to her passionate advocacy and policy work, and Ariel Couchman for her ongoing stewardship of the organisation.

It is a privilege to be involved in an organisation such as Youthlaw, which makes a positive impact on so many young people's lives. Over the next year, the organisation will need to focus on finding ongoing funding to secure the organisations future. I encourage you all to support Youthlaw.

Sarah Kemeny

Chairperson

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.

2010–2013 OBJECTIVES

1. Young people with formerly unmet legal needs are accessing high quality, free and accessible legal services.
2. Young people, particularly those most vulnerable & marginalised, are better able to identify and assert their human rights.
3. 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.
4. Victorian law, policy and public authorities will take steps to respond to the experiences of young people and actively protect their rights in three key focus areas ("Campaign areas"):
 - being infringements
 - police and young people; and
 - diversion from the criminal justice system.
5. Young people are involved and informing the work and direction of Youthlaw.
6. By 2013 Youthlaw secures on-going sustainable funding that enables Youthlaw to operate efficiently and effectively on a day-to-day basis.

OUR SERVICES

OBJECTIVE

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

We target our services to vulnerable and marginalised young people. This is reflected in where we provide our services, how we provide them and who we assist.

We also recognise that adults including youth workers, teachers and family members assist young people with their legal issues. We provide legal information to them by phone and email.

OUR SERVICES

Drop In – at Frontyard Youth Services

We have a drop-in legal clinic most days at Frontyard Youth Services located in King St, Melbourne. Frontyard houses a number of services for homeless and at risk young people, including housing support, a free health service, counselling, family reconciliation and Centrelink. Frontyard is easily accessible and young people travel in from all over Melbourne and further. It's also close to where many homeless young people sleep on the streets or in temporary accommodation.

Most young people coming in to Frontyard have multiple important concerns such as family, mental health, housing, financial and legal problems. Youth workers at Frontyard reception are welcoming and help young people work out which services they need.

Youthlaw works closely with the other Frontyard services so these issues are picked up and responded to.

By phone and email

"I'm really impressed with your response turn around time and the services provided by Youthlaw. Your organisation is really empowering youths to understanding their rights and hopefully stay out of trouble. Great job! "

Our lawyers respond to calls and emails each day from young people and also adults and workers assisting them.

Our email service is popular and is often used by younger people. It can be anonymous and we receive a high number of queries of a sensitive nature including family abuse.

Some of the queries we have received:

"I was just wondering if you could explain the process of going to court to contest a fine? Do you need to stand up in front of lots of people and are you questioned? I wrote a letter but they said if I wanted to contest it I would have to go to court."

A youth worker called asking about how to assist a young person who has mental health issues and has a number of fines

A worker called regarding a young person who took out a loan so her then partner could buy a car. The partner was abusive and she fled relationship. She is still making repayments.

Call from a local council. They have a driving course that generally requires a guardian to agree to terms for an under 18. They have a 17 year old without a legal guardian who wants to do the course.

A 16 year old called about whether he could live with his father (currently living with his mother).

A 20 year old called about a loan that he entered into with a bank when he was 18 years old. At the time he was working full time but has recently been laid off work and can't afford the repayments.

A CASE

A couple of years ago, Linda was sexually assaulted by someone who was a friend at the time. It took Linda a while to report the matter to police and by the time they investigated there was not enough evidence to charge. Linda came to Youthlaw for help accessing assistance as a victim of crime so she could get funding for counselling. Youthlaw helped Linda make an application for in the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal to help her get funding. When the Tribunal said they wanted to notify the alleged offender about Linda's application to get his view on the incident, Linda was very distressed and worried about retribution. Our lawyers advocated for Linda and convinced the Tribunal that it wasn't appropriate to notify the offender in Linda's case. Linda has now been granted an award to allow her to continue counselling.

At the Salvation Army Youth Bus

In early 2010, we teamed up with the Salvation Army to reach young people through their youth 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 provides legal advice from the youth bus on a Wednesday evening.

Many of the young people who come to the bus are homeless and live on the streets in squats or in temporary accommodation. Others are in out of home care and have usually left home or been removed from their family. These young people often have multiple and on-going legal problems. Having a Youthlaw lawyer at the bus is a great way to reach these young people. The friendly and relaxed environment enables us to build trust and confidence and many come back for further advice.

A CASE

18 year old Keith joined the Occupy Melbourne protest at Flagstaff garden. Part of the reason he was there was because he was homeless and the camp gave him somewhere to sleep and helped him feel like he was part of the community. When Council officers came to remove his tent, Keith, and a number of his friends, were arrested and charged with “hindering and obstructing” the Council officers. Since then there has been a challenge in the Federal Court about whether the Council officers had the power to take down Keith’s tent and those of his fellow protestors. Youthlaw is representing Keith to help him fight these charges.

At Braybrook Youth Enterprise Hub

In November 2008 we started an outreach legal service at the Melbourne City Mission 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. Local youth workers and council staff were concerned about young people increasingly in trouble with the law and negative interactions between police and young people.

With regular visits and our legal clinic running out of YEH our outreach lawyer Katrina Wong has fostered strong relationships with young people in the area and with other local services.

Youthlaw Online using Skype



Lawyer Katrina Wong with Outer East Youth Connections youth workers

In 2008, we established a Skype legal service we call Youthlaw Online. This service uses a low cost technology (Skype) to provide legal services throughout Victoria. Young people access the service at a local youth or community service.

Outreach Lawyer Katrina Wong visits our ‘host sites’ to develop trust in our service, train up staff, conduct education with young people in the area, and speak to key stakeholders (schools, community services, police, local legal services).

Our partnerships with these local youth services are an invaluable aspect of the service. Young people are provided the support and assistance from the service to identify their legal problems and are also linked up to other services they need. The local youth service connects us to the local community where we build relationships, conduct legal education and pick up on local issues of concern.

Due to identified gaps in legal service delivery, we were able to expand our Skype services to an additional location in the Morning Peninsula region in Mt Eliza. Youthlaw Online is currently available at:

- The Outer eastern area in partnership with the Upper Yarra Community House and Outer East Youth Connections at:
 - Healsville
 - Ringwood and Knox areas
- The Cobram area in partnership with Uniting Care Cutting Edge
- The Shepparton area in partnership with The Bridge Youth Services and 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 and Mt Eliza Village Neighbourhood Centre at:
 - The “Y Lounge” in Rosebud
 - “Shed 11” in Hastings
 - Mt Eliza Village Neighbourhood Centre

As of July 2012 we will be providing a Skype legal service in Geelong, in partnership with Barwon Youth and Barwon Community Legal Service.

"UYCH Community College/Outer East Youth Connections is very proud to support Youthlaw's Online Skype service. We have a dedicated Youthlaw laptop situated in our two main Youth Connections offices located at Ringwood and Healesville. Our team of dedicated youth workers encourage our young clients who have legal issues to talk to a Lawyer via the Skype service. We find our young clients feel more comfortable being able to sit in a private office that is local to their area and talk face to face with a qualified lawyer rather than travelling into the City to meet face to face with the lawyer. We have found it to be an accessible and invaluable service to our clients."

John Palmer, Outer East Youth Connections, Ringwood

CASE STUDIES

David was 21 years old and resided in a regional location in Victoria. He was a recipient of the Newstart allowance and had an extensive history of homelessness. David had recently commenced work as a casual employee, but as a result of being sick one day, he was sacked from his job. His then employer alleged that there was employee misconduct, and consequently, Centrelink imposed an 8 week non-payment period due to this alleged misconduct.

This 8 week non-payment period placed David at risk of homelessness as he could not afford to pay the rent. Youthlaw assisted David in appearing in the Social Security Appeals Tribunal where the Member found that there was no employee misconduct and reinstated his Centrelink payments

Abdi was 19 years old and had recently arrived from Ethiopia. He had no family support in Australia and had been homeless for a year when he was charged with theft offences from when he was out drinking with some friends. It was Abdi's first time in court and he had no prior criminal history. Youthlaw represented Abdi in court where the Magistrate imposed a Community Based Order with conviction. Youthlaw assisted Abdi with an appeal to the County Court based on the sentence being too severe. At the County Court, the Judge sentenced Abdi to a lesser sentence of a 12 month adjourned undertaking without conviction. This was an excellent result for Abdi.

At RMIT University

From February 2012 Youthlaw has been providing a legal service to RMIT students. Youthlaw lawyer Guy Donovan is at RMIT at the city campus each Tuesday and Wednesday. Students access the service initially via an email query system. This enables Guy to quickly provide information by email or phone. Where it is needed an appointment is arranged. Students at the campuses at Bundoora and Brunswick can access the service by Skype.

Guy also updates fact sheets and online resources available on the RMIT website, sends legal information messages via social media and provides legal training to RMIT staff.

QUERIES

Hi, I was having problems with my landord on 7 August. She kicked me out of her house at 9:00pm without any notice.

She did not allow me to collect my belongings and threatened me that i have to leave her place just right now without touching anything even its belong to me.

I have paid her my bond money also two weeks rent. I have the proof of online transaction.

Now she is denying that she does not own anything of mine.

She did not return my belonging completely yet. She put some stuff outside of her house to collect which was not complete. I have number of missing items like shirts, trousers, personal care products, kitchenware etc.

Could you please guide me how to precede it further to get back my bond money and two weeks rent along with all my remaining belongings? Kind regards

Last year I was employed as a casual staff member at the above company. I have not heard from my boss for the last two months and have assumed that I have been let go. However I have not been paid any superannuation for the duration I was there. Although I was a casual, I worked pretty much full time for about 8 months. What do I do now? I don't want to lose her as my reference.

I was involved in an accident in a friend's car that did not have insurance I am now being asked to pay 20,000 to other insurance company within 14 days. I am a full time student who works nine hours a week. I have no assets and no savings.

I was given a \$207 fine for travelling without a concession card. As an international student, I had no idea that a student card and concession card were different. In America, being a student with a valid student card automatically counts as concession. There was no way of knowing that concession is a different entity here.

Also, the man behind the desk sold me a concession Myki card based solely on my student card. How could the same company that sold me the concession Myki card based on my student ID fine me based on that same card?

I then wrote a letter with all the reasons I should not be fined, and included a torn-up Myki concession card to prove that I got rid of it. I stated that I was completely ignorant on the matter and in no way meant to steal or go against the law. My letter was turned down, and I am now considering going to court.

Hi, I've just received a court summons for the Magistrates court on 18 October for three offenses; failing to produce a valid ticket, failing to give name and address and giving a false name and address to an authorised officer aka ticket inspector. I was wondering whether I could set up a meeting next week to discuss what I should be preparing before my court date and also what I should say during court.

LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDED

In the 2011/2012 year Youthlaw assisted **1546** people.

- Legal assistance over the phone and by email to **948** young people and adults
- Face to face legal advice to **323** young people
- Court representation and on-going legal casework for **275** young people

This included:

- Outreach services to **132** young people (via Skype, the youth bus and at Braybrook)
- Legal assistance to **204** students and **60** staff consultations through the RMIT service.

TEST CASE

Independent investigation of police complaints

Two years ago, Youthlaw initiated a test case to challenge the practice of Victoria Police investigating serious complaints against police officers. We took instructions from a young person from an African back-ground, who had alleged that a Victoria Police officer had used excessive force during the course of an arrest in 2009 when he was 17 years old. He instructed that the police officer broke his teeth against a gutter, capsicum-sprayed him while he was handcuffed and racially abused him.

A formal complaint was made to the Victorian Office of Police Integrity (OPI) requesting they conduct an independent investigation. This was on the basis that the young person did not feel confident that the matter would be appropriately investigated within Victoria Police, given the racial discrimination he had experienced with police in his area. The young person also wanted to exercise his rights under the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (Charter) to have his complaint conducted by an independent body.

The OPI declined to investigate his complaint and referred the complaint to Victoria Police's internal ethical standards department for investigation.

With pro bono assistance, the young person sought judicial review in the Supreme Court of the OPI's decision not to investigate his complaint. With the assistance of law firm Maddocks, and barristers Jason Pizer and Emrys Nevkapil, an 8 day hearing was conducted in the Supreme Court before Justice Williams from 16 May 2012 and concluding on 25 May 2012. The Attorney General and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission also joined as intervening parties and provided submissions in relation to Charter issues. Judgment is expected to be handed down later this year.

This case raises a significant, novel and important legal issue. Do Victorians have the right, under section 10 of the Charter, to have a complaint of inhuman treatment at the hands of Victoria Police investigated by a body that is independent of Victoria Police? The Charter argument is a novel one for Victoria and Australia, but that right of independent investigation is recognised at international law, and in many countries around the world.

Senior Counsel Jason Pizer told the Supreme Court, that the right placed an "obligation on the state not only to refrain from such treatment but to effectively investigate allegations of such treatment ... effective investigation must be one that is independent, adequate and capable of resulting in prosecution and discipline of perpetrators."

Youthlaw wishes to express our extreme gratitude to Maddocks and senior counsel Jason Pizer and counsel Emrys Nevkapil for their generosity in devoting enormous hours of work in the preparation and conduct of the matter, which was provided on a completely pro bono basis.

OPI 'failed to probe cruel assault', The Age, 17 May 2012

To read the entire article, go to <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/opi-failed-to-probe-cruel-assault-20120516-1yr99.html>

YOUTHLAW REACHES THE AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY*!!

The 2011–12 AGM marked the 10th anniversary since Youthlaw's establishment on 23 October 2001.

YOUTHLAW OVER 10 YEARS : THE ACHEIVEMENTS & THE PEOPLE BEHIND THEM

To mark the occasion Tiffany Overall kicked off proceedings with a compulsory sentimental power point presentation high-lighting some of Youthlaw's achievements over 10 years & thanking all the amazing people that have made. Here's a bit of a summary.

Plotting Youthlaw's conception

1985 to 1993	1995	1996	2001	23 October 2001
John Finlayson former coordinator of the Victorian Youth Advocacy Network Inc and its members worked in vain to try and establish a state-wide community legal centre for young people.	the Australian Law Reform Commission and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission ran the Inquiry into Children and the Legal Process, (endearingly known as Seen and Heard) and recommended that in addition to specialist units within legal aid commissions: "... legal advocates for children should be funded within specialist children's legal centres or generalist community legal centres." Rec 87	Following this Inquiry North Melbourne Legal Service successfully applied for federal funding of a children and youth lawyer and started up a limited specialist legal service for young people under the umbrella network of JustLaw.	A unique partnership between Blake Dawson Waldron, NMLS and the Federation of Community Legal Centres formed in early 2001, with parties agreeing to establish a centre.	The then AG Rob Hulls formally launched the stand alone centre operating a drop in legal clinic most week days at Frontyard Youth Service.

Some of Youthlaw's achievements over the years

- **Legal service provision** – Youthlaw assisted 6420 young people with legal advice via our legal drop in clinic at Frontyard & various outreach sites & legal information via email & telephone.
- **Community legal education** – delivered over 450 sessions on a wide range of legal topics to diverse audiences of young people and workers
- **We have developed many fact sheets and other legal resources over the years.** One we are particularly proud of is What do I do when...? A practical guide to the law for people who work with young people produced in 2006. It was developed by Paula Grogan and a committed team of Youthlaw volunteers and a new version was published in 2012.
- **Advocacy and law reform** – over 100 law reform submissions & consultations Youthlaw has made which have been underpinned by human rights principles espoused in the UN CRC. Many of these submissions were done jointly with Federation, YACVic, VCOSS, Frontyard and we are incredibly appreciative of the opportunity to work in this way with other centres.

Thankyous

→ Getting Youthlaw up and running: Rhonda Gocher, Nicholas Batten, Sarah Nicholson (from NMLS) and Gavin Green at YouthLaw @ Werribee Legal Service

→ Ashurst (formerly Blake Dawson) for financial donations, pro bono and in kind support of all natures. Anne Cregan, National pro bono partner & Natalie Bannister, the former Vic pro bono manager at the then Bake Dawson were instrumental in negotiating the original partnership agreement & funding. Victorian pro bona partner Steven Amendola, Fiona Hodgson, Peter Stirling, Melbourne pro bono Coordinators Sarah Galloway & Fiona Spencer, Chian Kee, and long term IT support from Elaine Brown

→ Ashurst secondees – a big thankyou to Sophie Osborn – there since day 1 as first seconded, and the other 20 secondees since her

→ Frontyard Youth Services

→ Former and current staff that have been instrumental in shaping Youthlaw:

- Sarah Nicholson, our 1st Director
- Paula Grogan, and Ariel Couchman our 2nd and 3rd directors for their enormous contribution to and investment in Youthlaw
- Anna Radonic, principal lawyer hired in December 2001
- Sally Goldner, finance officer for 7 years.
- Jordana Cohen only person in YL's history to volunteer as a student, come back as a Blake Dawson and return as employee lawyer

→ Volunteer board members - 38 over 10 years. Special thanks to our former chairs: Gavan Green (2001- 5), Belinda Lo (2005- 7), Michelle Marvin (2007- 11).

→ Volunteer staff – 90 other volunteers have given their time to the organisation over the years.

Jo Poulton	Meghan McBain	Elaine Brown	Fiona Hammond	Phil Sharp
Amelia Tooher	Nik Dragojlovic	Kimberley Pritchard	Tom Cordiner	Michael Paphazy
Merinda Logie	Cathy Pappas	Robyn Sweet	Niti Gupta	Jeremy Tan
Chelsea Gore	Jacqui Plunkett	Emily Hay	Kate Salmon	Lucie O'Brien
Ani Tuna	Guillaume Bailin	Danielle Rossito	Vera Jonceski	Carmen Wong
Phoebe Smith	Ee Lynn Tan	Rob Sacco	Chenoah Ellis	Anushka Dantanarayana
Bernard Mackey	Bilgehan Yildiz	Mazon El-Bouch	Katherine Davis	Kristen Renae McKinnon
Emma Jane Chala	Rebecca Dunn	Cassandra Old	Jagrup Pangly	Nadeem Molla
Sandru S Anandaraj	Madeleine Forster	Frances Barbour	Sharika Jeyakumar	Longzhen Han
Joseph Donovan	Lisa Morstyn	Dave King	Dave Bourbon	Adela Woliansky
Daniella Sessarego	Alexa Segerius	Adelaide Rief	Tiernan Seth	

→ Partners at outreach sites

- Youthlaw Online sites
- Workers at YEH hub and MCM.
- Brad Ellis and the team at the Salvation Army

→ Funders

- Victoria Legal Aid
- Reichstein Foundation
- DCI
- HMST
- Victorian Legal Services Board (LSB)
- Victorian Womens Trust
- Helen McPherson Smith Trust
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Others

THIS IS YOUR YOUTHLAW LIFE...



The fun & surprise part of the anniversary proceedings was “This is your Youthlaw Life “ with former Youthlaw secondee and board member, Corey Johnson, hosting and celebrating principal lawyer, Anna Radonic’s 10 year’s at Youthlaw. Corey, in very Mike Munro fashion, paid homage to Anna as the heart and soul of the organisation and looked back on how her work and charisma touched so many people and has shaped the identity of Youthlaw. He invited a number of special guest to come up and reminisce and share about their special stories and memories about Anna.

- Judge Paul Grant – President of Children’s Court since 2006, Having volunteered together at Western Suburbs Legal Service , Paul admitted Anna (to practice) in 1982
- Sarah Nicholson – first Director of Youthlaw sat on the job interview for Anna and had distinct memory of socks and sandals
- Sophie Osborne – First Secondee and former board member of Youthlaw – current Senior Associate at Ashurst spoke of the efficiency with which Anna built in a coffee routine into their daily tasks.



- Dot Henning, A nurse with the Young People’s Health Service which provides a health clinic for young people accessing Frontyard Youth Services, shared some memories of how Anna empathetically supported highly vulnerable young women she had referred to her. And of how available she always made herself to Frontyard staff for legal questions
- Paula Grogan, former Director of Youthlaw , currently a policy officer with VCOSS shared the notorious “Piracy” legal information query story.
- Corey interviewed a group of former secondees (Sarah Kemeny. Chian Kee , Megan Trethowan Jordana Cohen, Libby Holzer & Jordana Cohen) who reflected on the caffeine pleasures of being supervised by Anna, her eating habits, her wonderful banana cakes, and love of potato cakes.
- Belinda Lo – former chairperson of Youthlaw and currently working at Easter Suburbs spoke of Ann’s intimidating fashion sense; and
- Nicole Jee long term volunteer at Youthlaw since 2007 and Monash University Law Student told the crowd how Anna had been a great support, mentor and inspiration. She told stories of undertaking regular hot chip runs for Anna and benefiting from Anna’s collection of shoes stored under her desk.



All guests were invited to put other stories or well wishes in the red This is your Youthlaw life book:

“You are the heart of Youthlaw and you deserve all the accolades you received!!!”

“You are the perennial advocate for young people’s rights.”

“If I have as much impact on young people as you have in terms of protecting their rights I will be a proud woman.”

“Thanks for making my time at Youthlaw so fun, dynamic and a great learning experience.”

“I’m so happy to have found someone who can match my eating habits.”

“Your passion and good humour is unforgettable.”

PHOTOS LEFT: Corey Johnson (right) and Anna Radonic. MIDDLE: Sophie Osborne and Anna Radonic. RIGHT: Corey Johnson with past secondees Libby Holzer, Jordan Cohen, Sarah Kemeny, Megan Trethowan and Chian Kee.

LEGAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION

OBJECTIVE

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

In the 2011–12 year Youthlaw provided over 29 education sessions to 587 young people and 14 legal training sessions to 291 participants who work with marginalised or vulnerable young people.

Highlights this year were:

- We began a major legal training project funded by the Victoria Law Foundation, to produce and present high quality training workshops for youth workers and other workers assisting young people.
- With a one off grant from the Victorian Department of Justice we revised and reprinted our popular publication *What Do I do when?* This publication is written for those who work with young people and covers their legal responsibilities and common legal issues facing young people.
- We began work on three legal training videos of 20–30 minutes to be accessed from our website.
- We produced new and improved online resources including fact sheets.
- We provided legal training for Youth Referral and Independent Person Program (YRIPP) volunteers.

YOUTH WORKER TRAINING WORKSHOPS

We presented three intensive legal training workshops over the last two months of the financial year. These sessions were three hours long and were presented by at least one lawyer from Youthlaw. There were 78 participants.

- At Brunswick for youth workers in the Moreland and Hume local government areas. Covering Powers of Police and Other Authorities (PSOs, ticket inspectors and security guards) and Arrest, Bail and Supporting Young People at Court with a guest speaker from the Public Transport Ombudsman (Policy Manager – Bridie Fennessy)
- At Shepparton for youth workers from Seymour, Cobram, Shepparton and surrounding towns, covering Powers of Police and Other Authorities (PSOs, ticket inspectors and security guards) and Arrest, Bail and Supporting Young People at Court
- In Melbourne CBD on Powers of Police and Other Authorities (PSOs, ticket inspectors and security guards) with a guest speaker from the Public Transport Ombudsman (Policy Manager – Bridie Fennessy)

Feedback from participants has been very positive. Another eight workshops are scheduled for July–November 2012 and 3 short DVDs will be produced by early 2013 based on the content of the workshops.

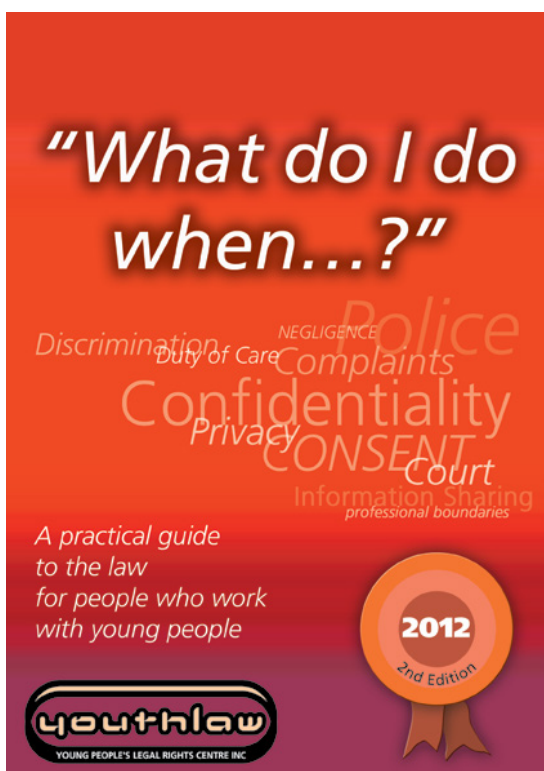
"[I liked] everything - speakers, visuals, handouts A+."

"Liked the length of the session, was not overwhelmed by the information. More similar workshops would be great."

"[I liked] the different scenarios ... the rights are confusing in these areas, so the session was great to sort this out for me."

Other Youthlaw training and presentations:

- Yarra Ranges youth network workers – common legal issues and duty of care
- Victoria Police Transit Safety Division Leadership forum – 30 sergeants and senior sergeants on issues affecting young people, perspectives on policing and youth specific approaches
- National Association of Community Legal Centres Annual Conference – 'Using Skype to Bridge the Divide'
- Youth Affairs Council of Victoria youth worker training (legal component)
- Youth Support services – legal training for newly employed youth workers
- Victoria Police Youth Resource Officer training
- Victoria Legal Aid and Community legal Centre staff – on Protective Service officer powers
- Royal Children's Hospital Adolescent unit staff (specialists, medical and nursing staff)
- Local Government Youth Services forum





JORDANA COHEN (LEFT) AND ANNIE DAVIES (RIGHT) AT CBD POLIC POWERS LEGAL TRAINING WORKSHOP.

EDUCATION SESSIONS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

These included:

- Mission Australia Youth Connections Life Skills program
- Say No To Crime (Sudanese peer education group) Mitcham
- WHEELS life skills program.
- Moving Forward program (young people disengaged from school), Broadmeadows
- Northlands Youth centre
- NMIT , Preston students
- Kangan TAFE, Broadmeadows students
- Frontyard youth education group
- Sydney Rd Community School
- Mt Eliza and Lalor Secondary College students
- VCAL students at Hastings, Caulfield Park Community school, Glenroy Neighbourhood Learning Centre, Lilydale, Warburton, Mt Evelyn, Redwood Secondary College and Ringwood Outer East Youth Connections.
- Sunbury Moving Forward Program participants
- Hume City Council Street Art Youth Group (at risk young people).
- RMIT youth work students

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT'S LEGAL EDUCATION

James Fleming of Youthlaw and Gillian Davy of Western Suburbs Legal Service provided legal sessions to international students up until October 2011 when funding ended. They spoke to students on topics including employment, fines, consumer issues, and car accidents.

In addition they produced brochures and online information for students and support workers. These are available online at <http://islac.org.au/Education> .

POLICY AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM

OBJECTIVE

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.

OBJECTIVE

To increase the profile of young people's human rights amongst key stakeholders & community organisations, in particular in relation to at least 2 and no more than 5 emerging issues per annum.

From 2010–11 with funding from the Victorian Legal Services Board Grants Program we have developed and implemented a three year policy and advocacy strategic plan with a focus on achieving real impacts in a number of key youth justice areas.

This year we are seeing the benefits of a planned and focused policy and advocacy program, particularly in regard to our three key campaigns.

CAMPAIGN AREAS

Youthlaw is actively campaigning in three areas:

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

In May 2011 Youthlaw initiated establishment of Smart Justice for Young People, a coalition of close to 30 organisations to address policing and diversion issues through coordinated campaigning and taking an approach to these issues that focuses on what is evidence based and effective.

It is the youth specific arm of Smart Justice led by the Federation of Community Legal Centres.

The coalition was officially launched in November 2011 by Judge Paul Grant, President of the Children's Court. Hannah, a representative from Imara Youth Advocacy, also spoke at the launch on the Ethiopian community's experiences with police.

When asked about the benefits of the Coalition Steering Committee members have suggested it helps the sector "Speak to power about how they exercise power" and "Sing from the same song sheet".

Smart Justice for Young People has a website with news items, media releases, fact sheets and other re-sources, and has maintained an active Twitter account, with over 300 followers including the Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission, journalists from Triple J and The Age and many legal services and community organisations.

Complimenting the work of Smart Justice for Young People, Youthlaw has continued to undertake campaign and law reform work in all three campaign areas.

"The outcomes achieved in the 1st year of the project have been excellent. We believe that your work thus far has heightened awareness of youth issues in the public and private sphere which will no doubt enhance justice for young people in the future through policy reform. Congratulations on the excellent implementation of the 1st year of the project."

Kelly Tasiopoulos , Grants Officer, Legal Services Board



Judge Paul Grant launches Smart Justice for Young People





More legal help
www.facebook.com/YourRightsOnTrack
 Federation of Community Legal Centres, for a referral to a community legal centre for free information and advice, 9625 1500
 Victoria Legal Aid Legal Help, for free legal information and advice on the phone, 9269 0120

© 2012 Victoria Legal Aid

Your Rights On Track
 wallet card.

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 over policing and the lack of an independent complaints process.

CASE

A 17 year old African man boarded a tram on a Friday night. He was going home after a few drinks with friends. He says he was not drunk. Boarding the tram the young man's phone was knocked out of his hand by another commuter causing the screen of the phone to smash. On the tram he engaged in conversation with this person. They ignored him and he began to raise his voice. The tram driver asked him to leave the tram.

Two police officers boarded the tram at the next stop to remove the young African man at the driver's request. The young man explained that he needed to sort out repair of his phone before he left the tram and resisted being taken off. They sprayed him with OC spray affecting others on the tram. Having moved him off the tram they continued to spray him and use force including hitting him in the back with a police torch. He was then taken to the police station, where the abuse continued physically and verbally. He was kept handcuffed in a cell handcuffed until 5:00 am and then released without being questioned.

Police charged the young man with assaulting an officer and public drunkenness.

Protective Services Officers

With the introduction of Protective Services Officers (PSOs) in February 2012, Smart Justice for Young People has been concerned about the potential for escalation of conflict between the officers and young people, particularly given the extensive powers and weapons and limited training these officers have.

Responding to the concerns of many organisations and individuals about how PSOs would exercise their power, Smart Justice for Young People became a key advocate on this issue and partnered with The Federation of Community Legal Centres Your Rights on Track project to educate young people and workers about rights and responsibilities in regard to PSOs.

In conjunction with the Your Rights on Track project we:

- Developed a wallet card and fact sheet aimed at a young audience
- Conducted legal training for workers in the youth, mental health, housing and drug and alcohol sectors
- Supported research with young people on their perceptions of PSOs.
- Surveyed young people and handed out info during National Youth Week in 2012

Victoria Police & Young People

The training of police and PSOs has been an ongoing concern for Smart Justice for Young People, particularly following the coronial inquest into the death of 15 year old Tyler Cassidy. The Coroner's recommendations included that Victoria Police reform their training program and there be a specific component on communicating with vulnerable young people. Representatives from Smart Justice for Young People met with Victoria Police to discuss implementing the Coroner's recommendations as a matter of urgency.

Youthlaw has also engaged in other campaign work on policing issues, including:

- Participating in a consultation with Victoria Police on their 'Use of Force' model
- Contributing to the Human Rights Law Centre's Use of Force project via a written submission and arranging a consultation with young people in Braybrook.
- Minister McIntosh launched Youthlaw's professional development DVD called *"Beyond Appearances"* developed in partnership with Victoria Police, which highlights positive ways for authorities to communicate with homeless young people. This film was also presented by Youthlaw at the launch of the edition of Parity *"Policing Homelessness"*.
- Presenting at the Victoria Police Transit Division Leadership Forum, educating senior members of police on best practice when communicating with young people.
- Attending a Stop and Search Receipting Roundtable, convened by Flemington Kensington Legal Centre.
- Speaking at a community forum on PSOs hosted by Greens MLC Sue Penniciuk. We highlighted our concerns about the over-policing of young people & lack of youth-specific training for police and PSOs.

To inform young people of their rights with police, Smart Justice for Young People produced youth-friendly fact sheets outlining what police can and can't do when a young person is stopped by police or arrested and taken to the station.



Youthlaw and Victoria Police working to ensure public authorities consider and comply with young people's rights' reported in Sunday Age 14 August 2011

Media

'Cassidy inquest prompts Coroner's call for youth-specific police training'

"Police training must prepare officers for dealing with young people who may be in crisis if we are to avoid a similar tragedy. We hope the Coroner's recommendations mean positive changes can come out of this incident,"

Youthlaw media release November 2011

'Tasers a costly option'

Herald Sun, ABC Radio Ballarat, SYN FM, Geelong Independent

"We hear many cases of young people being [capsicum] sprayed when they pose no physical threat to police and we fear that Tasers will be used in the same way."

Geelong Independent, 16 March 2012

DIVERSION

Youthlaw has continued to lobby government to increase funding for diversionary programs for young people and to legislate to ensure all young people have access to diversion.

Diversion at all stages of entry into the criminal justice process is a highly effective and cost effective way to address youth offending and prevent offending progressing into adulthood.

Diversionary programs:

- address the reasons behind offending and thereby reduce future offending.
- link young people to appropriate support services, interventions and programs including counselling, drug treatment and family mediation.
- assist a child or young person to avoid a criminal record and the harmful effects of stigmatisation that accompany this.

Youthlaw commonly assists children and young people being denied the opportunity to access diversion. Sometimes it is because the young person is not eligible for a diversion, however more often it is the result of police informants not exercising their discretion to issue a caution or refusing to give their consent for a referral to a diversion program (such as ROPES, offered by Victoria Police).

Police are the gate-keepers and they alone decide whether a young offender will benefit from a diversion program and agree to refer them to it. If they refuse to refer the young person to diversion there is no formal appeal or review process and a Magistrate can't overturn their decision.

The refusal means the young offender misses out on the chance to engage in a process which allows them (if they complete it) to avoid a criminal record and to move on with their life.

The unfairness of this is highlighted by 16 year old Max's experience.*

MAX'S CASE*

Max was drunk with friends in city and kicked in the door of a car. The car happened to belong to a police officer. Max was charged with criminal damage.

Max had no prior criminal history, was experiencing family conflict resulting in homelessness, had dropped out of school, and was working casually full time to support himself.

Youthlaw made submissions requesting the police informant refer Max to the ROPES diversionary program, believing he was an appropriate candidate. The police informant refused.

At court the Youthlaw lawyer again canvassed referral with the prosecutor's support. On a return date to court the informant still refused and was adamant Max should not be referred to the program.

The presiding judge made strong comments about how Max should have been referred to ROPES. The matter was found proved and dismissed, however this meant Max still had a disclosable finding of guilt on the record.

The current diversion options available to children and young people in Victoria are inadequate, ad hoc, often inaccessible and discriminatory and operate in a patch work fashion without any legislative basis. The unfortunate irony is that if young offenders were 18 or older and going through the adult system, where diversion is legislated and available statewide, the likelihood is that they would be offered diversion and their offending trajectory may be very different.

This year Youthlaw and Smart Justice for Young People advocated for:

- i) **The introduction of a state-wide legislative framework** to ensure consistent and equitable access to diversion options (pre-court and at court) for children and young people.
- ii) **Resourcing and strengthening the range of diversion support programs** and dedicated funding for graduated diversion options ranging from low level consequential activities to more intensive case managed interventions.

This year our advocacy included:

- Lobbying for inclusion of diversion reform in the Government's 2012–13 budget.
- Establishing and co-ordinating maintaining a coalition of 30 organisations (Smart Justice For Young People).
- Lobbying and consulting with key stakeholders including: Victoria Legal Aid, Department of Human Services – Youth Justice, local government youth services and the Children's Court;
- Meeting with the Attorney General Robert Clarke, Minister Andrew McIntosh and Minister Mary Wooldridge and advisors.

* Name has been changed.

Media

The announcement in August 2012 that the state government would seek more diversion programs for juvenile criminals resulted in a flurry of media including comment from Youthlaw and Smart Justice coalition members.

"Victoria had had a comprehensive adult diversion system for years, but there had been a serious gap when it came to youth diversion."

Smart Justice for Young People spokeswoman Tiffany Overall

"Just locking young people up is not that smart. It's smart and cost-effective to try and divert them, and spend the dollars on supporting them and keeping them out."

Jesuit Social Services CEO, Julie Edwards, The Age August 2012

YOUNG PEOPLE AND INFRINGEMENTS

Over the last few years, the Victorian Government has increased the number of offences dealt with by fines. We are concerned that replacing offences going to court with fines and the relative ease of issuing them has resulted in 'net-widening' effect on young people. We are also concerned about the cost of fines (most over \$200) and that young people are being fined instead of being issued warnings or cautions.

Fines do not reflect the income or lack of income of young people and their families. They are not fined any differently to adults (except some public transport fines). Currently minor behaviour offence fines issued by PSOs and transit police are well over \$200 each. Street offences such as being drunk in public or disorderly are close to \$300. In addition offences and fines have been introduced such as \$1000 for carrying a knife and \$700 for carrying a spray can on public transport.

17 year old with intellectual disability refused warning & fined for spitting

Ben* 17 years old with an intellectual disability, was approached by two police officers at Flinders Street Station. The officers tried to talk to Ben but he did not wish to talk. The officers asked his name & address which Ben provided. No reason was given for the questioning.

When his train arrived Ben looked between the train & the platform to see if he had dropped anything, at which time officers believed he had spat. The police followed Ben on to the train and made Ben get off the train at Southern Cross where they fined him for spitting. Ben, who had dropped out of school and was living on a disability support pension, had very little capacity to pay the fine.

The fine was not withdrawn on internal review by Victoria Police & the matter was referred to the Children's Court. In the interim, Youthlaw submitted a complaint regarding the police's failure to withdraw the fine and issue a warning. Ben's file was reviewed resulting in the fine being withdrawn and a warning issued.

Young people pay the same amount that adults do for most on-the-spot fines despite the fact they often do not have an income or earn much less than an adult. Young people with no or low income and limited parental financial support are particularly disadvantaged.

These fines act to entrench disadvantage for already disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people and increase their interactions with court system.

Additionally, the current system for managing fines for under 18's is confusing and complex, making it difficult for young people to self-manage their debts. This system is also more punitive than the adult system, despite young people's far more limited capacity to pay.⁷

Some agencies, including Victoria Police and many Local Councils, have a general practice of refusing to withdraw infringements on the basis of special circumstances at the internal agency review stage. It is our view that this is contrary to the Attorney-General's guidelines on Infringements and the intention of the Government that fines are dealt with at the earliest possible stage.

Youthlaw is advocating for:

- The amount of fines takes into account a young person's income/financial position and capacity (as compared to an adult).
- In the first instance an informal warning or caution should always be given by the issuing agency (including police and PSOs), rather than issuing an infringement notice.
- The development of a less complex and more equitable process in both the children's or adult's infringement systems that:
 - has a central database of infringements from all issuing agencies;
 - considers a broader range of special circumstances;
 - can finalise infringements at any stage of the enforcement process; and
 - uses a consistent set of guidelines in conducting agency internal reviews.

This year our advocacy included:

- Youthlaw lawyers contributing to Monash University's research on unpaid fines.
- Being an active member of Federation of Community Legal Centre's Infringements Working Group,
- Being an active member of Infringement Standing Advisory Committee meetings (Department of Justice governmental committee that advises the Attorney General), which includes DOJ, Victoria Police and Court representatives.
- Submission to the Department of Justice's Infringement Trial Evaluation

- Meeting with the Attorney General's Chief of Staff to provide advice on problems specific to the children's infringement system. Since that meeting there has been media in the Herald Sun confirming the Government has ordered a full review into all aspects of the operation of fines in Victoria.
- Worked with Victoria Police Internal Review team on guidelines for their internal review process.
- Being a partner agency on City of Melbourne's UN Global Compact Cities Program project - New approaches to "Special Circumstances" clients and infringements. A focus of the group is developing a model policy for enforcement agencies and their internal review of infringements on the basis of special circumstances.

Media

"Unpaid fines are the most common reason why young people end up in court. We call on the Government to review its approach to fines and introduce a means-tested system that will take into account financial hardship".

'State Budget robs Peter to pay Paul', Youthlaw media release May 2012

EMERGING, & TOPICAL ISSUES

Additionally, we also responded to a number of emerging and topical issues including:

- ticket inspectors' treatment of young people;
- disengagement from education, including school discipline processes ;
- youth offending, including minimum mandatory sentencing;
- human rights of children and young people

This work has included ongoing advocacy to government and within the sector; providing media comment when approached by journalists; and developing our evidence base on the true extent of youth offending.

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 two years for 16 and 17 year olds and 4 years for those over 18.

Youthlaw prepared an extensive submission to the Sentencing Advisory Council. Youthlaw also engaged in advocacy and law reform activities in opposing these proposed introductions. This included meeting with the Attorney General Robert Clark, providing media comment and working in partnership with a number of key stakeholders including VCOSS, Victoria Legal Aid, Victoria Aboriginal Legal Service, Jesuit Social Services, Centre for Multicultural Youth and Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.

Smart Justice for Young People created a fact sheet on minimum mandatory sentences and the myths around youth offending.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE

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

With funding from the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust we were able to continue to employ Sarah Segal 1 to 2 days a week as our youth engagement officer.

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2011 – 12

Peer research about experiences with police

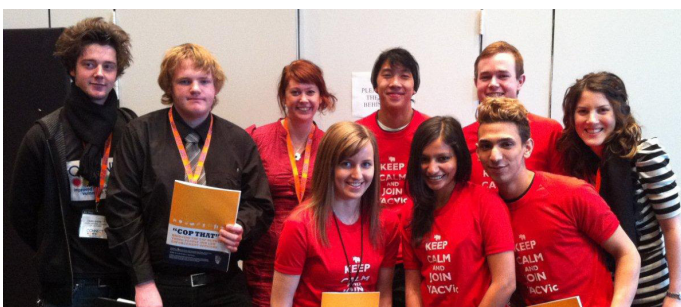
Sarah continued work from last year with the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria's, Youth Reference Group (YRG). Last year YRG members received training in basic research skills. This year the YRG members took up the role of peer researchers and decided to research young people's experiences and perception of police including newly introduced protective service officers.

The peer researchers came up with their research questions.

- What are young people's perceptions of law enforcement officers?
- What are young people's experiences with law enforcement officers and how do these influence perceptions?
- What factors contribute to positive relationships between young people and law enforcement?

They then devised questions for focus groups and an online survey. The focus groups not only collected the experiences of young people but also became an opportunity to find out how much they knew about the law and their rights. 211 young people took part in an online survey

The peer researchers decided it would be good to put the findings in a report to influence policy relating to young people and law enforcement by conveying young people's feelings about law enforcement officers to government and policy makers. In June the report was launched at the annual YACVIC state conference. Copies were sent to the Minister for Youth Affairs, the Minister for Police, and Victoria Police.



YACVic YRG members at launch of their report

Melton peer research project.

In January 2012 Sarah met with the organisation YouthNow, working in western metropolitan Melbourne, and they eagerly accepted an invitation to work with Youthlaw on a peer research project.

YouthNow partnered with a local school Kurunjang Secondary College to engage young people in the VCAL stream of the school to become peer researchers. YouthNow Inducted and recruited for the project and supported participants through it. Sarah assisted students to come up with their re-search questions and undertake peer research activities. The project took place over term 1 and 2 and the research areas they chose were prevention and stigma about teen pregnancy and school rules. They made posters to advertise their research and then collected views of the 2 VCAL classes. They finished the project by writing a proposal to the school principal. It looks like this peer research will become an integral part of the VCAL curriculum.

About Youthlaw - 3 short films

With funding from the Victoria Law Foundation and the filming and production skills of James Fleming we produced 3 short films this year about using Youthlaw from the perspective of young people. Each of the films interviewed clients of Youthlaw and were designed to increase awareness amongst young people of common legal issues and about how legal services like Youthlaw can help.

Youthlaw volunteer program.

In the first half of 2012 we began planning a complete revamp of our volunteer program so that volunteers get a great experience from volunteering (including thorough induction, on-going training, supervision and mentoring) and Youthlaw gains a team of awesome skilled and passionate volunteers.

Youthlaw Board – youth designated positions and mentoring of youth members

We continue to encourage young people to nominate for the Youthlaw Board and we have 2 designated positions that can only be filled by young people. This year Monica Lillas one of our youth designated youth members became deputy chair and she chaired a number of meetings in her own right and spoke at the Ashurst trivia night about Youthlaw.



Melton Youth researchers with Sarah Segal

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 2011/2012

Ashurst – We have maintained our strong community law partnership with the legal firm Ashurst. They continue provide a secondee lawyer on 6 month rotation, administrative assistance and use of meeting rooms. They provide a significant financial donation each year and assistance with printing the Annual Report. Again this year they organised and hosted a Trivia night to raise money for Youthlaw. This year they provided pro bono legal advice on a number of governance and operational issues. This year we continued to host Ashurst graduates (1st year lawyers) for a day. We also welcomed a number of secondary students of Ashurst staff on work placement.

FUNDING

This year we received recurrent funding of \$286,000 from the Commonwealth/state government Community Legal Service Program (CLSP). Over the past four years we have received a number of additional one off grants from the Federal Attorney General's Department in recognition of our work with homeless youth and our outreach work to rural communities.

We source funding from philanthropic trusts, foundations, private companies and private donors. We generate income from our work.

In 2011–12 we received funding from the following sources

- Legal Services Board of Victoria
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Helen McPherson Smith Trust
- Lance Reichstein Trust
- Ashurst
- Ashurst Trivia Night

Youthlaw extends enormous gratitude and thanks to our financial supporters.

CORPORATE STRATEGY

In 2011–12 The Youthlaw Board embarked on implementing a corporate strategy to take the good work of Youthlaw to private business to secure their financial and in kind support. A brochure was produced and printed by Ashurst. So far 7 companies have been approached.

IN KIND SUPPORT

Each year professionals and firms donate their time and expertise for free or at a highly subsidised rate.

This year we received the following in kind or subsidised support:

- Ashurst – Pro Bono legal advice, stationary, hosting Youthlaw legal training sessions, Board meetings and AGM.
- Maddocks – Test case pro bono legal team.
- Legal Counsel Jason Pizer and Emrys Nekvapil – Pro bono test case representation
- Lucia Marin – Subsidised design of the 2011-12 Annual report
- Melbourne City Mission –support to Youthlaw with telephone equipment and other co-location supports and hosting the Youthlaw Braybrook outreach service.
- Youth services across Victoria hosting Youthlaw Online.



LEFT: Youthlaw volunteers LongZhen, Nicole and Patrick with Tiffany overall and youth Board member Monica Lillas. RIGHT: Tony Cooke , Vikki Grimley and Nicholas Boymal, from the Hewlett Packard legal team with Youthlaw staff.



OUR VOLUNTEERS

As we don't have paid secretarial or administrative staff we rely heavily on volunteers. All volunteers commit to 6 months (half a day a week) and many stay on longer. Each week we have up to 20 volunteers assisting us. Each university semester we supervise 2 law students from Deakin University Law School as part of their course studies in legal practice. The Melbourne Hewlett Packard legal team have continued to volunteer at Youthlaw once a week contributing their extensive knowledge and skills.

Volunteers and Deakin placement students

Patrick Donovan, Nicole Jee, Anita Das, Melissa Molloy, Bronwyn Montgomery, Lisa Nguyen, Sylvia Varnham O'Regan, Patrick McLennan, Vanessa Delle-Vergini, Olga Fishman, Daniel Opare, Michelle Fineberg, Lindel Hoskins, Elizabeth Margonis, Anna Innerebner, Aimee Pomogacs, and Aaron Claring-bold, Tony Cooke, Vicki Grimley, Nicholas Boymal, Elizabeth Budd, Melanie Long, Stephanie Free-man, Renee Trenamen, Nathan Moniatis.

YOUTHLAW BOARD

- Sarah Kemeny, Chair
- Monica Lillas, Deputy Chair
- Jan Farrell, Treasurer
- Anoushka Jeronimus, Secretary
- Mari Cuzilla
- Matthew Gregg
- Meribah Rose
- Megan Trethowan (Ashurst)
- Chian Kee (Ashurst)

And we farewelled:

- Daniel McQuilken
- Joanna Huang
- Simon Gauci

YOUTHLAW STAFF 2011-12

- Ariel Couchman, Co-Director
- Tiffany Overall, Co-Director and Human Rights and Advocacy Officer
- Anna Radonic, Principal Lawyer (12 months leave 1st April 2012)
- Katrina Wong, Outreach Lawyer and Policy Officer and Principal Lawyer from 1st April 2012
- Jordana Cohen, Lawyer
- Guy Donovan, Lawyer
- Marlena Pitrone, Education and Training Co-ordinator until June 2012
- Annie Davis, Education and Training Co-ordinator from June 2012
- Emma Breheny, Policy Officer
- James Fleming, Lawyer, International Students legal education
- Sarah Segal, Youth Engagement Project Officer
- Sally Goldner, Finance Officer
- Libby Holzer, Seconded Lawyer
- Jo Slater, Seconded Lawyer

EXTERNAL SERVICE STAFF

- Lucia Marin
- Meghan McBain (Design Bus)
- FINREA Computing Services
- JL Collyer and Partners
- Helen Rosenbaum, consultant
- Dialogue Consulting

YOUTHLAW FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2012

CONTENTS

- Balance Sheet
- Income and Expenditure Statement
- Income Statement
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Audit Report

Balance Sheet

as at 30 June 2012

	Note	2012	2011
		\$	\$
Current Assets			
Cash	7	461,335	449,666
Receivables		7,703	4,301
Prepayments		2,249	1,951
Total Current Assets		471,287	455,918
Non Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	5	3,449	5,393
Total Assets		474,736	461,312
Current Liabilities			
Payables		13,599	8,639
Provisions		57,255	50,206
Grants in advance	6	126,164	149,625
Total Current Liabilities		197,017	208,469
Net Assets		277,718	252,842
Equity			
Committed Fund		277,718	252,842
		277,718	252,842

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

Income Statement

for the year ended 30 June 2012

	Note	2012	2011
		\$	\$
Revenue from ordinary activities	2	595,806	537,861
Employee expenses		(400,395)	(346,460)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		(2,767)	(4,304)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(167,768)	(157,496)
Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities	3,4,8	24,876	29,601
<i>Increase/(decrease) in reserves from prior year adjustments</i>			
		24,876	29,601

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2012

	Note	2012	2011
		\$	\$
Cash Flow from Operating Activities	7		
<i>Receipts</i>			
Operating grants		207,110	358,814
Donations		3,421	4,019
Interest Earned		11,720	13,831
Other receipts		284,789	173,241
<i>Payments</i>			
Payments to suppliers and employees		(494,549)	(458,118)
Cash Flow from Operating Activities		12,492	91,788
Cash Flow from Investing Activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(823)	(3,040)
Cash Flow from Investing Activities		(823)	(3,040)
Net increase/ (decrease) in cash held		11,669	88,748
Cash at the beginning of the year		449,666	360,919
Cash at the end of the year		461,335	449,666

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

**Notes to and forming part of the accounts
for the year ended 30 June 2012**

Note 2: Revenue	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Operating activities		
Legal Aid - recurrent funding	286,288	321,292
Legal Aid - other funding	-	-
Legal Services Board	95,178	92,906
Reichstein Foundation - Access to Justice	-	10,000
Helen McPherson Smith Trust - Peer Research	-	25,000
Marybyrnong City Council - Speak Out	(3,000)	3,000
Victoria Law Foundation	28,089	-
RMIT	30,124	-
Ashurst (formerly Blakes)	85,000	-
Adjustments re grants carried forward	(46,637)	(35,129)
Donations	-	-
Donations other	3,421	4,019
Donations in kind	61,903	60,100
Interest received	11,720	13,831
Management fees	16,026	19,054
Cost recoveries	10,051	9,758
Community Legal Education	1,403	1,980
Other income	16,241	12,049
Total revenue	595,806	537,861

Note 3: Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities has been determined after		
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	2,767	4,304
Remuneration of auditor		
- audit services	1,133	1,072
- other services	-	-
Total remuneration	1,133	1,072

Note 4: Income tax

The Association is specifically exempt from tax under s(50)10 of the Income Tax Assessment Act, 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	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Furniture and fittings - at cost	35,775	34,952
Less Accumulated depreciation	(32,326)	(29,559)
	3,449	5,393

Note 6: Grants received in advance	2012	2011
	\$	\$
Ashurst (formerly Blakes)	85,000	-
City Of Maribyrnong	-	1,251
Department of Justice	3,611	4,883
Helen Mcpherson Smith Trust	5,004	34,450

Legal Services Board	1,311	27,608
Reichstein Foundation	8,370	10,000
RMIT	8,894	-
Victorian Law Foundation	12,639	-
Victoria Legal Aid	1,335	71,433
	126,164	149,625

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

**Notes to and forming part of the accounts
for the year ended 30 June 2012**

Note 7: Cash flow information	2012	2011
	\$	\$
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	461,335	449,666
	461,335	449,666

B) Reconciliation of net cash provided by operating activities to operating surplus

Operating surplus	24,876	29,601
non cash flows in operating surplus		
depreciation	2,767	4,304
Provisions	7,049	(3,270)
Changes in assets & liabilities		
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	4,960	(11,216)
Increase/(decrease) in grants received in advance	(23,461)	72,651
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	(3,402)	(507)
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	(297)	224
	12,492	91,788

Note 8: Statement of Changes in Equity	2012	2011
Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities	24,876	29,601
Net increase/ (decrease) in Equity	24,876	29,601
Equity at the beginning of the year	252,842	223,241
Equity at the end of the year	277,718	252,842

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report



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 2012, 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 on 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.

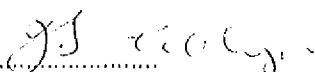
Independence

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 2012 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.


.....
Janet Collyer
J L COLLYER & PARTNERS

28th September 2012

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