

A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, thin, light-colored circles that create a sense of movement and depth. These circles are centered around the text and extend across the upper and middle portions of the page.

NSW Youth Advisory Council

**Annual Report 2010**

**2010**





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**YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

The Hon. Victor Dominello MP  
Minister for Citizenship and Communities  
Level 37  
Governor Macquarie Tower  
1 Farrer Place  
Sydney NSW 2000

4 April 2011

Dear Minister

It gives me great pleasure to present you with the 2010 New South Wales Youth Advisory Council Annual Report.

The Council has carried out its functions in accordance with the *Youth Advisory Council Act 1989*. This is reflected in the variety of Council activities throughout 2010.

I would like to thank the former members of the Council for their work and for the role they have played in ensuring that the Council continues to provide a link between the young people of New South Wales and the NSW Government.

Yours sincerely

**Emma Byrne**  
**Chair**

## Role of the Council

The NSW Youth Advisory Council (the Council) was established in 1989, under the *Youth Advisory Council Act 1989* (the Act), to ensure that young people participate in the development of Government policies and programs that concern them. The Act defines young people as ‘persons who are of, or over, 12 years of age and under 25 years of age’.

The Council has the following statutory functions:

- to advise the Minister on the planning, development, integration and implementation of Government policies and programs concerning young people
- to consult with young persons, community groups and Government authorities on issues and policies concerning young people
- to monitor and evaluate legislation and Government policies and programs concerning young people, and to recommend changes if required
- to conduct forums, approved by the Minister, on issues of interest to young people
- to collect, analyse and provide the Minister with information on issues and policies concerning young people.

## Administration of the Council

The Hon. Peter Primrose, MLC, Minister for Youth, administered the *Youth Advisory Council Act 1989* during the term of this Council from January to December 2010.

During 2010, administrative responsibility for the Council was held by Communities NSW. Mr Tony Wiseheart, A/Director, Corporate Strategy, Policy & Reporting, Communities NSW, was the ex-officio member of the Council and secretariat support was provided by Ms Cat Wright.

## Membership of the Council

In 2010 the NSW Youth Advisory Council consisted of 12 part-time members appointed by the Minister.

Under the Act, at least half the Council’s 12 members must be under the age of 25 years at the time of their appointment. In 2010 all members of the Council were under the age of 25 years.

Council members are appointed in their own right, rather than as representatives of organisations or groups. The Minister seeks a Council that is broadly representative of young people in New South Wales. In determining membership, the Minister seeks a balance from metropolitan, regional and rural areas; young men and women; Indigenous young people; young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and people with experience in a range of youth and community organisations.

## Council Members in 2010

### **Mr Travis Holland (Chair)**

**Hill Top**

**Age: 24 years**

Travis is studying for a Bachelor of Communications and Media Studies at the University of Wollongong and is an active member of his community in the Southern Highlands. He has been a member of the National Youth Roundtable and a variety of local community service organisations, including the Southern Highlands Foundation youth programs, University of Wollongong Rotaract and was the founding Vice-President of the Rotaract Club of the Southern Highlands. In 2010, Travis represented the Council in a range of activities in his role as Chair.

### **Ms Katy Brownless**

**South Maroota**

**Age: 24 years**

Katy has been a member of Amnesty International's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Committee, the Women's Action Group and NSW Speaker's Network. She has contributed to projects at the Aids Council of NSW and the Young Women's Project. She has assisted Family Planning's 'Same Difference' Panel Speakers Program and volunteers at fundraisers for 'Twenty10' LGBTQ Youth Service. Katy also has worked as a Youth Worker in crisis care for Guardian Youth Care and as a support worker at Pegasus Healthcare. She also undertook a traineeship in Disability/Community Support Work and continued on to a Diploma of Community Welfare.

### **Ms Kaitlyn Carlia**

**Elderslie**

**Age: 20 years**

Kaitlyn is currently studying for a Bachelor of Media and Communication in Marketing and Advertising, and a Bachelor of Creative Writing at the University of Wollongong. During her time at school, she was a member of the Drama Committee, the Social Justice Committee and the Student Representative Council. Before being appointed to the Youth Advisory Council, she was involved in a number of community projects, such as the local Youth Café, and many music events.

### **Mr Mitchell Dahlstrom**

**Moree**

**Age: 18 years**

Mitchell completed his High School Certificate at Moree Secondary College and a School Based Traineeship in banking during 2010. Mitchell is the Senior Multicultural Ambassador for the Moree Plains Shire Council, President of the Moree Plains Shire Youth Council and has been President of the New England Region Student Representative Council. He has been actively involved in his school community by serving as President and Treasurer on the Student Representative Council, President of the Junior Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and Middle School Captain. In 2008 he was also a member of the NSW Student Representative Council.

## Council Members in 2010

### **Mr Samir Kinger**

**Wattle Grove**

**Age: 17 years**

Samir is undertaking his High School Certificate in 2011 at Sydney Boys High School. Samir is the Chairperson of the Liverpool Youth Council, has been the Premier of the NSW Youth Parliament and was also President of his school's Student Representative Council. In 2007, Samir was on the organising committee of 'Yo-West', a youth initiated conference aiming to address issues faced by young people in Western Sydney. In 2010, Samir represented the Council on the Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health Advisory Board and the NSW Youth Health Policy Reference Group.

### **Ms Paige Labone**

**Woy Woy**

**Age: 18 years**

Paige recently completed her High School Certificate at Brisbane Waters Secondary College. Paige has held the role of Secretary for the Gosford City Youth Council and was the youth representative of the Gosford Sister Cities Committee. She has also held the position of Treasurer on her School Representative Council and has been a member of the Central Coast Rotoract. In 2010, Paige represented the Council on a Young Drivers Panel at the Youth Action and Policy Association Conference and was a co-master of ceremonies at the NSW Youth Action Plan consultation.

### **Mr Ricky Leong**

**Ryde**

**Age: 20 years**

Ricky is currently studying for a Bachelor of Commerce at the University of Sydney. Ricky has been a member of the NSW Youth Week Young People's Advisory Committee, Ryde Youth Council and Ryde Youth Week Working Council. He has also been on the West Ryde Redevelopment Committee and was the 2008 Ryde representative on the NSW Youth Parliament. Ricky's volunteering efforts have resulted in him receiving a City of Ryde Volunteer Recognition award. Ricky is also involved in his university community through the United Nations Society.

### **Mr Emre Mehmet (Deputy Chair)**

**Birrong**

**Age: 20 years**

Emre is currently studying for a Bachelor of Accounting at the University of Technology Sydney. Emre finished high school in 2008 at Homebush Boys High School. He was a member of his school's Student Representative Council and a member of the NSW Student Representative Council. Emre has also been a member of the Auburn Youth Advisory Council. In 2010 Emre represented the Council on the Police Commissioner's Advisory Council on Culturally Responsive Policing and also chaired Council meetings in his role as Deputy Chair.

## Council Members in 2010

### **Ms Stephanie Nehme**

**Blacktown**

**Age: 17 years**

Stephanie recently completed her High School Certificate at Catherine McAuley High, Westmead. Stephanie has been actively involved in her school community as School Captain and through the Leadership Team, Liturgy Committee and Peer Support Groups. In 2010 Stephanie represented the Council on the Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health Advisory Board, Student Volunteering Program Reference Group, judging panel for the NSW Fair Trading Money Stuff Competition and was a co-master of ceremonies at the NSW Youth Action Plan consultation.

### **Ms Mariah Okeroa**

**North Parramatta**

**Age: 18 years**

Mariah was working during a gap year between high school and university in 2010. Mariah had been active in her school community as the Captain of the Debating Team, a member of the Social Justice Group and editor of the Year Book. Mariah was an ambassador for the Oaktree Foundation's 'Make Poverty History' road trip and was previously their NSW Future Fund Officer. She is also a member of 'Kaphaka' Maori Cultural Group. Mariah also volunteers each Christmas at 'Making a Difference' and adjudicates public speaking and debating competitions for the Department of Education and Training. In 2010 Mariah represented the Council on the Young Offenders Advisory Council.

### **Ms Maydina Penrith**

**Griffith**

**Age: 22 years**

Maydina recently commenced working full time as the Heritage Information Officer for the Far West, Country, Culture and Heritage Division with the Department of Environment, Water and Climate Change. Maydina has been Chair of the Creative Riverina Youth Team and The Foundation for Young Australians Indigenous Small Grants Committee and also a member of the NSW Youth Participation Action Committee, Griffith Youth Advisory Board was a member of the Board of Management for the Griffith Aboriginal Medical Service. She is also a mentor for the Marambul Yuganha Program, Riverina TAFE Campus. In 2010 Maydina represented the Council at the NSW Student Representative Council.

### **Mr Jacob Wray**

**Moruya**

**Age: 17 years**

Jacob completed his High School Certificate in 2010 at Moruya High School. For the past two years he has been involved with the Department of Education and Training's Student Equity Advisory Team, a representative on the Priority Schools Program – Illawarra South East and a member of his local Youth Council.

### **Ex-officio member**

Mr Tony Wiseheart, A/Director, Corporate Strategy, Policy & Reporting, Communities NSW, is the ex-officio member of the Council. At the last meeting of the 2010 Council (24 November 2010), Ms Jacki Hayes, Director, Policy (Policy and Reform Division), Communities NSW, filled the role of ex-officio member of the Council in Mr Wiseheart's absence.



## Work of the Council

Under the *Youth Advisory Council Act 1989*, the key function of the Council is to provide current and relevant advice to the Minister for Youth on issues affecting young people in New South Wales. In developing its work plan for 2010, the Council decided to focus on four issues of importance to young people in NSW: young driver licence restrictions, access to higher education for young people from rural and regional areas, participation of young people in their local areas and climate change. The Minister for Youth also requested that the Council review the 2009 Council reports to identify changes in policy and programs and recommend any areas that require further change.

The Council reported to the Minister on the following issues:

1. Review of the 2009 Council's reports on youth homelessness, rural transport, education and wellbeing in NSW schools and youth employment opportunities
2. Young drivers
3. Access to higher education for young people from rural and regional areas.
4. Participation of young people in their communities

In 2010 the Council fulfilled its functions as specified under the Act through a range of activities. The Council carried out youth consultations, attended seminars and conferences, and conducted research that assisted it to become better informed about key issues and enabled it to provide considered advice to the Minister.

Members represented the Council on a number of Government and non-government committees and gave presentations at meetings and conferences. The Council also met with a range of key people to address the issues identified in the work plan.

These activities are detailed below.

### **1. Review of the 2009 Council's reports on youth homelessness, rural transport, education and wellbeing in NSW schools and youth employment opportunities.**

In February 2010 the Minister for Youth met with the Council and asked that the Council review the 2009 Council's reports to identify changes in policy and programs and to recommend issues requiring further change.

#### **Youth homelessness**

The Council meet with Helen Reynolds, Senior Policy Officer, Homelessness Unit, Housing NSW, to discuss youth homelessness policies. The Council considered the information provided at this meeting in reviewing the 2009 Council's Youth Homelessness Forum Report.

#### **Rural transport**

The Council meet with Kim Bush, Youth Services Coordinator, Eurobodalla Shire Council, to discuss rural and regional transport projects. The Council considered information provided at this meeting in reviewing the 2009 Council's Rural Transport Report.

### **Education and wellbeing in NSW schools**

The Council meet with Paul Lennox, Manager Student Behaviour and Attendance and Kate Lovelace, Coordinator Student Health from the Welfare Directorate, Department of Education and Training to discuss school welfare policies. The Council considered the information provided at this meeting in reviewing the 2009 Council's wellbeing in NSW schools report.

### **Youth employment opportunities**

The Council meet with Susan Calvert, Nicholas Lewis and Hayley Reay from the Strategy and Project Delivery Unit, Department of Premier and Cabinet to discuss current policies addressing youth unemployment. The Council considered the information provided at this meeting in reviewing the issues relating to employment opportunities raised by the 2009 Council.

In September 2010 the Council wrote to the Minister for Youth recognising policy and program changes in the areas of youth homelessness, rural transport, education and wellbeing in NSW schools and youth employment opportunities. The Council highlighted the recommendations in the Council's 2009 reports that required further attention by government.

## **2. Young drivers**

Young driver issues have featured on the Council's work plan since 2007. In 2010 the Council again decided to focus on young driver issues. The Council were particularly concerned about the impact of increasing restrictions on learner and provisional licences, particularly for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and those living in regional and rural areas. Members of the Council not only had personal experience of the difficulties in obtaining a full licence, but had heard many concerns from young people through their youth networks.

The Council researched young driver issues and met with Kim Bush, Youth Services Coordinator, Eurobodalla Shire Council to develop an understanding of some of the issues facing young people in rural and regional areas who are trying to learn to drive or progress through their provisional licence stage. The Council then met with Fiona Baikie, Senior Policy Officer, Youth Affairs, Communities NSW to raise their concerns about young driver restrictions and possible responses. Ms Baikie assisted the Council to develop ideas to respond to these concerns and draft a report on the issue. The final report was sent to the Minister for Youth who forwarded it on to the Hon. David Borger, Minister for Roads.

In November the Chair of the Council met with the Minister for Youth and the Minister for Roads to discuss the young driver report. In January 2011, the Government announced its intention to reduce young learner driver log book hours and provide increased support to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in accessing driving lessons.

During 2010 the Council also participated on the Young Drivers discussion panel at the Youth Action and Policy Association Conference. The Council's work on young driver issues saw them invited to sit on the newly established Road Safety Advisory Council commencing in 2011.

### **3. Access to higher education for young people from rural and regional areas**

During 2009 the Council reported to the Minister for Youth on limited transport options restricting rural and regional young people's attendance at tertiary institutions. The 2010 Council felt that in addition to these transport issues, young people from rural and regional areas were also experiencing a number of other barriers to accessing tertiary education.

The Council met with Bronwyn Ledgard, Higher Education Directorate, Department of Education and Training to discuss current projects to increase numbers of young people participating in tertiary education, including young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and rural communities.

The Council wrote to the Minister for Youth highlighting the need to address disadvantage experienced by young people required to relocate to attend a tertiary institution. The Council recommended increasing support for relocation costs and improved opportunities for online learning so young people had the option of remaining in their communities while studying.

### **4. Participation of young people in their communities**

Council members maintain strong connections with youth networks in their local areas and many members continue to sit on their local council youth advisory bodies. The Council became concerned about the consistency of opportunities across different areas for young people to participate in local youth advisory councils. To develop an understanding of the issue, the Council consulted with young people through surveys and small group workshops at the Youth Action and Policy Association's (YAPA) 2010 Youth Conference.

The Council wrote to the Minister providing the findings from the consultation, highlighting that many young people reported that they valued being involved in local youth advisory councils, but more needed to be done to increase opportunities for young people to participate.

In addition, the 2010 Council were consulted on the following youth participation projects: NSW Youth Strategy policy (with Louise Ruddock, Senior Policy Officer, Policy and Reform, Communities NSW), Better Futures Funding of youth programs and review of the NSW Youth Week project (with Kay Dunne, Manager, Policy and Corporate Strategy, Communities NSW) and development of the NSW Government Volunteering Strategy (with Paul Sabatier, Senior Project Officer, Volunteering Unit, Communities NSW). The Council also provided advice on application and interview processes for membership of the 2011 Council.

### **5. Climate change**

The Council identified climate change as an issue of significant importance to young people. The Council undertook research to inform them about this issue and corresponded with Megan Craig from Sustainable Schools, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW about current school projects focussing on Climate Change. The Council also met with Amanda McKenzie, National Director, Australian Youth Climate Coalition to discuss the Council's possible involvement in the 2010 Power Shift Summit in Canberra. To develop an understanding of the issue, the Council consulted with young people through surveys carried out at the 2010 Australian Youth Climate Coalition Power Shift Summit in Canberra. The survey findings were provided to the 2011 Council for further consideration.

## **Advice and consultations**

The Minister for Youth requested advice from the Council in relation to the NSW Standing Committee on Public Work's Inquiry into the effects of graffiti on public infrastructure. The Council researched this issue and met with Dr Kurt Iveson, Senior Lecturer in Urban Geography at Sydney University to discuss current issues. The Council wrote to the Minister highlighting the importance of programs that engage young people using aerosol art and the aesthetic benefits of utilising aerosol art to beautify public spaces.

The Council was consulted on the legislative review of the Commission for Children and Young People. Allison Waring, Secretariat for the Review, Communities NSW attended a meeting of the Council to consult with them on the possible legislative changes. The Council highlighted the importance of expanding working with children checks beyond the current scope, particularly to people who work with young people in a voluntary capacity.

The Council also was consulted about increasing youth participation at the Powerhouse Museum. Melanie Morris, Manager, Marketing and Communications and Janson Hews, Manager, Education Programs, Powerhouse Museum provided information to the Council about current patterns of youth attendance and opportunities for the Council to utilise the Museum's resources.

## **Subcommittees**

### **Youth Week in NSW Young People's Advisory Committee**

The NSW Youth Week Young People's Advisory Committee, is a subcommittee of the NSW Youth Advisory Council, which advises the Government on the coordination of Youth Week in NSW.

In New South Wales, Youth Week has evolved from its humble beginnings in 1989 where a small number of young people participated in a few local activities across metropolitan Sydney, into a large coordinated effort involving more than 900 local events and activities across the State.

Approximately 4,500 young people were involved in the planning and management of over 1,500 events and activities during Youth Week 2010. More than 172 000 young people participated in the activities and events.

Youth Week provides young people throughout the State with an opportunity to participate in their communities through events, programs, forums and debates. It is organised by young people, for young people.

## **Meetings with Government Ministers**

In 2010 the Council met with the Hon. Peter Primrose, MLC, Minister for Youth to discuss the issues outlined above. The Council also met with the Hon. David Borger, MP, Minister for Roads to discuss the issue of young driver licensing restrictions.

## Council meetings

In 2010 the Council met on: 19 February; 6 and 7 April; 4 and 5 June; 7 and 8 July; 27 and 28 September; and 24 November. The Council met with the following people (in order of meeting):

<b>Jayne Paramor</b>	Policy Advisory to the NSW Minister for Youth
<b>Tim O'Halloran</b>	Chief of Staff to the NSW Minister for Youth
<b>Meredith Turnbull</b>	Establishment Director, Australian Youth Affairs Coalition
<b>Reynato Reodica</b>	Executive Officer, Youth Action and Policy Association
<b>Helen Reynolds</b>	Senior Policy Officer, Homelessness Unit, Housing NSW
<b>Fiona Baikie</b>	Senior Policy Officer, Youth Affairs, Communities NSW
<b>Susan Calvert</b>	Acting Director, Strategy and Project Delivery, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
<b>Nicholas Lewis</b>	Strategy and Project Delivery Unit, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
<b>Hayley Reay</b>	Strategy and Project Delivery Unit, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
<b>Dr Kurt Iveson</b>	Senior Lecturer in Urban Geography at Sydney University
<b>Allison Waring</b>	Secretariat, Review of the Commission for Children and Young People Act, Communities NSW
<b>Kim Bush</b>	Youth Services Coordinator, Eurobodalla Shire Council
<b>Paul Lennox</b>	Manager Student Behaviour and Attendance, Student Welfare Directorate, Department of Education and Training
<b>Kate Lovelace</b>	Coordinator Student Health, Student Welfare Directorate, Department of Education and Training
<b>Janson Hews</b>	Manager, Education Programs, Powerhouse Museum
<b>Melanie Morris</b>	Manager, Marketing and Communications, Powerhouse Museum
<b>Kay Dunne</b>	Manager, Policy and Corporate Strategy, Communities NSW
<b>Bronwyn Ledgard</b>	Higher Education Directorate, Department of Education and Training
<b>Amanda McKenzie</b>	National Director, Australian Youth Climate Coalition
<b>Louise Ruddock</b>	Senior Policy Officer, Policy and Reform Division, Communities NSW
<b>Paul Sabatier</b>	Senior Project Officer, Volunteering Unit, Communities NSW

## Committees

The Council was represented on the following committees in 2010:

- Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health Advisory Board
- NSW Fair Trading Money Stuff Competition Judging Panel
- Police Commissioner's Advisory Council on Culturally Responsive Policing
- Student Volunteering Program Reference Group
- Young Offenders Advisory Council
- Young People in Emergency Service Forum Committee
- Youth Health Policy Reference Group
- Youth Health Priority Taskforce
- Youth Week in NSW Young People's Advisory Committee

## Conferences, Seminars and Forums

Council members presented and/or facilitated at the following conferences, seminars, forums and meetings:

- NSW School Representative Council – new 2010 members meeting
- NSW Youth Strategy student consultation
- Youth Action and Policy Association Youth Conference 2010

Council members attended the following conferences, seminars, forums and meetings:

- 2010 Australian Youth Climate Coalition Powershift Summit, Canberra
- Australian Youth Led Conference
- Community Consultation on Culturally Responsive Policing
- Unsung Heroes NAIDOC Week event

## Training

Council members undertook the following training:

- Facilitation Skills
- Supporting facilitators



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