



MELBOURNE CITYMISSION REVIEW OF THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVE (YEETI)

Using YEETI to Assist Young People

December 2006

This review was undertaken by David Crawford, YEETI Project Worker, Melbourne Citymission

Acknowledgements

The purpose of this review was to identify the impact and outcomes for the programs and young people participating in the YEETI.

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

Homelessness Service System

The Federal and State government jointly fund the Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program (SAAP). In Victoria the SAAP Housing Service System consists of 113 specific youth targeted services that include: 18 refuges, 7 Transitional Housing Management programs, 83 providing transitional support, 20 providing Adolescent Community Placement and 13 agencies providing mediation and reconciliation services.

In Victoria, the Office of Housing (OoH) also funds the Transitional Housing Management program (THM) to assist people in housing crisis to establish or maintain appropriate, secure and sustainable accommodation. The THM program provides Housing Information and Referral (HIR), Recurring Homelessness assessment for the OoH and 3,400 THM properties.

SAAP services and THM programs distribute \$6.3 million through the Housing Establishment Fund (HEF) to assist people accessing or maintaining accommodation.

Client Profile and Issues

In 2001-02 the Victorian SAAP data reported that of the 29 000 people who accessed the Homelessness Service System 38% were under 25 years of age. (Victorian Government Department of Human Services 2002, p. 7). This data also highlighted that 7% had gained employment and 4% had commenced study on exit. Employment, education and training impact directly on accessing and maintaining housing and can offer sustainable pathways from Homelessness. It is therefore important the HSS consider integrating employment, education and training goals at both strategic planning and case planning stages in their work.

Under the Victorian Homelessness Strategy (VHS) 'Directions for Change' (2002), the Victorian Government committed to the development of a Youth Homelessness Action Plan (YHAP) to ensure the needs of homeless young people under 25 years of age were being met. Four key areas for improvement were identified:

1. Developing preventative approaches
2. Strengthening pathways to independence. Particularly in the areas of:
 - Education, Employment and Training
 - Young People Leaving Care
 - Long Term Housing
3. Developing the HSS. Areas for development included:
 - Access and Service Pathways
 - Early Intervention and Family Reconciliation
 - Crisis Accommodation and Support
 - Transitional Accommodation and Support
 - Rural Service Responses
4. Responding Effectively to Client Needs. Further development of service system responses to particular groups is required including:
 - Young People with Complex Needs
 - Unaccompanied Young People
 - Indigenous Young People

- *Children and Families*
- *Same Sex Attracted Young People*
- *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities*

Creating Connections: The Youth Homeless Action Plan Stage 2 2006-2010 (2006) states an intention to “actively address the link between homelessness and unemployment, as well as homelessness and disengagement from education and training“ (p. 12). Action 7 of the report is to maintain YHAP first stage themes with the continuation of the current funded initiatives to be determined by formal evaluations (p. 11).

Youth Employment, Education and Training Initiative

In August 2003, Melbourne Citymission supported, by the Maribryngong Local Learning Employment Network (LLEN), received funding from the Department of Human Services for an early initiative under the VHS. The Linking Young People into Employment Project (LYPIE) was established in the Western Metropolitan region to strengthen links and co-ordination between youth housing and employment support programs to provide improved education, training and employment pathways for homeless young people. The establishment of the LYPIE project was an important forerunner to the YEETI program.

The Youth Employment Education and Training Initiative (YEETI) is a YHAP first stage initiative that aims to directly assist young people to develop their own vision and a workable individual plan to participate in employment education and training and thereby move towards independent living. Agencies are able to access YEETI brokerage funds to purchase activities, equipment and provide subsidies that directly support a young person to effectively access, participate and/or maintain employment education and training.

SAAP providers across the State link young people into the YEETI according to the following criteria:

- Aged between 15 - 24 years
- Homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Not in sustainable employment
- Have experienced long term difficulties in maintaining stable accommodation and overcoming barriers to participation in employment, education and training
- Have high support needs

The targets for the YEETI program funded to 30 June 2007 are as follows:

- A minimum 165 young people to participate in the employment, education and training programs through utilisation of the YEETI packages. A total of 1273 YEETI applications for funding were recorded at the end of December 2006.
- A minimum 30% of those assisted are to come from rural Victoria. Programs in rural regions made 25% of all applications, which compares favourably to SAAP NDCA (Victoria 2004 - 05), which records 22% of all clients being in rural regions.
- Distribution of packages to reflect the gender profile of Victorian young people aged 15 to 24 (50% female, 50% male). The gender of young people granted funding was 60% females to 40% males..
- Young people who are leaving or have been in the care of the State, from both Child Protection and Juvenile Justice, will be given high priority in this target group
- Compliment resources for existing system
- Integrated packages and case plan approach

Financial Assistance Currently Available to Young People in HSS

Young people engaged in the Homeless Service System (HSS) have limited access to funds outside of YEETI. Financial sources for young people that are homeless, or at risk of homelessness are:

- *Job Placement, Employment and Training* (JPET) have 10% of the designated funding allocated to brokerage. The JPET program is not evenly distributed across the state. The average brokerage funding per client is between \$120 - \$200 per client over the 6 - 12 month engagement period.
- *School Focused Youth Service* (SFYS) has approximately \$45,000 per annum available for group work projects in school networks consisting of approximately 40-60 schools. In some areas a total of \$5,000 is available for distribution amongst individual students in the school networks.
- *Local Learning and Employment Networks* (LLEN) may provide limited funding for pilot projects.
- *Job Networks* can provide \$500 to \$3000 to an individual jobseeker if the young person is assessed as having 'high needs'. The amount of funding available depends on the provider contract and the number of young people assessed as a 'high needs' in that area.
- *Federal Government Apprentice Tool Allowance* of \$800 is available through Centrelink. Apprentices may also be eligible to apply for a Health Care card to gain concessions.
- *State Government Housing Establishment Fund* (HEF) distributes \$6.3 m to assist with accessing or maintaining accommodation through SAAP and THM agencies.

Description of the YEETI Model

YEETI has two types of funding.

The large grants known as Managing Personal Futures Packages are available via four rounds each year that are assessed by an independent panel. The YEETI Panel consists of representatives from the HSS, Employment Education Training sector, Department of Human Services (OoH) and Melbourne Citymission staff. To date 8 rounds have been completed. The average funding amount for this type of grant is approximately \$3300. For the purpose of this report the Managing Personal Futures Packages will be referred to as Large Grants.

The small grants known as Discretionary funds were introduced to provide a quicker response to the immediate needs of clients. Discretionary funds were capped at \$500 until June 2006 when they were increased to \$1,000. This funding is available on a one off basis. For the purpose of this report the Discretionary funding will be referred to as Small Grants

In response to the large amount of evidence generated from applications across the state, an Advisory committee consisting of representatives from HSS, Employment Education Training sector, Department of Human Services (OoH), Victoria University and Melbourne Citymission staff has been established to consider the broader program development and policy opportunities.

YEETI Program Review

In April 2006, the OoH agreed to expand the YEETI brief by funding consultation with the sector regarding the impact of the YEETI in relation to young people and broader sector development. Melbourne Citymission engaged a project worker for 9 months to undertake data analysis, consultation and a range of capacity building activities.

This Program Review is the second of four phases Melbourne Citymission is undertaking to review the impact and effectiveness of the YEETI

Phase 1 - Applicant Data: Dr Robyn Broadbent from Victoria University completed a number of reports to identify the characteristics of young people applying for YEETI assistance and how this assistance is being utilised.

Phase 2 - Program Review: Investigated the impact of YEETI assistance by surveying programs that utilised YEETI funding.

Phase 3 - Service User Review: Investigated the impact of YEETI by conducting a series of focus groups of service users that had received YEETI assistance.

Phase 4 - Forums: Report on findings and undertake sector development activities

1.2. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this review was to identify the impact and outcomes for the services and young people participating in the YEETI. This was to be achieved through consulting service providers regarding the usefulness of YEETI funds on the young person's vocational or employment pathway.

The Program Review will be used to:

- Document the effectiveness of YEETI.
- Identify issues in accessing YEETI funds and gaps in its use.
- Assist understanding of needs, issues and barriers faced by homeless young people accessing employment, education and training.
- Advocate for policy and structural changes.
- Identify opportunities for program and resource development

Research Question

The research question for this review was: *Is the YEETI assisting agencies to meet the employment education and training needs of Young People in HSS?*

This research question investigated and discussed the impact of YEETI assistance for clients and programs using the following sub-questions:

1. *Are the YEETI grant packages useful in enabling young people to develop pathways into employment, education and training?*
2. *What are the outcomes for clients receiving YEETI funding?*
3. *What is the impact of the YEETI grant packages for agencies assisting young people?*
4. *Has the YEETI strengthened agency links to employment, education and training?*

1.3. Method

A small working group assisted the YEETI project worker in establishing the objectives and method for this Program Review. In formulating the sample and survey, a pilot survey was sent to six programs that received Large Grants in Rounds 5 and 6. This pilot drew attention to the time factor in Large Grants being utilised, as Round 6 grants in the pilot survey had not yet been used. Clients were still purchasing items and waiting for courses to begin. The working group decided to survey both Large and Small Grants to increase the survey numbers and acknowledge that funding was often utilised for similar reasons.

All 76 Large Grants from Round 5 in February 2006 were sent a survey, which covered 37 programs across the State. As 314 applications received Small Grant funding between Jan - June 2006, applications were randomly selected when more than two applications had been approved for a program. The Small Grant surveys targeted 132 applicants from 80 programs across the State. In total 208 surveys were distributed to SAAP workers in 87 programs across Victoria. Due to the high use of YEETI and some services designating a staff member responsibility for applications for their program, many workers were sent more than one application to complete.

Part one of the survey was to be completed by the author of the YEETI application as the review sought information on pathways, usefulness and benefits of funding for a specific applicant. If the original worker was not available, another team member or line manager was asked to complete the survey.

Part two of the survey was to be completed in consultation with the program's team and line manager to provide the program's perspective on the usefulness of YEETI to the Homelessness Service System. The questions in this section sought to identify gaps and barriers to accessing employment, education and training that could be addressed by improvements to YEETI, the HSS and employment, education and training sectors. Fewer responses were recorded in Part two, as this section was to be completed once per program and considerable overlap of responses occurred between these questions. Information has been organised into key themes and responses were cross-referenced to ensure the same point was not also recorded at another question in this section by the program.

The information collected was collated using Excel and SPSS..

Note: Some agencies accessing YEETI funding have more than one program and these may operate in different regions, with different management structures, practice and targets. This report therefore makes a distinction between programs and an agency.

Ethics and Principles of Research

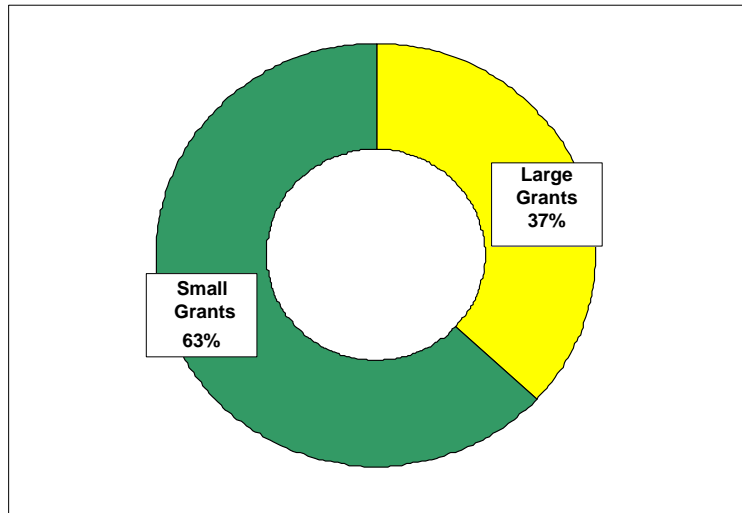
This project met the requirements of Melbourne Citymission's research ethics process. The survey responses were kept confidential and tracked by application number for administering survey returns. Applicants, workers and programs that accessed YEETI funding are not identified in the reporting of this Review. This Program Review will be made publicly available at www.YEETI.org.au.

2. FINDINGS

2.1. Profile of Sample

From a total distribution of 208 surveys, 81 surveys were completed and returned. Diagram 1 shows that these responses came from 30 (37%) Large Grant applicants and 51 (63%) Small Grant applicants.

Diagram 1: Survey responses according to funding type

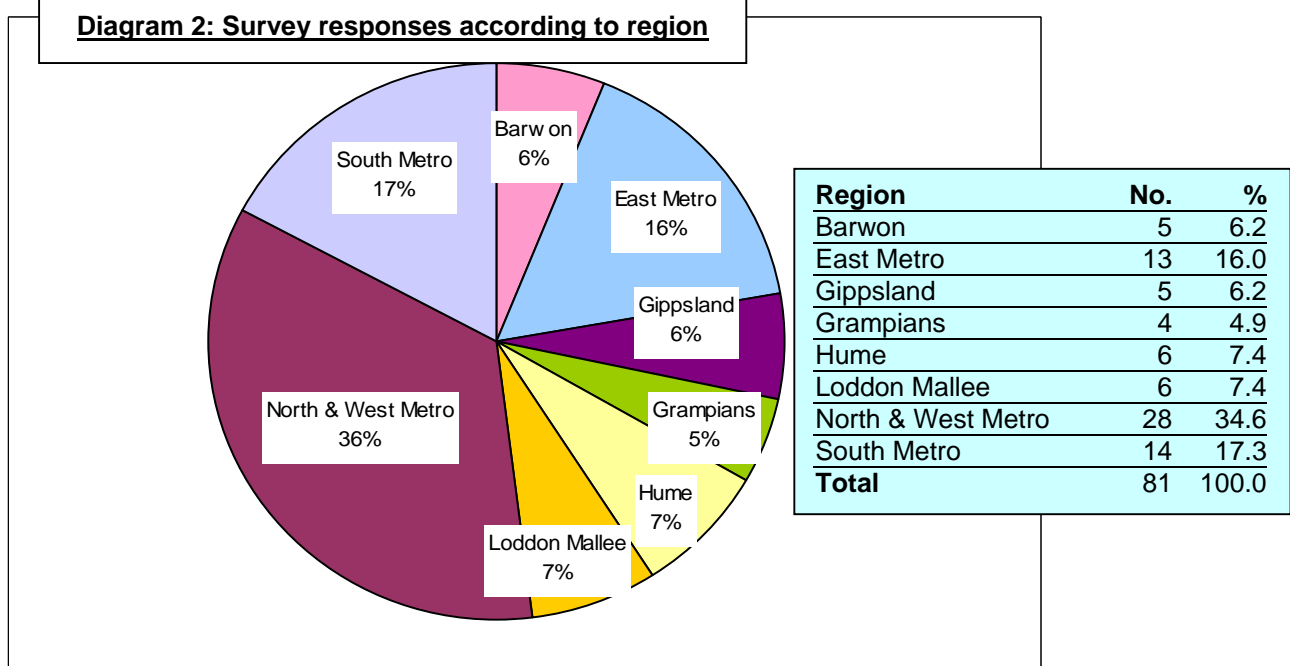


This number of returned surveys provided a 39% response rate to each of the funding types as well as 39% overall. This result contained 48 (55%) of the 87 programs covered by the survey.

When clients were reported to have left their program, workers were encouraged to still complete the survey. Several of these were received, however 10 surveys reported in this manner were not returned and therefore not counted in survey results. Reasons given for these clients no longer being in that program were imprisonment, transience and client withdrawal. Staff turnover in the sector is often high and likely to have contributed to the response rate.

Diagram 2 show the survey responses according to the region where clients received a funding package.

Diagram 2: Survey responses according to region



2.2. Impact of YEETI for Young People in Developing Pathways into Education, Employment and Training

Employment

Workers were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the impact YEETI had on the young person's case plan with employment and their responses are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Impact of YEETI on accessing and maintaining employment

Accessing Employment	No.	Percent	Maintaining Employment	No.	Percent
1 - Low	4	4.9	1 - Low	8	9.9
2	3	3.7	2	5	6.2
3	6	7.4	3	3	3.7
4	16	19.8	4	7	8.6
5 - High	18	22.2	5 - High	7	8.6
Not Applicable	17	21.0	Not Applicable	30	37.0
Not Completed	17	21.0	Not Completed	21	25.9
Total	81	100.0	Total	81	100.0

From the 81 returned surveys YEETI had a significant impact on:

- 34 clients (42%) accessing employment
- 14 clients (17%) maintaining employment

The majority stated accessing employment was not applicable (21%) or not recorded (21%) and maintaining employment was not applicable (37%) or not recorded (26%).

“YEETI funding has provided (the young person) with confidence to attend job interviews, knowing that she looks presentable and socially desirable for an office position.”

Education

Workers were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the impact YEETI had on the young person's case plan with education and Table 2 outlines their responses.

Table 2: Impact of YEETI on accessing and maintaining education

Accessing Education	No.	Percent	Maintaining Education	No.	Percent
1 - Low	1	1.2	1 - Low	2	2.5
2	2	2.5	2	6	7.4
3	5	6.2	3	3	3.7
4	12	14.8	4	12	14.8
5 - High	28	34.6	5 - High	33	40.7
Not Applicable	17	21.0	Not Applicable	15	18.5
Not Completed	16	19.8	Not Completed	10	12.3
Total	81	100.0	Total	81	100.0

From the 81 returned surveys YEETI had a significant impact on:

- 40 clients (49%) accessing education
- 45 clients (56%) maintaining education

“Continued education and the part time employment that flowed from this would not have been possible without YEETI funding.”

Training

Workers were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the impact YEETI had on the young person's case plan in relation to training and these responses are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Impact of YEETI on accessing and maintaining training

Accessing Training	No.	Percent	Maintaining Training	No.	Percent
1 - Low	4	4.9	1 - Low	4	4.9
2	4	4.9	2	4	4.9
3	5	6.2	3	5	6.2
4	4	4.9	4	5	6.2
5 - High	15	18.5	5 - High	17	21.0
Not Applicable	29	35.8	Not Applicable	27	33.3
Not Completed	20	24.7	Not Completed	19	23.5
Total	81	100.0	Total	81	100.0

From the 81 returned surveys YEETI had a significant impact on:

- 19 clients (23%) accessing training
- 22 clients (27%) maintaining training

The majority stated accessing training was not applicable (36%) or was not recorded (25%) and maintaining training was not applicable (33%) or not recorded (24%).

“Initially this client was able to start school and feel normal like everybody else. Unfortunately, she realized that she didn't 'fit' into this environment and had trouble making friends. She left school and became a job seeker. Since she has had 3 casual jobs and is currently doing a traineeship in small business management in hospitality.”

2.3. Outcomes for Clients Receiving YEETI Funding

Housing

Workers were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the impact YEETI had on the young person's case plan with obtaining and establishing Housing. Table 4 outlines their responses.

Table 4: Impact of YEETI on obtaining and establishing housing

Obtaining Housing	No.	Percent	Establishing Housing	No.	Percent
1 - Low	14	17.3	1 - Low	11	13.6
2	2	2.5	2	2	2.5
3	2	2.5	3	4	4.9
4	3	3.7	4	3	3.7
5 - High	6	7.4	5 - High	7	8.6
Not Applicable	36	44.4	Not Applicable	34	42.0
Not Completed	18	22.2	Not Completed	20	24.7
Total	81	100.0	Total	81	100.0

From the 81 returned surveys YEETI had a significant impact on 9 clients (11%) obtaining housing and 10 clients (12%) establishing housing. Some respondents recorded other ways YEETI funding had assisted was through establishing housing, finding security and relocation of accommodation.

Personal Development

Workers were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the impact YEETI had on the young person's case plan with personal development. Workers responses are outlined in Table 5.

Table 5: Impact of YEETI on personal development

Personal Development	No.	Percent
1 - Low	2	2.5
2	--	0.0
3	7	8.6
4	11	13.6
5 - High	45	55.6
Not Applicable	4	4.9
Not Completed	12	14.8
Total	81	100.0

From the 81 returned surveys YEETI had a significant impact on the personal development of 56 young people (69%).

Other Impacts of YEETI Funding on a Case Plan

Survey questions 2j and 3 both considered other impacts of YEETI for clients. Survey question 2j invited workers to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 other impacts YEETI had on the young person's case plan. Although only a few respondents completed this question it is important to note that ten rated YEETI funding as having a high impact on case plans. Seven responses indicated this question was

not applicable. Other ways YEETI contributed to the young person's case plan concerning employment, education and training were more extensively recorded by 69 responses to question 3.

The *other impacts* recorded in both questions have been combined in Table 6. Responses were cross-referenced to ensure the same impact was not record twice for the same client. Responses can be grouped into the key themes of assisting young people in developing pathways, self-esteem and well being, connecting to the community and financial assistance.

Table 6: Other ways YEETI has contributed to the young person's case plan

Contribution of YEETI	Number of Clients*
Commenced / Continued Education	22
Assisted in Developing Pathways	20
Developing Confidence, Self-esteem and Self-worth	19
Financial Assistance	16
Assisted Well Being	11
Connecting to the Community	10
Accessing Employment, including looking for Work (3)	11
Assisted with Housing	6
Allowed Support of Dependants	4
Provided means of Transport	3
Access Child Care	2
Address Personal Barriers	2
Decreased Anxiety and Stress	2
Provided meaningful Activity	1
Access Training	1
Independent Living Skills	1
Assisted Stability of Family Relationships	1
Assisted Relationship between Program and Client	1

*Note: Ways YEETI contributed to clients case plans exceed no of responses, as clients may have been assisted in more than one way.

A quarter of the programs reported YEETI contributed to 20 clients developing pathways into employment, education and training by assisting them to discover their passion, pathway, motivation and identify goals. This also includes two important outcomes of a client developing their own business and another ceasing criminal activity.

“This funding has provided this person with means of succeeding and following his dream of becoming a string maker for instruments. (The client) is hoping to develop a guitar making business in the future and the tools that he was funded for certainly assisted him to begin that dream.”

YEETI funding assisted confidence, self-esteem or self worth to improve for 19 clients. Well-being, security or independence improved for 11 clients. YEETI funding also assisted clients to address personal barriers, reduce their anxiety and stress and develop independent living skills.

“(The client) is a trainee employed by this organisation where she was previously a foster-care client. Her confidence and feeling of being a team member was greatly assisted by being able to afford uniform worn by most of the admin team.”

YEETI assisted young people to be more independent but also to participate in their community. YEETI had an important impact in assisting clients with social interaction, community participation, the relationship with a service and the stability of a family relationship. Young people received considerable help in their education setting, with YEETI reportedly assisting in building friendships and integration with other students.

“The training that the young person did whilst they were here and that was funded through YEETI really helped the young person with his confidence to participate more in the community. Although the YEETI is targeted to assist a young person's life via funding that contributes to employment, education and training opportunities, it has a more holistic effect. It affects all areas of the young person's life.”

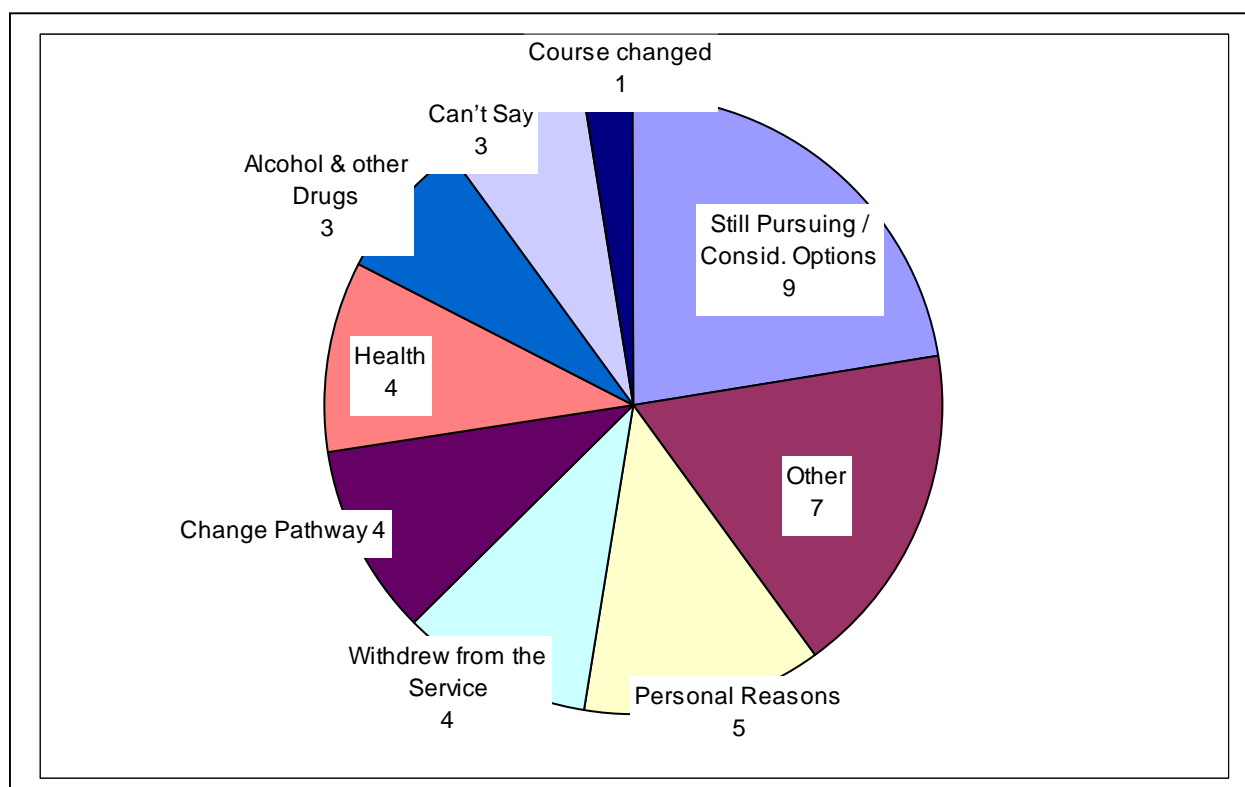
It was reported that YEETI contributed to relieving the financial pressures by assisting with education costs for 14 clients and avoiding debt for 2 clients. It was reported that YEETI also assisted clients to access childcare, support dependents and develop financial independence. Assisting independent travel to school and work through the purchase of a bicycle and MET tickets were other ways YEETI was relieving financial pressure on clients.

“YEETI has provided the stability to assist the young person to maintain secure accommodation thus allowing her to enroll in and engage with her tertiary study. This funding contributed to the young person feeling that they fitted in with their peers. It was not obvious to these peers that the young person was disadvantaged as she could afford to have a computer to complete her work. This led to the young person continuing their studies.”

Reasons goals were not achieved by the young person

Workers reported that goals were not achieved by 25 clients (31%). Diagram 3 shows a breakdown of these reasons.

Diagram 3: Reasons goals were not achieved by the young person (Question 4)



Respondents recorded that goals were not achieved by some clients who had received YEETI funding due to these young people still considering their options or not wanting to complete the particular pathway described in the application. Workers also described a range of support issues including personal reasons, health issues and alcohol and other drug misuse that meant these clients were unable to achieve some goals. Four clients were reported as having withdrawn from the

service. Other reasons clients did not achieve the goals of the YEETI application were reported as failing a driving test, legal reasons, moved to another area, relocated interstate and unable to find a suitable work experience placement.

“(The client) was unable to overcome her drug and alcohol issues and suffered a relapse. Because of this and numerous personal issues her education suffered and she was unable to continue the course.”

Barriers for the young person that were not overcome by YEETI assistance

This question sought to build on individual issues and identify systemic barriers to employment, education and training not overcome by YEETI assistance despite the young person working towards their goals. Barriers for the young person nominated by the survey were outlined by 33 respondents and are listed in Table 7. Some respondents stated that YEETI had met all the needs or overcome all barriers for 16 clients nominated as the focus for their survey. Four clients were reported as requiring additional and ongoing support needs, with some respondents identifying plans to reapply for additional funding. Barriers not overcome by the YEETI grants for clients in the sample can be grouped as support, family, housing, transport, employment and education.

Table 7: Barriers not overcome by YEETI assistance packages

Barriers	Number of Clients*
Support Issues	20
Family Relationships	7
Accommodation	5
Employment	5
Additional Ongoing Needs Identified and Plan to Reapply	4
Lack of Transport	3
Lack of Education	2
Delay in Accessing Items for Job Interview	1
Childcare	1
YEETI Not Approved	1
YEETI Met All Needs	16

*Note: Barriers not overcome by YEETI exceed no of responses, as clients may have faced more than one barrier.

It was reported that YEETI did not overcome support issues for some clients with personal issues (8), mental health (4), alcohol and other drug dependence (3), independent living skills (2), criminal activity, social skills, lack of direction and maturity, trauma of past experiences and low self-confidence one client. Access to childcare was a reported barrier for a client.

“There are still mental health barriers that could become problematic to the case plan and to this client's ability to achieve her goals for employment in the future.”

It was reported that YEETI did not overcome family issues for seven clients with family relationship or reconciliation issues.

“At this stage the only barrier not overcome is reconciliation with her family.”

It was reported that YEETI funding did not overcome lack of housing for five clients

“Client still challenged by housing issues. YEETI funding unable to alleviate these problems.”

It was reported that YEETI did not overcome transport issues for two clients in rural regions due to distance and after hours service. Lack of services in the outer metro region was also reported as a barrier for another client

It was reported that YEETI did not overcome employment issues for five clients. Barriers reported were obtaining employment (2), assistance with a Job Network member, Visa restricting employment, difficulty obtaining information about services or other options for employment, education and training for a client.

“Unfortunately even though the young person participated in the training and he really enjoyed it he has not found work in the area.”

It was reported that YEETI did not overcome education issues on the lack of formal education, literacy and tutoring for a client.

2.4. The Impact of YEETI Packages for Programs

Importance of YEETI Funding for Case Plans

Question 1 requested workers rate on a scale of 1 to 5 how important overall the use of YEETI had been to assist the nominated young person with their case plan. It was reported that YEETI had been important or very important to assist the young person with their case plan by 85% of respondents. These responses are recorded in Table 8.

Table 8: Overall Importance of YEETI

Overall Importance of YEETI	Frequency	Percentage
1 - not at all important	-	0.0
2	-	0.0
3	6	7.4
4	21	25.9
5 - very important	48	59.3
Can't Say	6	7.4
Total	81	100.0

Many unprompted positive comments on the value of YEETI were made by programs in Part two of the survey. 17 programs reported that YEETI was readily accessible and YEETI program staff were responsive. The need for additional financial resources for clients in the HSS was strongly supported by programs. It was reported that YEETI grants provided:

- positive outcomes and opportunities that greatly benefited young people (9)
- valuable resources that fills the gap for homeless young people (9)
- the only way for clients to study (2)

Other comments included that Centrelink payments are not enough for employment, education and training, YEETI grants improved living conditions for young people and allowed limited SAAP funding to be used for other client needs. Further positive comments noted that increasing small funding packages to \$1000 had improved assistance to clients. Two programs also reported that YEETI grants had identified the need to review and change their own administration processes.

Improving the YEETI - Program Feedback

Reasons young people in the HSS do not access YEETI funds suggested by programs are listed in Table 9.

Table 9: Reasons YEETI was not being accessed by young people

Reasons YEETI not accessed	Number of Programs*
Lack Knowledge of YEETI	20
Impact of Client Support Issues	12
Short Time Service is Involved	11
Transient Client Group	8
Lack of Secure Housing	8
Housing Workers Ability / Lack of Time	7
Commitment of Young Person	4
Clients Under 15	4
Lack of Planning or Support with EET	3
Poorly Timed Courses	2

*Note: Programs often recorded more than one reason YEETI was not accessed.

The main reason suggested for not accessing funding through the program was the lack of knowledge of YEETI by both young people and services. Programs reported that client support issues often impacted on their involvement in further education or gaining employment. Support issues identified were language, alcohol and other drugs, volatile relationships, pregnant or parenting responsibilities and accessing childcare. Several programs reported that clients sometimes lacked motivation or commitment.

YEETI grants were difficult to access for young people connected to programs with a limited support period or involvement with clients. The short period of involvement meant clients were sometimes not ready, able or willing to engage. Programs reported that the lack of secure housing meant clients were in crisis and housing was the main priority. Loss of contact and transience of clients also made accessing YEETI difficult for some programs in the sample. Planning for young people in crisis was reported to be tough and this is understandable given associated distress, significant support issues, transience and importance of obtaining stable accommodation.

A small number of programs suggested a young person's access to YEETI was based on the skill of their workers. Some reported that SAAP and housing workers did not have the confidence, ability or time to complete YEETI applications. The lack of planning and support provided to young people with employment, education and training was also suggested as a factor in accessing these grants. Not having an allocated worker was another barrier suggested by a program. Other suggested reasons for not accessing funding were clients not fitting YEETI criteria, funds not fitting timelines, obtaining quotes, obtaining other funds for housing, not having an allocated worker and. Not having funding to assist with setting up purchased items, the ongoing IT support and maintenance of items was also reported as a reason YEETI was not accessed by young people.

Programs suggested a range of improvements to the YEETI program. Table 10 records responses suggested to assist programs or the sector to make more use of YEETI.

Table 10: Assistance required to make more use of YEETI

Assistance / Changes Suggested	Number of Programs*
Quicker Response Time	9
Increase Profile of YEETI	8
Expand to Include Non Housing Services	4
Fund Group Work / Projects	4
Increase Frequency of Funding Rounds	5
Flexible Criteria	3
Provide Ideas & Process on Website	2
Provide Administration / Support Costs	2
Other	6

*Note: Programs often suggested more than one way to improve the YEETI program.

Increasing the profile of YEETI through improved sector engagement and more promotion was a key suggestion to assisting wider use of YEETI. A quicker response to applications was also a main theme with programs suggesting direct access to funding once approved, flexibility in payment options and grants sent directly by the YEETI program. It was also reported that the application process was time consuming, involved too much paperwork and delayed responses to clients needs. Other suggested improvements to YEETI included not requiring information on quotes under \$20, keeping the application pro-forma consistent or providing clear information regarding any changes. Two programs suggested YEETI needed to resource the sector by including both application ideas and a clear application process on the YEETI website.

A number of improvements were suggested to the YEETI grants. Several programs suggested increasing the frequency and improve the timing of Large Grant funding rounds. One program suggested allowing more than one Small Grant application or allowing repeat Small Grant

applications to the value of the full \$1,000. Funding group work or small scale projects and the costs associated with administering and supporting a YEETI application were also suggested as important ways YEETI could improve assistance to the sector.

Programs were keen that the YEETI model be broadened or replicated to enable other clients in the HSS or young people in the community to access employment, education and training. Common suggestions included expanding the YEETI to other non-housing services, to all disadvantaged young people and increasing the age range of clients in HSS.

One program suggested that opening YEETI funding to services other than housing would promote cross sector collaboration. Other responses raised difficulties in organising YEETI funding with schools and Centrelink not recognising lifeskill activities funded by YEETI as compliant with Mutual Obligation activities. These responses touched on the need for the greater collaboration between sectors to make more use of YEETI and assist with pathways into employment, education and training.

2.5. Strengthening Links to Employment, Education and Training

The links between the HSS and the Employment Education and Training sector are critical for exchanging information, developing pathways planning skills and for opportunities to co -case manage or collaborate for improved outcomes for young people. Unfortunately this survey only achieved a limited response in relation to cross sector engagement and collaboration. Further work will be undertaken in phase 4 of the YEETI Program Review to identify sector relationships.

Many of the YEETI applications have demonstrated positive engagement between HSS and employment, education and training providers such as Schools, TAFES, Adult Community Education providers and the JPET program across the state. Some applications were completed in partnerships between SAAP agencies and employment, education and training programs with the SAAP service as the funds holder. Comments by respondents identified difficulties in liaising and coordinating YEETI funding with schools, Centrelink and the Job Network. These difficulties suggest that further work needs to occur to enhance the connection between Housing Support Services, schools, TAFES and other State and Commonwealth employment education and training programs.

3. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

3.1. Strengths - Meeting the Needs of Young People

Usefulness of YEETI in Developing Pathways into Employment, Education and Training

This review found that the YEETI has had a definite impact for young people in the HSS. 85% of respondents indicated that the YEETI been important or very important to assist young people with their case plan. A quarter of responses (20) reported YEETI contributed to young people in the sample developing pathways into employment, education and training by assisting them to discover their passion, pathway, motivation and identify goals.

Packages were most useful in assisting the young people to access or maintain education. YEETI funding was very important for young people developing pathways into education with forty or half of all respondents reporting it was very significant for young people accessing education courses. Over half of the respondents recorded YEETI funding was very significant for 45 young people in maintaining their education..

YEETI funding was having an impact in assisting clients to develop pathways into training. A quarter of respondents recorded YEETI funding was very useful for young people both accessing and maintaining training. Training is usually an apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship course. YEETI funding was significant for young people developing pathways into employment, having a significant impact on 34 clients (42%) accessing employment and 14 clients maintaining employment. Directly obtaining employment through YEETI was an excellent outcome that will provide these young people with a wage, networks and skills.

Accessing employment, education and training will provide one of the best opportunities to divert these young people from the HSS and enable them to maintain housing in the future. Workers from over 115 programs and across the State have spent considerable time and expertise in utilising this funding to support homeless or at risk young people. This impact is significant given the profile of this client group and their support needs.

Improved Outcomes with Accommodation, Community Connections, Personal Development and Less Financial Pressure

This Review found that as well as assisting with employment, education and training, YEETI was providing many other outcomes for young people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness. Outcomes identified by this Review were improved accommodation, community connections, personal development and reduction in financial pressure. These other outcomes of the YEETI grants assisting providing both practical assistance and holistic development of the young people. These outcomes will assist in maintaining education and training, overcoming barriers to employment and providing support links that assist in prevention of homelessness.

Secure Accommodation

A tenth of respondents reported YEETI had a high impact for both obtaining and maintaining housing. YEETI assisted in establishing or the relocation of accommodation for young people in this client group.

Less Financial Pressure

All YEETI grants assist clients financial needs but it is important to acknowledge the meaning and feeling for individual service users. YEETI assistance relieved the financial pressures on young people. Financial assistance was used to support other household members, avoid debt, promote financial independence, fund child care and travel. These reinforce the value of flexibility in YEETI funding that is required to assist young peoples pathways.

Additional resources provided through YEETI grants are important in this client group overcoming the barriers of age and associated homelessness issues that restrict participation in employment, education and training. This is not to deny the existing skills and resourcefulness of young people, but recognises this client group's unequal starting position and lack of opportunities.

Personal Development

YEETI had an important impact on the personal development of young people, as recorded by the majority of respondents. It was reported that YEETI was having a high impact in many other ways including building friendships, childcare, independent living skills, reducing criminal activity and business development.

Eighteen workers reported their client's confidence, self-esteem and self worth improved due to YEETI assistance. Well-being, security or independence improved for 11 clients. YEETI funding also assisted clients to address personal barriers and reduce anxiety.

“(YEETI) assisted in building self-confidence and self esteem. It has also given this young woman a sense of accomplishment. The training also assisted this young woman to widen her career options and strengthen her motivation to find employment.”

Community Connections

YEETI assisted young people to be more independent and participate in their community. Improved social interaction, relationships between service and clients and stability of family were also attributed to YEETI assistance. Connection to local, peer and employment, education and training community's can also assist in building skills and resources to prevent and divert young people from homelessness.

“The young person has been able to shift his self-perception from 'I am a criminal' to 'I am a student'. He now thinks about things from a different perspective and recently when considering what to do to earn money his thoughts had changed from committing crime to getting a part time job as a kitchen hand. He is now employed and studying!! The young person has also formulated longer term goals around employment including starting his own private enterprise.”

3.2. Challenges

The Impact of YEETI Packages for Programs

Many workers reported YEETI was accessible, easy to use and responsive. The review highlighted the challenges of the sector and collected feedback to be considered for improvements to the YEETI program. These challenges reinforce the need to ensure YEETI funding is responsive and flexible across the state, while ensuring consistency and accountability for the large number of grants.

Transient Client Group

Accessing employment, education and training funding for this client group was difficult due to clients being transient, moving on quickly and maintaining contact. Many programs also reported that limited contact with a service also made connecting to employment, education and training difficult. Support in the Youth SAAP sector can range from one-off contact through a crisis service, a six-week stay in a youth refuge or support and a THM lease. The difficulty in planning with clients in crisis was also acknowledged. Secure housing has to be the main priority which means employment, education and training is a secondary concern.

“Likely to lose contact with young people between application and approval or approval and spending money.”

High Cost of Employment, Education and Training

The cost of employment, education and training is a major impediment for young people who are wanting to access or maintain a pathway whilst living independently.

“It has been quite incredible to see what difference a few thousand dollars can do for someone's life. The client who received the funding has changed so much since his initial contact with this agency and is now looking forward to his new career. The client is more motivated and confident and happy than he was prior to receiving the funding. Next time I have clients under 25 I will definitely talk to them about the YEETI program

“All taken into account, this fund is very good. It opens the opportunity for young homeless people to look at education or employment as a realistic goal. The small amount of money they receive from Centrelink is not enough to pay for their schooling or for other expense associate to employment or training.”

Engagement

Workers reported that clients are not always ready, able or willing to engage contact. Client support issues suggested by workers also made it difficult to access funds for employment, education and training. A worker recorded that YEETI had assisted the relationship between service and clients. It is commonly reported to the YEETI team that funding assists contact and clients remain more engaged with their overall case plans. YEETI and employment, education and training providers need to be quick and responsive to make the most of opportunities.

“Homeless young people are transient - they are forced by necessity to move on or move quickly to grab an opportunity when it's offered and don't or can't keep workers informed of contact details. Can't see any way of changing this.”

“A lot of young people seeking our assistance are in crisis. School, training and employment are usually not a priority at that stage in their life. They need to find stable accommodation, learn how to organise their budget, learn how to cook, clean, do their grocery shopping etc.

Meeting the Needs of Programs

Promotion

The profile of YEETI needs ongoing promotion across the State. Given that the operational funds for YEETI are concentrated in the administration of funds, the program needs to strengthen its collaboration with other YHAP initiatives, Housing Network Coordinators, peak bodies and other key stakeholders to ensure continued promotion. Using YEETI funding requires the HSS to develop knowledge and skills in the complex employment, education and training sector. Further promotion and development of resources required to achieve this across the State requires additional support and funding.

Application Process

Many programs reported that completing YEETI applications was time consuming, reporting was monotonous and a faster response was required by the YEETI program. The HSS utilises HEF, which is accessible and has set eligibility. Larger amounts of funding require more planning, management and greater accountability which can be both new and challenging for the sector. The survey identified the need for further professional development opportunities in relation to pathway options for young people, key contacts in the employment, education and training sectors the and development of funding applications.

It was not clear why some programs reported the YEETI funding process was straight forward while others suggested it was too difficult to use. Time to consider planning for employment, education and training is difficult for programs funded for short term and crisis work. Ensuring work is client centred will assist in directing priorities for the casework.

Surprisingly, respondents did not suggest dispersing YEETI funding into the regions or other alternative YEETI models, apart from suggestions on managing rounds and payment processes. This was noteworthy given the strengths and weaknesses of a centrally managed program. Possible explanations for this are not having a direct question in the survey, lack of confidence in the independence of this review or, as reported by many programs, YEETI is currently responsive and accessible in its current form.

The response time for providing YEETI funding is very important given the fixed support period of some services and transient nature of the client group. Time and process adds anxiety to young people who often require the resource to utilise in an immediate way. Although a number of programs recorded that YEETI required a faster response, this was balanced by reports that YEETI was accessible, easy to use and staff were responsive. The following quotes provide examples of greatly differing views of respondents.

“Our agency is already accessing YEETI funding with excellent results and our clients have benefited enormously with this funding. We have found the process easy and have no issues.”

“The only issue that I have with YEETI is that it can be quite time consuming to complete the whole process. I don't see how it could be made any faster though, and is a very useful tool to assist young people into education or employment”

Melbourne Citymission needs to review YEETI processing and consider possible options to improve efficiency. Current methods of paying approved YEETI funds require an invoice or receipt and then funds are paid by Melbourne Citymission's finance department by direct funds transfer or a cheque. Respondents suggested improvements required for YEETI were direct access to funding once approved, flexibility in payment options and grants sent directly by the YEETI program

Timing of Funding Rounds

Feedback from the survey suggested increasing, improving flexibility and timing of the Large Grants rounds. A number of issues need to be considered in relation to this suggestion. Firstly, it is difficult to time YEETI funding rounds given the differing educational timelines of university, TAFE and school terms. Secondly it is difficult to time rounds to suit an individual application. Thirdly, closure dates for Large Grants need to provide adequate time for panel members to assess the large volume of applications. Instituting more frequent rounds would reduce the volume of applications for each round but increase the difficulty in organizing the Panel. Currently Large Funding Package rounds occur four times a year supported by an open funding round of Small Grants to the value of \$1,000.

Administration Costs

Some programs in the sector have indicated their desire to build in administrative costs into the YEETI application. The fee would be utilised to cover costs associated with financial management, sourcing and purchasing funded items. Other suggestions to fund a position to assist with set up and maintain equipment in a statewide program would be cost prohibitive. The YEETI with the support of DHS has been clear the funds are only to be used for the benefit of the clients.

The work in submitting a YEETI application could also ensure work is client directed. Depending on abilities and maturity, clients should be allowed responsibility and opportunities to develop skills in completing their YEETI application. Tasks like organising quotes for example, can assist clients to develop independence. Other programs assess after market support when purchasing.

Further creativity and exploration is required to develop links with purchasing items and sourcing partnerships for support e.g. bulk purchasing of computers by YEETI and seeking ongoing support with volunteer networks, school or IT department. An examination of administration and financial processes by both Melbourne Citymission and programs may also improve efficiency reducing time and administration costs.

Employment, Education and Training Funding for Other Clients

A number of agencies suggested eligibility should be widened so YEETI was not limited to SAAP or Housing services with responses suggesting expanding program to young people who were under 15 years, 'disadvantaged' and those who were transient but outside the Housing Support System. At this stage YEETI remains focused on the target group established for young people engaged in services within the Victorian Housing Service System.

Project or Group Work

Several programs have requested the option to undertake group work and small scale projects incorporating educational, living skills and personal development as a preliminary step towards re-engagement with employment, education and training. Recognition and support is also required for SAAP programs already organising groups that promote living and social skills that aim to assist diversion from homelessness. These approaches have been recognised by the sector as a re-engagement and peer education tool, particularly when working with specific cultural groups. The proposal for group work or project funding provided through YEETI has been endorsed by DHS

Client Support

Several issues identified by programs as reasons young people in the HSS do not access YEETI funds were that housing workers were either not confident, did not have the ability or time to complete applications. The lack of planning or support to young people with employment, education and training and not having an allocated worker were also recorded. Professional development and the Homelessness Assistance Service Standards may address worker skill levels and provide assurance of quality services for clients.

Some programs identified that young people who were transient but did not have an allocated support worker in the Homelessness Service System may be prevented from accessing YEETI funds. The limited numbers of HIR workers at THM's submitting applications suggests an opportunity to develop stronger links with this part of the sector to enable homeless young people to access YEETI.

“Once they are more stable they can start envisaging their future and what they need to do to achieve those goals. For some, this can take a long time before they get to this point.”

3.3. Conclusion

YEETI was having a major impact by creating opportunities and demonstrating positive outcomes that greatly benefited clients. Responses described YEETI as a valuable resource that fills a gap for homeless young people, the only way for clients to study, provided a higher standard of living and prepared clients for work.

The YEETI is a valuable resource that was meeting the needs of programs in assisting clients with pathways into employment, education and training. In the context of the issues faced by homeless young people, difficulties in engagement for programs and barriers to employment, education and training, these results are notable. Difficulties reported in the application process were balanced by programs reporting that YEETI was accessible and staff were responsive. Further promotion, training and capacity building will assist in raising awareness of YEETI across the State. YEETI was also found to be assisting young people in acquiring secure accommodation, community connections, personal development and reducing financial pressure. These are enabling young people to complete further education, develop support links and obtain employment.

“YEETI funding has been a huge benefit to numerous clients who have access to both the large sums and the discretionary. I know at least 8 young people who continue to achieve their goals as a direct result of funding received by YEETI. I believe that with a combination of the funding and appropriate supports, young people can achieve their longer term goals.”

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Office of Housing to continue to fund the YEETI to strengthen access and positive outcomes for homeless young people, to further promote a holistic case management approach and strengthen collaboration between the related sectors.
2. The Office of Housing to continue to fund the YEETI to assist young people to develop pathways into employment, education and training that provide self-development and flexible approaches that allow their aspirations and dreams to be supported
3. Investigate a partnership with the Department of Education and Training to address the gap in accessing YEETI by those not connected to government housing programs. These young people are reported as the *hidden homeless* that are accessing employment, education and training without adequate support.
4. Explore possible collaborations with the Homelessness Service System, State Department of Education & Training and the Commonwealth Department of Employment & Work Place Relations with regard to program development and policy issues
5. YEETI to continue to work closely with related YHAP 1& 2 initiatives, Housing Network Coordinators, peak bodies and other stakeholder to continue to promote the initiative across the Victoria.
6. Increase resources for the 1 EFT funded position to strengthen the sector capacity building opportunities as evidenced through YEETI.
7. YEETI to liaise with the Office of Housing to discuss professional development opportunities to support the sector to fully engage in the planning development and administration of YEETI application and case plans.
8. Melbourne Citymission to review YEETI administration system to ensure an efficient and timely response of funding grants, whilst ensuring accountability to expenditure of funding.
9. Programs and Melbourne Citymission to share best practice regarding administering funds for clients.
10. YEETI to supporting and sourcing the sector to fund small scale projects and group work.

5. APPENDICES

5.1. Research Statement and Purpose (Survey Cover Letter)

PROGRAM REVIEW

Dear _____,

Melbourne Citymission is undertaking a review of how YEETI is working. This will include a survey of caseworkers.

Please take a few minutes to complete this brief survey regarding _____ application no. _____. The survey responses will be kept confidential and tracked by application number. Part 1 of the survey is to be completed by the service user's caseworker who completed the YEETI application. Where this is not possible, another team member or line manager can complete it. Part 2 of the survey seeks your programs perspective on YEETI, so where possible, complete these three questions in consultation with your team and line manager. Only complete PART 2 ONCE per program.

All programs that applied for YEETI Managing Personal Futures Packages in Round 5 and Discretionary Funding between 1/01/06 and 30/06/06 will be consulted. Applications have been randomly selected when more than one application was submitted by a program. This has been done to ensure a representative sample across the YEETI.

This project will meet the requirements of Melbourne Citymission's research ethics process. Young people, workers and programs that accessed YEETI funding will not be identified in the reporting of this Review. The Program Review will be made publicly available through the YEETI website and is part of four phases that will assist in providing feedback and enhancement of YEETI. For further information see www.YEETI.org.au.

This Review will be used to:

- Document the effectiveness of YEETI.
- Identify issues in accessing YEETI funds and gaps in its use.
- Assist understanding of needs, issues and barriers faced by homeless young people accessing Employment, Education and Training.
- Advocate for policy and structural changes.

Return by email to dcrawford@mcm.org.au in the next two weeks. If you have any further queries feel free to contact me on 9680-8249.

Thanks for your assistance,

David Crawford
YEETI Project Worker
Melbourne Citymission

5.2. YEETI Review - Program Review Survey Form

PART 1:

These questions seek your feedback on the usefulness of YEETI in assisting the specific young person related to the applicant number.

1. Overall how important has the use of YEETI been to assist this young person with their case plan ?

(√ Tick one response)

<i>Not at all</i>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<i>Very</i>
<i>important</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>important</i>

2. Indicate the impact of YEETI on the young person's case plan concerning Employment, Education and Training.

(√ Tick your rating for each question)

	Level of Impact					(Not Applicable)
	<i>Lo</i>				<i>High</i>	
a) Accessing Education*	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Maintaining Education*	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Accessing Training **	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Maintaining Training **	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Accessing Employment	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Maintaining Employment	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Obtaining Housing	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Establishing Housing	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Personal Development	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Other (please specify)	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

* Education includes Secondary Education, Post-Secondary Ed. University

* Training includes Traineeships, Tafe, Apprenticeship.

3. Please suggest any other ways YEETI has contributed to the young person's case plan concerning Employment, Education and Training.

4. If the goals were not achieved by the young person, please indicate the reasons for this.

(√ Tick as applicable)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| a) Young person withdrew from the Service | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Did not want to complete the particular pathway option described in the application | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Health (incl. chronic illness, mental health) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Alcohol and other Drug misuse | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Personal reasons | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Course changed | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Still pursuing / considering other options | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h) Other (please specify) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i) Can't Say | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. List any barriers for the young person that were not overcome by YEETI assistance packages.

PART 2: (Only complete PART 2 ONCE per program)

The following questions seek your programs more general views on the role of YEETI to date.

6. List any reasons young people in the homelessness service system do not access YEETI funds.

7. What would assist your agency or the sector to make more use of YEETI?

8. Please add any other comments you would like to make about the accessibility and use of YEETI.

9. We may be interested in clarifying your responses or exploring particular issues raised in your questionnaire. Please record your contact details only if you would be happy about further contact.

Name

Service address

.....

Telephone Number

Email

Thank you for completing this survey, your input is highly valuable!

Please email your completed questionnaire to dcrawford@mcm.org.au

**If you have any enquiries regarding this survey please contact
David Crawford YEETI Project Worker on 9680 8249.**

5.3. References

Melbourne Citymission YEETI Funding Submission, 2004.

Office of Housing Department of Human Services, 2004, *Youth Homeless Action Plan First Stage Report*, Victorian Government.

Victorian Government Department of Human Services, 2006, *Creating Connections Youth Homeless Action Plan Stage 2: 2006 - 2010.*

Victorian Government Department of Human Services, 2002, *Directions for Change - Victorian Homelessness Strategy: Action Plan and Strategic Framework*