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# **NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP ON YOUTH ATTAINMENT AND TRANSITIONS**



**-AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL  
TERRITORY-**

**2010  
ANNUAL REPORT**

**(Submitted MAY 2011)**

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## Contents

PART A: Reporting Requirements outlines in the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions.....	2
PART B:.....	4
Jurisdictional Context.....	4
Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions .....	11
Indigenous Reporting.....	23
The Compact with Young Australians .....	26
Youth Connections and School Business Community Partnership Brokers in [State] .....	32

Annual reporting requirements under the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions are contained in paragraphs 69 to 72 (reproduced below). In addition, Schedule B of the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions contains Indigenous reporting requirements.

69. Thereafter, States and Territories will provide annual reports to the Commonwealth against the outcomes, performance benchmarks and performance indicators specified in this Agreement as outlined in table 1 at paragraph 16 and in table 3 at paragraph 59.

70. To meet a shared commitment to reporting on efforts to close the gap for Indigenous people, States and Territories also commit to including in their annual reports progress towards halving the gap in Indigenous Year 12 or equivalent attainment by 2020. Progress measures towards halving the gap in Indigenous Year 12 or equivalent attainment are at Schedule B.

71. Reporting will include detail of funding provided to the non-government sector and maintenance of any existing State and Territory funding for careers and transitions support services (see paragraph 52 and 53).

72. The first annual report, for the period 1 July 2009 to 31 December 2010 is due by 31 May 2011. Subsequent annual reports for each calendar year of the Agreement are due by 31 May of the following year. The final report, for the 2013 calendar year, is due by 31 May 2014.

## PART A: ACT, National Partnership on Youth and Transitions – May 2011 report

Outcome	Performance Indicator	Source	May 2011	August addendum	May 2012	August addendum	May 2013	August addendum	May 2014	August addendum
Increased participation of young people in education and training	Enrolment of full-time equivalent students in years 11 and 12 <sup>1</sup>	National Schools Statistics Collection (ABS)	9,337	-	2011 School	-	2012 School	-	2013 School	-
	Enrolment of Indigenous full-time equivalent students in years 11 and 12 <sup>2</sup>		132	-	2011 School	-	2012 School	-	2013 School	-
	Enrolment of Indigenous full-time equivalent students in years 9 and 10 <sup>3</sup>		213	-	2011 School	-	2012 School	-	2013 School	-
	15-19 year olds without a Year 12 certificate and not enrolled in school who are enrolled in a vocational education and training (VET) course at Certificate II level or higher <sup>4</sup>	VOCSTATS (NCVER)	-	2010 VET	-	2011 VET	-	2012 VET	-	2013 VET
	Indigenous 15-19 year olds without a Year 12 certificate and not enrolled in school who are enrolled in a vocational education and training (VET) course at Certificate II level or higher <sup>5</sup>		-	2010 VET	-	2011 VET	-	2012 VET	-	2013 VET
	Indigenous 15-19 year olds without a Year 12 certificate and not enrolled in school who are enrolled in a vocational education and training (VET) course at Certificate I level <sup>6</sup>		-	2010 VET	-	2011 VET	-	2012 VET	-	2013 VET
Increased attainment of young people aged 15-24, including Indigenous youth	The proportion of young people aged 20-24 who have attained Year 12 or Certificate II or above	Survey of Education and Work (ABS)	89.5%	-	2011 SEW	-	2012 SEW	-	2013 SEW	-
		VET completions (VOCSTATS) <sup>7</sup>	-	2010 VET	-	2011 VET	-	2012 VET	-	2013 VET
	The proportion of young Indigenous people aged 20-24 who have attained Year 12 or Certificate II or above	ABS Census	-	-	-	-	2011 Census	-	-	-
		VET completions (VOCSTATS) <sup>8</sup>	-	2010 VET	-	2011 VET	-	2012 VET	-	2013 VET
Young people make a successful transition from school to further education, training or full-time employment	The proportion of young people aged 15-24 participating in post-school education, training or employment six months after leaving school	Survey of Education and Work (ABS) <sup>9</sup>	68.6%	-	2011 SEW	-	2012 SEW	-	2013 SEW	-
Improved Indigenous attendance	Attendance rates for Indigenous students in years 1-10 in government schools	MCEECDYA National Schools Attendance Collection (NSAC) <sup>10</sup> Figures awaiting release by ACARA	Year 1 2010 attendance	-	2011 attendance	-	2012 attendance	-	2013 attendance	-
			Year 2	-		-		-		
			Year 3	-		-		-		
			Year 4	-		-		-		
			Year 5	-		-		-		
			Year 6	-		-		-		
			Year 7	-		-		-		
			Year 8	-		-		-		
			Year 9	-		-		-		
			Year 10	-		-		-		
Improved Indigenous retention	Apparent retention years 7/8 to year 10, by Indigenous status <sup>11</sup>	National Schools Statistics Collection (ABS)	96.4%	-	2011 ARR	-	2012 ARR	-	2013 ARR	-
	Apparent retention years 7/8 to year 12, by Indigenous status <sup>12</sup>		58.8%	-	2011 ARR	-	2012 ARR	-	2013 ARR	-
Improved Indigenous participation and engagement	School level strategies <sup>13</sup>	Jurisdiction information								

### Notes on the data

- Attainment measure for 20 to 24 year olds is sourced from the ABS Survey of Education and Work. The survey is undertaken in May each year with results normally reported in December of the same year. The data from the survey relates to measures at that point in time.
- The ABS Survey of Education and Work is a sample survey; results are therefore reported with confidence intervals. For smaller jurisdictions confidence intervals can be substantial. The nature of the survey and the size of the error mean that it may not be possible to accurately identify change over time, even in larger jurisdictions. These data limitations were signalled by the COAG Reform Council (2010).
- Data from NCVER VOCSTATS are normally available in July of the following year. VET statistics reflect a cumulative summary of the year's activity as opposed to a point in time.
- According to MCEECDYA guidelines, "Attendance rates for indigenous students" relates to students who identify as Indigenous. The data are collected for the first semester of the school year, and reported in the first quarter of the following year. There are data quality issues. Significant numbers of students in all jurisdictions have not indicated their Indigenous/non-Indigenous status. Collection methodologies vary across some jurisdictions and sectors. Data should be treated with caution.

<sup>1</sup> As per 2010 Participation target measure

<sup>2</sup> As per Schedule B

<sup>3</sup> As per Schedule B

<sup>4</sup> As per Schedule B

<sup>5</sup> As per 2010 Participation target measure

<sup>6</sup> As per Schedule B

<sup>7</sup> To monitor annual changes – reported for calendar year VET completions, age to be determined.

<sup>8</sup> As per Schedule B. To monitor annual changes – reported for calendar year VET completions, age to be determined.

<sup>9</sup> As per NP YAT Table 3 (p14)

<sup>10</sup> As per Schedule B. This section will be populated by DEEWR pending data availability. This may result in this information being part of the August addendum.

<sup>11</sup> As per Schedule B

<sup>12</sup> As per Schedule B

<sup>13</sup> As per Schedule B- This information is to be provided under Part B – Indigenous Reporting

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e) According to MCEECDYA guidelines, "Attendance rates for indigenous students" relates to students who identify as Indigenous. The data are collected for the first semester of the school year, and reported in the first quarter of the following year. There are data quality issues. Significant numbers of students in all jurisdictions have not indicated their Indigenous/non-Indigenous status. Collection methodologies vary across some jurisdictions and sectors. Data should be treated with caution.

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## **PART B:**

### **AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

#### **Context**

The Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership (YAT NP) was established to achieve improvements in the numbers of young Australians making successful transitions from schooling into further education, training or employment, with a particular focus on 15 to 24 year olds and young people at risk. A further objective of the YAT NP is to develop a skilled and work ready Indigenous workforce by increasing the educational attainment and engagement of young Indigenous Australians.

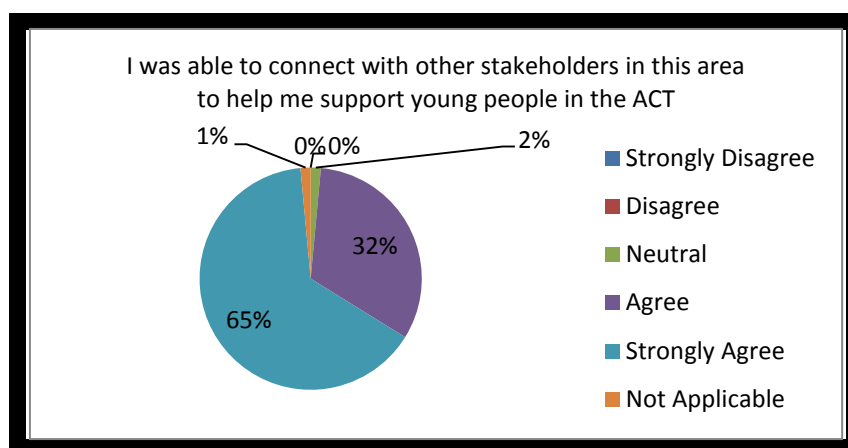
The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) is committed to working collaboratively to increase the educational engagement, attainment and successful transitions of young people. A major advantage for a small jurisdiction such as the ACT is the opportunity for all stakeholders to work in close partnership with one another. Such collaboration between government and non-government school sectors, and training, business and community sectors is evident in the ACT and has become the driving force for achieving the objectives of the YAT NP and for meeting the targets to improve participation, lift qualifications and support successful transitions for young people.

In September 2010 the Australian and ACT Governments worked together to arrange an ACT YAT Regional Forum to bring the Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections providers together with key stakeholders in the ACT region. Representatives from a wide range of government and non government organisations were invited, including public and non-government schools, parents, Centrelink, the Youth Coalition of the ACT and their member organisations, Job Services Australia providers, the Australian Federal Police, the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), Australian Apprenticeship Centres, registered training organisations (RTOs), Group Training Organisations, as well as the ACT Department of Education and Training (now the ACT Government Education and Training Directorate) and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

The ACT YAT Regional Forum gave participants the opportunity to learn more about one another's programs, share information and best practice, network with other key stakeholders in the region and also look to future challenges and opportunities in the ACT.

The pie chart below (Figure A) illustrates how successful the Regional Forum was in connecting stakeholders. Sixty five percent of participants reported that they 'Strongly Agreed' that they were able to connect with other stakeholders to help them support young people in the ACT, and thirty two percent reported that they 'Agreed'.

Figure A - results of the ACT YAT NP Regional Forum evaluation.



Feedback from the final workshop session ‘Where to From Here?’ at the ACT Regional Forum provided strategies and directions for the ACT to consider in response to the YAT NP and *ACT Youth Commitment*. Further information regarding the Regional Forum and the outcomes can be found on the ACT Youth Commitment website: <http://www.det.act.gov.au/actyc>.

The ACT has a strong vocational learning network linking government and non government schools, Canberra Institute of Technology, a range of RTOs, business and industry interests, government agencies and the higher education sector. These established forums and processes allow for a consolidated approach to the YATNP in the ACT. Other initiatives introduced to ensure appropriate transitions and pathways for all secondary students in the ACT include:

- the *Moving Forward* Initiative that placed additional resources into ACT public colleges
- increased support for Australian School-based Apprenticeships (ASBAs)
- establishment of three *Achievement Centres* for disengaged students in years 7 and 8
- establishment of three *Connect 10* programs for students in years 9 and 10 who are at risk of disengaging from school
- introduction of Pastoral Care Coordinators, School Youth Health Nurses and Youth Workers in high schools.
- release of the discussion paper *Creating a connected ACT tertiary education environment* and the establishment of the ACT Tertiary Taskforce.
- release of the discussion paper *Improving ACT Public High Schools and Colleges*.

A major aspect of ACT YAT NP is the introduction by the ACT Government of the *ACT Youth Commitment*. The *ACT Youth Commitment* presents new expectations for the ACT community of working and supporting young people in the ACT. The *ACT Youth Commitment* was implemented to ensure that the needs of each young person are at the heart of agency activities. If a student moves from school to further education and training or work, he/she will continue to be accounted for, cared for and supported.

The *Youth Commitment* has been established on the premise that if a young person can be identified by a number they can be identified by a name. That name allows them to be known, to be understood, to be treated with respect and for their specific needs and circumstances to be catered for.

The *Youth Commitment* asks all agencies that serve young people to the age of 17 to commit to ensuring that no young person is lost from education, training or employment.

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Over the last decade the ACT has implemented an extensive reform agenda. Many of these reforms align closely with the objectives of the YAT NP.

***The Canberra Plan: Towards our Second Century*** (2004) - includes a theme of excellent education, quality teaching and skills development ..... *to ensure that all Canberrans benefit from a quality education, that lifelong learning opportunities are available to all, and that our skilled workforce is adaptable to the needs of the economy.*

***Building Our Community: The Canberra Social Plan*** (2004) - as one of its priorities aims to: 'Lead Australia in education, lifelong learning and training' by:

- increasing education participation, engagement and achievement of children and young people
- increasing literacy and numeracy levels, particularly for students at risk
- improving the transition between school, further study, and the workforce
- providing opportunities for lifelong learning.

***ACT Skills Future: Key Initiatives in a Long Term Strategy to Address the Skills Challenge*** (2008) provides a long term strategy to address the shortage of skilled workers in the ACT. In ACT Government Budgets, \$51 million over four years (2008-09) and over \$40 million over four years (2009-10) was allocated to tackle the skills shortage in the short and long term in the ACT.

*ACT Skills Future* aims for Government, in association with schools, the vocational education and training (VET) sector and the higher education sector, to ensure that the education and training system is responsive to the needs of participants, industry and the economy and for all Canberrans to have the opportunity to access post-school education and training opportunities.

The Minister for Education and Training released the ***Pathways to the Future*** consultation paper in August 2008. The paper identified different options to increase young people's engagement in education, training and work. Consultations ended in October 2008 and resulted in an ACT decision to increase mandatory participation in school until a student completes year 10 and for engagement in education, training or work until age 17. Legislation to effect this change was passed in the Assembly on 10 November 2009.

On 1 January 2010 the ACT Government amended the *Education Act 2004* requiring all young people to continue in education, training or employment until completing year 12 or equivalent, or reaching age 17, whichever occurs first. The *ACT Youth Commitment* was developed in response to the changes to the Education Act, and has been designed to ensure that the progress of every young person in the ACT is monitored and they are supported to remain in education, training or employment.

The ***ACT Children's Plan*** and the ***Young People's Plan*** are important frameworks for the ACT Government. The plans articulate the ACT Government's commitment to children, young people, their families and community. As well as providing a common policy framework for service provision, they guide the practical implementation of services across government and non-government agencies and within the community. The new vision for the ***ACT Children's Plan 2010 to 2014*** is that "Canberra is a child and youth friendly city that supports all children and young people to reach their potential, make a contribution, and share the benefits of our community."

The key themes for the ACT Young People's Plan 2004 - 2008 were:

- Participation
- Access



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- Transitions
  - Support.

From initial consultation for the **ACT Young People's Plan 2009 - 2014** these themes appear to continue to be relevant. So does the *Blueprint for Young People at Risk*, which outlines strategies for action for young people who may require additional support. Another aspect of the *Young People's Plan* is the *ACT Government Commitment to Young People*, which specifies key actions in relation to young people's completion of schooling and the provision of appropriate and effective training both on and off the job.

The ACT Department of Education and Training's **Strategic Plan 2010 – 2013 Everyone Matters** has as its vision to support and engage young people so that they “learn, thrive and are equipped with the skills to lead fulfilling, productive and responsible lives”.

**Excellence in Disability Education in ACT Public Schools: Strategic Plan 2010 - 2013** outlines the priorities and related activities that will further improve the learning outcomes of students with a disability.

The **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010 - 2013** outlines the priorities and actions required across ACT schools and central office teams to close the learning achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students in the ACT.

Early in 2010 the ACT Tertiary Education Taskforce was formed to consult on a vision for tertiary education. The Taskforce brought together stakeholders from institutions, industry, government and the community resulting in the release of the report of the Taskforce: **Learning Capital: an integrated tertiary education system for the ACT** in February 2011.

At the same time, the discussion paper, *Improving ACT Public Schools and Colleges* was launched, inviting the community to contribute ideas to improve and energise the ACT secondary education system. Students, school staff, parents, community members and stakeholder groups all contributed their ideas and aspirations in over 100 written submissions and in community forums and school meetings. Drawing from these submissions, **Excellence and Enterprise Advancing Public Schools of Distinction: A framework for improving secondary schooling in the ACT** was released in May 2011. The framework outlines eleven key directions organised under three broad themes:

- Theme 1 - Advancing distinctive public secondary schools
- Theme 2 - Flexibility, pathways and partnerships
- Theme 3 - Strengthening the system.

There are a number of common areas for improvement identified in both the *Excellence and Enterprise* framework and the *Learning Capital* report.

Embedded in these reform documents are specific goals which are relevant to the YAT NP including:

- reducing poverty and exclusion for vulnerable people
- maintaining Canberra's status as the State/Territory with the lowest unemployment rate
- reducing the level of long-term unemployment and the level of unemployment experienced by vulnerable groups towards the ACT average
- reducing inequalities in children's first five years and improving the transition between home, early childhood settings and kindergarten
- increasing education participation, engagement and achievement of children and young people
- increasing literacy and numeracy levels, particularly for students at risk

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- improving the transition between school, further study, and the workforce
  - increasing educational attainment and engagement of young Indigenous Australians
  - providing opportunities for lifelong learning.

### Factors impacting on NP progress

At 89.5 percent, the ACT has the highest year 12 or equivalent attainment rate for 20-24 year olds in Australia. The national rate is 85.6 percent. A large proportion of the effort to lift attainment rates in the ACT therefore needs to focus on disengaging or disengaged young people.

Staffing has been a significant issue for both Youth Connections and Partnership Broker providers. A major factor in this challenge is the length of funding contracts and the late announcement of renewal or termination plans. Individual staff who find themselves within a year of a contract termination are on the lookout for other opportunities, and recruiting staff for short term contracts is particularly difficult. There have also been challenges with administration of Youth Connections due to the gradual roll out of tools that have supported the program and the Outcomes Framework.

Key stakeholders in the Partnership Brokers program were heavily involved with the former Local Community Partnership in the region, and benefited immensely from the direct service delivery offered under the Career Advice Australia Program. As the organisation that had been funded to deliver the Local Community Partnership service continued to operate on a fee-for-service basis for some months after the program was discontinued, some of these stakeholders resisted the implementation of the Partnership Brokers program and have been reluctant to move to the partnership model.

The Australian Government's reporting requirements have posed a challenge to the Directorate. Whilst the ACT applauds a rigorous data and analysis reporting regime for National Partnerships, such a requirement for a small jurisdiction presents an enormous challenge. The ACT is engaged with approximately seven National Partnerships and a number of other Council of Australian Government (COAG) reforms, placing a significant demand on data collection, analysis and reporting capacity.

The ACT Youth Commitment Steering Group (YC SG) is leading the work of the *ACT Youth Commitment*. A number of working groups have been established to take this work forward. One of these groups is the Reengaging Youth Leadership Group (REYLG). This group is leading the collaboration and coordination of activities that support disengaged young people to reconnect with education, training or employment or a combination of these, to connect providers with each other and to schools in order to improve the educational outcomes for disengaged youth and to work to build a resilient system that ensures that no young person is lost from education, training or employment.

In 2010 the REYLG advanced a plan for each of the four ACT School Networks to develop an Action Strategy. The four School Networks were established according to geographic areas. The Action Strategy will outline the approach that all schools and providers in each of the School Network areas will adopt to better meet the needs of young people.

The Tuggeranong School Network piloted this new approach by holding the Tuggeranong Network Forum. All stakeholders within the School Network area were invited to attend the forum to explore practical ideas on:

- what is currently working?
- what might potentially work?

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- what are the barriers to working together more productively?

The outcomes of the forum included:

- mapping of what is already happening in the School Network area, and the gaps, in relation to reengaging youth
- new and better connections between stakeholders
- commitment to the development of an Action Strategy
- identification of a Reengaging Youth Network Board (REYNB) to lead the ongoing development and implementation of the Action Strategy
- building knowledge and awareness of the *ACT Youth Commitment*
- building understanding and awareness of the new Pathways Planning process being implemented across the ACT.

The process and outcomes provided a structure for the other three ACT School Networks to replicate.

Analysis of the discussion and feedback from the Tuggeranong Network Forum identified the following factors that may have an impact on the YAT NP progress in the ACT:

- Lack of consistency and coordination between services and programs was identified as a problem – need program/service mapping
- Lack of holistic support for young people with complex needs
- Slow referral and response times – a central intake and referral centre could resolve this
- Greater understanding by schools and the youth sector of the work done by each other to assist in fostering a greater degree of professional respect
- Young people from alternate settings experience difficulties in transitioning back into mainstream education settings - further use of mentors could provide part of a solution
- Not having available transport to programs/services for young people is often a barrier
- The lack of available research about what works and what doesn't work regarding the reengagement of disengaged or at risk of disengaging youth.

A number of positive ideas were identified from the forum. Overwhelmingly agencies identified that a face to face forum format for all agencies to learn about one another was a great help in itself. A consistent and coordinated approach to evaluating programs, which will ensure that the success of programs and services is evidence based and can therefore be 'transferred' and replicated, gained unanimous support. The consensus was that the ACT needs to move forwards with programs and services that have been properly evaluated.

## **Trends in Young Peoples' Transitions from School**

### ***Annual Survey***

The Measurement, Monitoring and Reporting branch of the ACT Education and Training Directorate conduct an annual survey of ACT students. The *2009 ACT college graduates: Where are they now?* report presents results of the fourth annual post-year 12 destination survey, and provides a summary of a survey of graduates awarded an ACT Year 12 Certificate in 2009.

Key findings from the report are that:

- Ninety percent of all 2009 year 12 graduates were employed or studying in 2010
- Seventy five percent of all 2009 year 12 graduates were employed and 11 percent were unemployed in 2010

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- Fifty three percent of all 2009 year 12 graduates were studying in 2010  
Of those who were not currently studying 77 percent intended to start some study in the next two years
  - Overall 97 percent of 2009 year 12 graduates found year 11 and 12 worthwhile
  - 2009 year 12 graduates who speak a language other than English (LBOTE) at home were more likely to be studying and less likely to be employed in 2010 than graduates who are not LBOTE
  - Just over half of the 2009 year 12 graduates who were studying in 2010 were undertaking their study because “it’s a course that interests me”
  - The most common reason 2009 year 12 graduates gave for not studying in 2010 was that they were “taking a gap year”

### *University of Canberra Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra*

The ACT Education and Training Directorate and the University of Canberra with Lake Ginninderra Secondary College are proud to announce the first University of Canberra/Schools Partnership Agreement in the ACT.

The University of Canberra Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra partnership will enable the institutions to work together to improve learning outcomes for students; with specific attention on student transition from high school to college and from college to further study, work or training.

The partnership not only strengthens teaching and learning initiatives at the college but also allows educators at all institutions to share resources, strategies, research and practice. For students at Lake Ginninderra College this partnership will provide opportunities for students from Year 12 and beyond college into the tertiary sector.

### *Partnership projects*

A range of partnership projects is already underway or in active planning, including:

- Access to facilities and resources beyond the reach of senior secondary students
- Access to best practice in classroom teaching across all curriculum areas by teachers in training, teachers and university educators locally, nationally and internationally
- Broadening of the international focus of the college including teacher training, virtual learning, student exchange and communication, languages and academic and cultural tours
- Establishment of areas of excellence within the national curriculum, such as; Sport, Outdoor Education, Business, Design and Architecture, Virtual and Distance Education, International Partnerships, Student Leadership, Welfare and Transition
- Broad based teacher participation in postgraduate study
- Staff and student involvement in university research projects.

This project is dynamic, far reaching and educationally exciting, allowing for enhanced professional learning, best practice in education and further educational opportunities for students.

### *University of Canberra High School Kaleen*

A new partnership initiative between Kaleen High School and the University of Canberra was established in 2009. This collaborative initiative is exploring ways to further maximise student learning outcomes through the Future Directions Program, which provides a range of activities and experiences to support the nurturing, and preparation of students for post high school life.

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### *ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS)*

Data from the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies' (BSSS) Year 12 Study (Figure B) indicates an increase in Year 12 Certificate attainment rate since 2008. It appears that while the number of candidates in the age cohort has declined slightly, the number of Year 12 students receiving a Year 12 Certificate has increased. The number of mature age students receiving a Year 12 Certificate remains about the same.

Figure B – BSSS Year 12 Study

Year	Number of Candidates in ACT Age Cohort	Year 12 Students Certified	% of Age Cohort Receiving a Year 12 Certificate	Mature Age Students Receiving a Year 12 Certificate
2008	4866	4076	83.8	35
2009	4625	4100	88.6	40
2010	4762	4214	88.5	32

## **Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions**

### **ACT Reform**

The National Partnership agreed ACT participation rate target for 2010 was 10,336, an increase on 2008 of 216.

The ACT Implementation Plan agreed to build on the current ACT Government and non-government sector effort by:

- Identifying current alternate education programs and ensuring that they have inbuilt learning that leads to the attainment of VET qualifications and competencies
- Developing strategies in collaboration with CIT and other partners for early career development and the establishment of one plan one child that covers movements through school and into work or further education and training
- Ensuring that services provided by Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections providers mesh with and add value to established successful ACT activity and practices.

ACT schools and colleges offer flexible pathways which lead to tertiary study and to recognised VET qualifications. Students can begin apprenticeships while they are still at school. Innovative programs, many in partnership with business and industry, increasingly link school studies with the worlds of work and community.

Young people in the ACT have access to a range of settings and programs which support individual learning needs and encourage the completion of school and VET qualifications. These include but are not limited to:

- CIT Vocational College
- Achievement Centres for students in years 7 and 8 at Canberra High School, Campbell High School and Wanniasa School.
- Connect 10 program in each School Network area located at Lake Tuggeranong College, Lake Ginninderra College and Dickson College
- CCCares conducted by Canberra College in partnership with ACT Health, Connecting Young Carers to Life Opportunities and Personalised Support (CYCLOPS) and other community agencies
- Students Participating In Community Enterprise (SPICE)

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- Pastoral Care Coordinators, School Youth Health Nurses and Youth Workers in ACT Government High Schools.

### **ACT Reform 1 – ACT Youth Commitment**

Performance indicators include:

- Sign up of agencies to the Youth Commitment
- Retention of students to completion of year 10 in schooling and until age 17 in education, work or further training.

The *ACT Youth Commitment* has been developed following significant consultation, and is guided by the ACT Youth Commitment Steering Group. The strength of the *ACT Youth Commitment* is found in the close partnerships that have developed through this process. Representation on the ACT Youth Commitment Steering Group includes representatives from: the ACT Education and Training Directorate, the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, the Youth Coalition of the ACT, the ACT and Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the University of Canberra, the Canberra Institute of Technology, the Association of Private Training Services, the Australian Council for Private Education and Training, ACT Health, the Association of Independent Schools, the Catholic Education Office, the Australian Federal Police, Anglicare Canberra Goulburn, the Canberra Business Council and the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Association.

These stakeholders were asked to sign a Statement of Commitment as an expression of their pledge to work collaboratively with other organisations to implement the *ACT Youth Commitment*. This includes:

- Supporting a Pathways Planning process
- Where appropriate, ensuring student details are entered and updated on the ACT Student Transfer Register
- Actively promoting and raising awareness of the *ACT Youth Commitment* within our communities including through keeping their organisation profile updated on the Career and Transition Framework Register.

The *ACT Youth Commitment* Signing Ceremony and launch of the Pathways Plan took place on 18 May 2011. Over 140 ACT agencies signed a Statement of Commitment, committing them to ensure that the transfer of a young person from one agency to another happens effectively. The responsibility of an agency is to know where a young person that they are responsible for is and what is happening to support them. The *ACT Youth Commitment* establishes a new set of expectations for ACT schools and the community regarding young people's experience in schooling and their transitions onto further education, training and work. Stakeholders represented at the Signing Ceremony included representatives from government and non-government schools, CIT, RTOs and other educational institutions, community and youth agencies, business and government agencies, all of which demonstrated their dedication to increasing the educational engagement, attainment and successful post school transitioning of young people in the ACT. Such a pledge ensures that the goals of the *ACT Youth Commitment* are met, including working towards no young person in the ACT being lost from education, training or employment.

Importantly, there was a strong representation of young people at the Signing Ceremony. Not only did young people assist with the running of the event, two young people, Tom Ramsay, a troubled school student who became a WorldSkills medallist, ACT and now Australian representative, and Ally Collins, a young single mother who was once homeless but has now found her way back into training and employment with the help of Youth Connections, told their stories to an enraptured audience.

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## *Pathways Planning Process*

Minister Joy Burch MLA launched the Pathways Plan and stressed that in order to give young people the best possible chance of success it is important that they are given the opportunity to think about who they are, what they know, where they are going, how they will get there and who will help them and that Pathways Planning is a mechanism that will give young people this opportunity.

Pathways Planning documents, including the Plan and a Facilitators Guide, have been developed in consultation with a range of agencies in the youth sector. The development of the Plan is underpinned by current Career Management theory and practice. A Pathways Planning Working Group and Action Group were set up to support this development. An implementation timeline has been developed with an aim of all young people aged 11-16 in the ACT having a Pathways Plan by 2014.

The Plan or a Pathways Planning process, which reflects the essential components of the Plan, is being used in 2011 by both ACT government and non government schools for years 10 and 11 students, by 15 and 16 year olds enrolled with a training provider outside of school, and by young people under 17 enrolled at the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT). An action plan is currently under development to continue the development of the Pathways Planning process for year 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12.

The Pathways Plan is now available as an interactive document allowing young people to save it electronically and print out a hard copy if needed. Three Pathways Planning workshops have been held with other workshops scheduled throughout term 2. These workshops provide teachers and youth workers with professional learning including background about the development of the Plan and resources and ideas to support the use of the Plan. In addition, ACT public college Moving Forward Officers developed a high school to college transition plan for use with year 10, 11 and 12 students.

The Pathways Plan, Facilitator's guide and College Transitions Plan are available on the Education and Training Directorate's website at <http://www.det.act.gov.au/actyc>. Initial indications show that the Pathways Planning process has been well received by school and youth agencies. Below are some of the agencies which have supported the development of the Pathways Planning document:

- ACT Education and Training Directorate (Principals, Deputy Principals, Moving Forward Officers, Career Counsellors, Teachers, Transitions, Careers and Vocational Learning, Student Support and Learning Technologies)
- Youth Coalition of the ACT
- ACT Department of Housing and Community Services (DHCS) - Office for Children, Youth and Family Support (OCYFS)
- Bimberi Youth Justice Centre
- Catholic Education Office
- Association of Independent Schools
- CIT
- Children and Young People Commissioner
- Youth Connections, Anglicare Canberra Goulburn
- READY Program, ACT and Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Volunteering ACT
- Ted Noffs
- Australian Federal Police
- House with no Steps
- Caloola

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- Centrelink
  - Gugan Gulwan.

### ***Student Transfer Register***

The ACT Youth Commitment is supported by the use of the Student Transfer Register, which is used by both the government and non government sector to track students. A Data and Analysis Group has been established, which reports to the YC SG, to investigate the potential for the current usage of the Student Transfer Register to be extended and for other enhancements to be made to it. The Data and Analysis Group continues to investigate issues and develop strategies relating to the collection of data and the tracking of progress towards the achievement of the targets in the ACT YAT NP.

The work of the Data and Analysis Group has identified issues that are currently under consideration:

- Following up of unaccounted for students
- Issues associated with the intersection of data from government and non-government schools, School Networks, CIT and other training providers
- Steps to be taken to reengage non-compliant students.

### ***The ACT Career and Transition Framework***

In 2003 the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) Taskforce on Transition from School published the Career and Transition Services (CTS) Framework, presenting a range of options, which could be implemented within jurisdictions to support young people in making effective transitions through school and between school and post-school destinations. Using the MCEETYA Career and Transition Services Framework as a model, the ACT Career and Transition (CaT) Framework will take the form of an internet resource which will provide a systematic and comprehensive approach to assisting young people from 11 through to 25 years of age in the ACT in managing career and transition processes. The internet resource is intended to promote a holistic and consistent approach in navigating the range of options that young people are faced with as they move towards independence by providing a 'one stop shop' and 'how to' guide for all stakeholders and users. It will provide support to stakeholders to identify the various components that go towards supporting young people in making these successful transitions. The Framework will identify best practice examples and draw together the wide variety of sometimes disconnected career and transition services, resources and providers from the ACT and generate synergies and relationships between them.

A CaT Framework reference group was established in 2008 and consulted throughout 2008 and 2009 with government and non-government schools, parents, CIT, the AFP, ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, RTOs, Australian Apprenticeship Centres, Job Services Australia providers and Group Training Organisations.

The ACT CaT Framework will support the achievement of ACT targets within the YAT NP and the objectives of the *ACT Youth Commitment*. In the 2010-11 ACT Budget funding of \$300,000 was allocated to the CaT Framework and design and scoping work has now commenced.

### ***ACT Reform 2 – Structured Workplace Learning***

Performance indicators include:

- New model of service delivery developed and in place
- Structured workplace learning rates.



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In the ACT structured workplace learning (SWL) is undertaken by students in years 10, 11 and 12 who are currently enrolled in the relevant VETin Schools (VETiS) course. SWL placements provide supervised learning activities in the workplace contributing to an assessment of competence and achievement of outcomes and requirements of a particular Training Package. Placements for public schools are covered by the Directorate's public liability and personal accident insurance policies.

SWL is a long standing, recognised strategy to support student understanding about the workplace and provide an opportunity to further develop their knowledge and skills in an industry environment related to their vocational learning in the classroom. Participation enables students to make informed career choices, hence the ACT Education and Training Directorate is committed to increasing SWL opportunities for students.

Under the Federal Government's Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership, responsibility for SWL has been transferred to the states and territories. Migration of SWL data from the Local Community Partnership (LCP) provider in the ACT was successfully carried out at the beginning of 2010.

To ensure that students continue to have at least the same level of access to SWL as was provided under the Local Community Partnership (Student to Industry Program) model, the Education and Training Directorate has allocated the following resources:

- 2 x 0.5 School Leader Cs (SWL Champions) - the role of the SWL Champions is to work with schools to identify barriers to SWL, identify solutions and develop innovative programs. These positions also work with employers and providers of other work based learning programs to build partnerships and relationships in schools to increase the quality and quantity of SWL placements.
- 2 x 0.8 Administrative Assistants – the role includes providing administrative and clerical support for schools in relation to SWL placements and, along with the SWL Champions, maintaining the SWL database. The administrative assistants also work with the SWL Champions to liaise with teachers, industry, government departments, private employers, unions, members of the public and departmental staff in order to support schools to meet the needs of students in regards to SWL placements.

### ***New SWL Initiatives in 2010 - Improving the Quality of SWL Placements***

As part of the goal to improve the quality of SWL placements, a review of Training Packages was completed, which mapped the occurrence of SWL units across Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) endorsed VET courses. The BSSS requires that SWL units contribute workplace based evidence for the assessment of competencies. It was found that while some courses had a mandatory requirement for students to complete a SWL placement, others courses listed SWL as desirable or optional. Determinations were made in consultation with BSSS representatives about the required changes needed to streamline and create equity across courses. For this to take effect the proposed changes must be accredited by the Board. This will occur progressively in two ways:

- during rewriting of a course, where this has been scheduled within the next 12 months, OR
- when a course is not due for rewriting for some time, an amendment to that course is to be drafted and submitted to the Board.

Based on feedback from both employers and teachers, a need to have specific information about what is required of a student undertaking a SWL placement was identified. Work has begun on the development of

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a series of industry focused checklists to be used in the workplace to assist in the gathering of evidence for assessment of student competence. School based specialist teachers will be consulted to ensure validity of information. As an interim measure, an industry focussed employability skills checklist has been developed for use. In some cases, in-house checklists and booklets are already in use. These will be reviewed for possible incorporation into system wide forms.

In cooperation with the BSSS VET Subcommittee, investigation of opportunities for recognition of student paid work relating to a current VETiS course being studied took place. SWL Champions made a significant contribution to the development of this proposal which was approved by the Board in principle. Agreement has been reached with the BSSS in regards to maximum points that SWL can contribute to the Year 12 Certificate for college students. The current status and introduction of this initiative is contingent upon accreditation of any changes under current courses.

Building sustainable projects that support teachers in their SWL responsibilities was a significant initiative during 2010. Continuation of training for administrative staff in ACT Schools with some industry expertise was conducted by CIT. Currently there are 17 administrative staff across the ACT system with an industry specialisation that hold either a Certificate IV in TAE or TAA Workplace Training and Assessment. The newly qualified staff may be deployed by their respective schools to work with teachers at the discretion of the Principal and/or VET Coordinator in SWL related matters.

Two staff members from Bimberi Youth Justice Centre successfully completed Certificate IV in TAA then went on to gain a Statement of Attainment in *Prepare and Serve Espresso Coffee*. Delivery began mid-year for selected Bimberi residents to undertake minor Hospitality training in order to give them skill sets that will assist them in gaining employment in the Hospitality industry. The residents have attained competent status and have been awarded the relevant Statement of Attainment. This joint venture between the Department of Housing and Community Services (DHCS) and the Education and Training Directorate gives young people a valuable opportunity to develop industry focused employability skills. This initiative supports the ACT Government's measures and targets under the YAT NP.

### ***New SWL Initiatives in 2010 - Improving the Quantity of SWL Placements***

A variety of initiatives were introduced in 2010 to increase participation of students in SWL. Industry has made clear the importance of students engaging in meaningful structured learning experiences in a professional work environment or industry-like simulation. Students across ACT schools participated in two events of this kind:

- Coffee Day Out: two day intensive Hospitality experience
- World Skills: one day participation for VET students across a range of industry areas.

### ***New Hosts***

Relevant employers have been approached to enlist as new hosts in order to meet growing industry areas of demand, and several have taken up the opportunity to be involved in SWL. It is particularly important to source new employers in areas where a mandatory SWL placement occurs. The SWL administrators have found it very difficult to place students in certain industry areas. Two major areas of need were identified in 2010 – Media and IT.

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## *School Visits*

Several schools were visited in 2010 and the SWL process was discussed with VET staff. These visits also provided an opportunity to address any issues that individual staff had with the SWL procedure.

## *SWL Statistics for 2010*

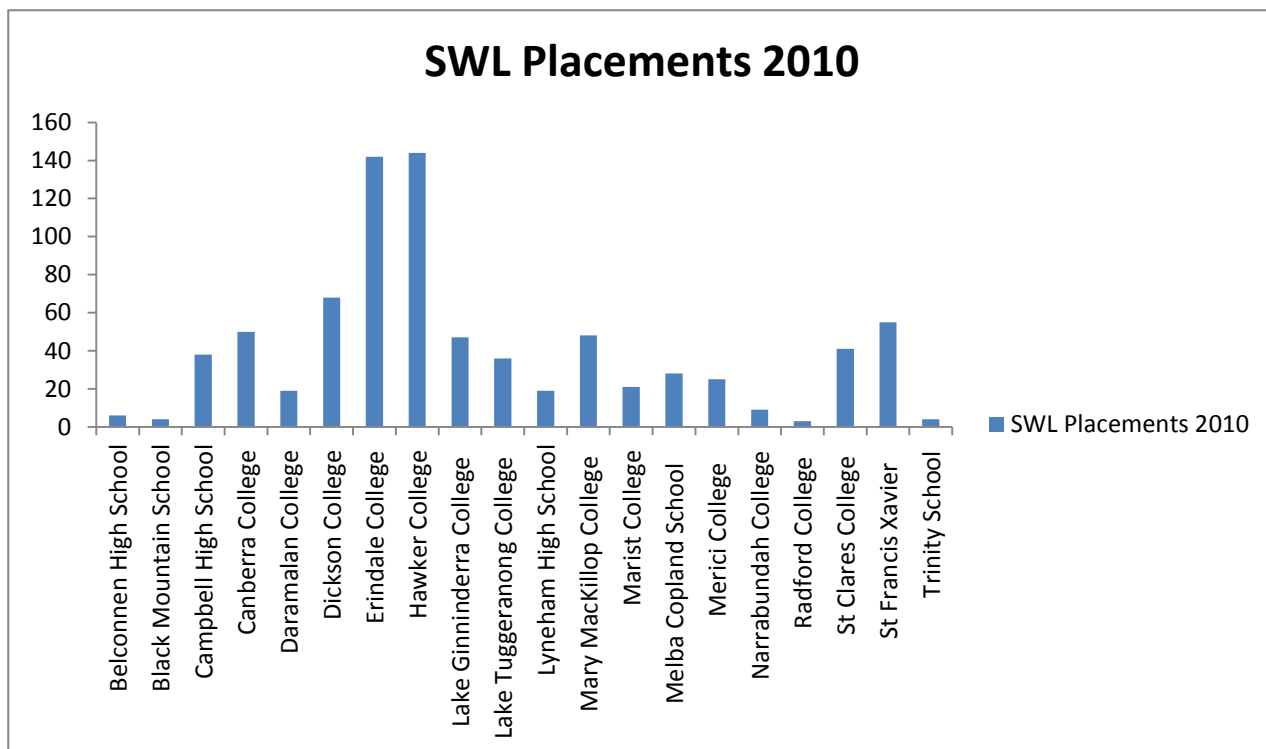
The SWL administrators have been working diligently to arrange placements for over 800 VETiS students this year. Procedures are constantly being monitored and reviewed as necessary. Substantial changes have been made to the “Experience Counts SWL Guidelines” for both non-government and public schools in order to streamline procedures and offer the support required for teachers across the system.

### Summary of Statistics for 2010:

- 844 total placements
  - 524 from Public Colleges
  - 67 from Public High Schools
  - 215 from Non-Government Schools
  - 38 WorldSkills Participants
  - 73 cancellations
  
- Origin of placements
  - 500 placements made by SWL administrators (via work experience database and Pathways 9)
  - 204 placements made by individual schools on work experience database
  - 140 additional placements made by schools.
  
- Areas not addressed in 2010
  - placement by industry area
  - placement by gender.

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The following graph gives a breakdown of SWL placements in both public and non-government schools. Some schools are not represented as data was not supplied.



## Conclusion

In 2010 the focus for SWL has been to consolidate past processes and raise the profile of SWL in general. For 2011 this will be strengthened and enhanced through the revised “Experience Counts SWL Guidelines” for both non-government and public schools and accreditation of the SWL units in BSSS course documents. Planned work on industry specific checklists, when completed, will support schools in their on-the-job assessment of students studying VETiS.

Visits to schools will continue to support VET staff, as well as liaison with industry to ensure authentic learning is taking place and to maintain the integrity of SWL placements.

SWL remains in high demand as we approach mid-year in 2011 with administrators working hard to broker placements with employers. Procedures are constantly being monitored and reviewed as necessary. Work is continuing on the development of SWL checklists to assist with the gathering of evidence for assessment of students on-the-job. A workshop in June 2011 progressed this process.

## Trade Training Centres

Work in the ACT around developing a proposal for Trade Training Centres (TTCs) in the government school sector has been a catalyst for improving communication between the high schools and colleges around VET and awareness of VET as a valuable educational pathway has been raised amongst ACT public school Principals.

The concept of developing a strategic approach to VET delivery in School Networks is under consideration as the strength and benefits of the School Network TTC approach becomes more obvious, such as Industry Advisory Groups engaging in quality discussions with Principals and school representatives.

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School Networks have developed a teacher qualifications audit and are developing plans for sharing facilities and resources for VET professional learning and up skilling. Awareness and deeper understanding of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) and the implications of the move to the national regulator are increasing. A Principals Consultative Group with representation from School Networks will provide broader advice on VET governance and finances and a rationalisation of VET programs and RTO status may be considered through the development of an ACT VET strategic plan.

### ACT Reform 3 – Alternative Programs

Performance indicators include:

- Number of students in these settings undertaking VET qualifications leading to Certificate II attainment.

The ACT has implemented Alternative Programs to assist in meeting the *ACT Youth Commitment* and targets under the ACT YAT NP. Alternative Program activity provides support for existing alternative programs and stakeholders to assist students at risk to achieve Certificate II nationally accredited qualifications. A .6 School Leader C has been appointed to coordinate and develop Alternative Programs, and the activities generated are supported by the Partnership Broker’s READY program and Youth Connections.

Young people who wish to participate in any of the programs must belong to one of the following categories immediately before commencing the training course:

- a person with a disability, mental illness, which may affect access to training and employment
- an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- a youth at risk (aged 17-24 years)
- a humanitarian refugee.

The following activities and programs have been established to date:

#### Sam Cawthorn Workshops – 11 and 12 May

Sam Cawthorn, young Tasmanian of the Year in 2009 presented two highly engaging and motivational workshops to disengaged youth, titled “Throw out your Excuse Book” at the Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning on 11 and 12 May. All government and non government schools and alternative education settings received information about this event and were invited. One hundred and thirty youth at risk of disengaging from school from government, non government schools and alternative education settings and 20 staff attended.

#### Pace It Programs

This is a fully funded six week program designed to reengage disengaged youth with education, training and vocational pathways. The program is delivered flexibly with students attending school two days per week and a vocational skills program with Caloola three days per week, followed by work experience. Caloola is an Australian Apprenticeships Centre, a member of Job Services Australia and a RTO. A teacher or youth worker attends part of the program with the students.

Program Two is in progress involving Calwell High School and Chisholm High School with eight students participating, and Program Three commenced on Monday 23 May involving Melba Copeland and

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Belconnen High Schools with ten students participating. Students have the opportunity to gain their Construction OH&S Induction White Card, Certificate I Business, and Certificate I Community Services during the program. Program Four is currently being planned for Term 3.

The partners in the program are the Education and Training Directorate , Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS), Caloola, the Australian Federal Police, and CRS Australia. CRS Australia is a provider of disability employment and assessment services to people with a disability, injury or health condition.

#### CCCares - Cert III Hospitality Australian School-based Apprenticeships (ASBAs)

CCCares provides a best practice model for pregnant and parenting students to access education in the ACT, offering Year 12 Certification; goal oriented learning packages, on-line learning and employability skills within a mainstream ACT Government College context.

Delivery of Certificate III Hospitality is taking place one day a week at CCCares during Term 2, in partnership with Templar, a local recruitment agency specialising in the area of Hospitality, and Access Training (RTO). Twelve students have signed up and will be completing an ASBA in addition to their Cert III Hospitality training. This is a first for CCCares and the girls are very excited to have this opportunity.

#### CCCares – Cert II Business Administration

Certificate II Business Administration continues to be delivered by the CIT at CCCares one day per week, enabling students to work toward Certificate II Business Administration. By the end of 2011 approximately 15 students will have completed this qualification.

#### Murrumbidgee School, Bimberi Youth Justice Centre – Cert II Construction Pathways Program

Bimberi Youth Justice Centre is the ACT's new youth custodial facility and is the first youth custodial facility in Australia to be designed, built and operated under Human Rights legislation. The purpose-built centre is designed in the style of a secondary school campus and can accommodate up to 40 young people aged from 10 - 18 years but can accommodate some young people up to age 21.

Bimberi staff work with government agencies and community organisations to provide education, training, healthcare and recreation to address the needs of young people. Certificate II Construction Pathways Program, delivered through CITEA and the Australian Brick and Blocklaying Training Foundation Ltd (ABBTF), is in progress. CITEA is a not for profit association operating as a Group Training Organisation and a RTO, focussing on the building of skills within the broader construction industry. Ten students are participating in this eight week program learning bricklaying and construction skills. It is hoped that the program will give these students employability skills they can utilise when back in the wider community. Four students have been offered future employment.

#### Clubstart - Wait Skills and Bar Skills course

Four fully funded programs will be delivered through Access Training and the Alternate Programs to students at risk. Two three-day Bar Skills (RSA) programs are in progress during Term 2 and two Wait Skills programs will be offered in Term 4. These programs will be offered at the Calwell Club and at Belconnen Labour Club. Places are limited to 10 young people for each course and young people must be attending alternate programs to be eligible.

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## Horticulture Program – Statement of Attainment

Through a partnership between the Alternate Programs, Greening Australia, Waterwatch and the Lions Youth Haven, a horticulture and environmental program is to be run in Term 3 and Term 4 for students in Years 9-12. On one day per week students will be involved in a variety of different activities either at the Greening Australia nursery in Aranda or at the Westwood Farm in Kambah. The focus of the program is 'learning by doing' with a taster day offered before commencement of the program. Twenty training places will be made available and students will have the opportunity to achieve a Statement of Attainment in Horticulture.

## Diversionsary Program for Youth

A Diversionsary program for young people who come before the courts is in the planning stages. Stakeholders include the ACT Education and Training Directorates Alternate Programs, AFP, the Youth Coalition, DHCS, and Caloola. The Youth Coalition is the peak youth affairs body in the ACT and is responsible for representing the interests of people aged between 12 and 25 years of age, and those who work with them.

## Strategic Funding Pool

The ACT Youth Attainment and Transitions Strategic Funding Pool (ACT YAT SFP) provides funding for innovative and sustainable projects that support or enhance the youth attainment and transition programs and activities in the ACT and support the achievement of the ACT targets identified under the YAT NP. The ACT YAT SFP is being jointly managed by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the ACT Education and Training Directorate (the Joint Working Group).

A total of \$250 000 is available each year – 30% (\$75 000) for public submissions, 30% for schools submissions, 30% for projects resulting from business partnerships, 10% for administration.

## School Submissions

In the 2010 SFP round funding of \$75 000 was allocated to schools, or clusters of schools, submitting project proposals that clearly adhered to the ACT YAT SFP guidelines. Projects funded under the ACT YAT SFP need to demonstrate that they will:

- develop and/or enhance programs that do one or more of the following:
  - support the positive participation of young people in school (particularly those previously disengaged from school)
  - support increases in the number of young people successfully achieving Year 12 Certificate outcomes or nationally accredited vocational qualifications at the Certificate II level
  - support the positive transition of young people through school or from schooling into further education, training or employment;
- address impediments and create new options to support the development of effective and sustainable youth attainment and transition partnership programs and activities;
- develop the capacity of the network of organisations delivering youth attainment and transition programs;
- support the achievement of the ACT targets identified under the YAT NP;
- promote the youth attainment and transitions programs and services in the ACT;
- be supported by evidence based research, including an analysis of data; and
- may support career and transition research.

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In Semester 2 2010, five grants were made for school based projects under the ACT YAT SFP. A total of \$52,600 was allocated to projects which focused on a wide range of innovative strategies aimed at the reengagement of young people, building partnerships between schools and the community, improving transitions for young people at risk and improving learning environments.

Grants of \$15,000 were available to Canberra College CCCares and to Wanniasa School. CCCares used the grant to establish an in-house training and development program, which brought together specialised trainers to provide students with vocational, face-to-face, employment specific qualifications and assistance in presentation and grooming. Wanniasa School focused on establishing partnerships between three ACT schools and community business partners by providing training for potential mentors and holding events to raise awareness of mentoring opportunities within the community. Dickson College used a grant of \$4,100 to enhance its student services hub, expanding the available learning spaces and creating an enriching, flexible learning centre with virtual learning and a drop-in facility.

A transition project initiated within the Education and Training Directorate attracted a grant of \$12,300 to provide tutoring support for youth in alternate programs across the ACT who had been identified as 'at risk'. The tutoring was aimed at reengaging the participants with school and introducing them to vocational pathways with nationally accredited qualifications. Erindale College received a grant of \$6,200 for The Walkabout Adventure project which was designed to re-establish contact with those vulnerable youth who had become disengaged from the College.

### ***Public Submissions***

Submissions from community groups seeking funding through the YAT SFP varied in scope from *ACT wide research into the best models* for reengaging youth to a proposal to support the transitions of a small group of vulnerable young people at one school. A total of \$79,400 has been allocated.

A grant of \$27,000 has been approved for the Association of Parents and Friends of ACT Schools to conduct workshops to assist parents in supporting their children in their later years of schooling. The project is designed to equip parents with tools and strategies to engage effectively with their children and to consequently enhance their school outcomes. An external facilitator will conduct a series of workshops for parents of students at all ACT schools in years 9 to 12.

The YWCA Mura Lanyon Youth Centre Employability Skills Project attracted a grant of \$23,500 to support disengaging and disengaged young people to successfully enter established training pathways and attain nationally accredited vocational qualifications through new and more flexible routes. Included in the program is a Ready to Learn literacy training course for youth workers and improved linkages between the youth centre, local high schools and CIT's Vocational College.

Canberra YWCA was granted a further \$17,000 for the Mura Lanyon Youth Centre Tuggeranong Outreach Project which is aimed at building on the employability project to deliver an outreach program. It is focused on disengaged and disengaging young people who do not attend youth centres, and aims to develop their readiness to enter established training pathways. The project involves the engagement of an outreach development program planning consultant, and reframing the activities at the outreach settings with a focus on employability skills and literacy.

A project designed to improve transitions and school experiences for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has been proposed by Jennifer Sexton Productions. A grant of \$9,400 has been approved for the



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provision of an early intervention and holistic approach to positive school participation in the form of training in emotional literacy and coaching dialogue for ACT Indigenous students and their parents, guardians or carers. Several of the students and their carers will be the focus of recorded interviews which will track their progress.

Black Mountain School received a grant of \$2,500 to support its Helping Hands for Healthy Horizons program, which assists young people with moderate to severe intellectual disability to transition through school or from schooling into further education, training or employment. The program provides meaningful work experience for students in other school canteens. Students are exposed to team building, OH&S, problem solving, personal presentation and other employability skills within a supportive environment in the wider community.

In conjunction with the well-established Students Participating in Community Enterprises or SPICE program, which is an early intervention program targeting ACT students between the ages of 12 and 15 who are at risk of leaving school before completing year 10, Volunteering ACT applied for a grant of \$35,798 for the *LitSPICE* project. The focus of the proposal was to transform and port paper based workplace literacy and numeracy skills modules used by SPICE into electronic form. It was envisaged that the e-learning platform would improve flexibility for students and tutors and allow for an extension of scope within modules to enhance student centred learning.

### ***Business Partnerships Submissions***

The University of Queensland was successful in their submission for a grant of \$85,000 to conduct research to determine the principles necessary to cater for the needs of young people in the ACT who may be disengaged from mainstream schooling and thus be transient and/or unaccounted for in continuing education, training or work. The project aims to gauge the scope of disengagement in the ACT, to explore and assess the flexible and alternative learning options in place and to identify possible future frameworks to improve and augment existing provisions.

Eight school submissions were received in Round 1 for 2011, to the total value of \$111,150. These submissions are currently being evaluated by the Joint Working Group and successful applicants will be notified by mid-July 2011.

Further promotion and advertising of the ACT YAT SFP is planned to encourage a greater number of submissions from all categories.

## **Indigenous Reporting**

Improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and closing the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attainment is a fundamental part of creating a fair Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disaggregation of Performance Indicators within the Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership (YAT NP) provides a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendance, retention, and participation in middle secondary and lower levels of VET.

The YAT NP target rate for the ACT 20-24 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 or equivalent attainment is 80.2% in 2020. To advance this agenda the ACT has established the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Transitions Leadership Group (A&TSITLG). The aim of this group is to connect providers and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support agencies with each other and with schools

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to enable a coordinated, innovative, synergistic approach to the positive transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people through education and onto further education and training and/or employment.

The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Transitions Leadership Group (A&TSITLG) reports to the ACT Youth Commitment Steering Group (YCSG), which guides the development and implementation of the ACT *Youth Commitment* and the achievement of the ACT targets under the YAT NP.

The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Transitions Leadership Group is jointly chaired by Mr Phill Nean - Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, ACT Education and Training Directorate, and Ms Caroline Hughes - Director Yurauna Centre, Canberra Institute of Technology.

Current ACT activities which support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attainment are as follows:

- Commencing in 2008 and continuing, all government school Principals are required to have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander target in their Performance Appraisal Agreements. These are monitored by School Network Leaders during Principal Appraisal Reviews.
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in ACT Government schools are required to have a Personalised Learning Strategy (PLS)
- ACT Government schools track Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendance and performance to inform student learning and PLS
- A total of 110 schools are *Dare to Lead* Schools and many have developed Reconciliation Action Plans with their clusters schools and communities
- The ACT Government Education and Training Directorate has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic plan, *Education Matters 2010-2013*. This identifies the priorities and actions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education in ACT public schools and has a number of measurable targets
- The ACT Government Education and Training Directorate also has a Reconciliation Action Plan identifying targets to improve reconciliation outcomes
- The ACT Government has recently funded two initiatives to close the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in ACT Government schools. These are the Aspirations program, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scholarship program
- The Aspirations program began in 2009 and seeks to identify high achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and provide them with complementary extension activities and experiences with a view to improving the overall retention to higher education and achievement of these students. In 2011 there are 120 students across 37 government schools from years 5 to 12 in the Aspirations program
- **From the beginning of the 2011 school year, seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officers (ATSIEOs) are based in government high schools to support high schools and local primary schools. The focus is to improve attendance, establish a connection and build relationships between schools and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.**
- The ANU Secondary College Program which caters for talented year 11 and 12 students has a targeted focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to ensure representation in the cohort
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students receive a scholarship for program fees to study at CIT

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- CIT has a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student support Centre the *Yurauna Centre* which provides an individual case management approach with each student having a personal learning strategy (PLS)
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at CIT have access to intensive literacy and numeracy support and tutoring
  - CIT has a reconciliation statement which underpins all policies relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander training.
  - As each independent school is a self-governing and operating entity, there is no 'sector' program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Each independent school works with their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families directly to implement a holistic approach to education for each Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student.
  - Catholic Education Office (CEO) schools are responsible to the CEO, providing programs for their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within their own school environment. All CEO schools are *Dare to Lead* schools, with some schools having already developed their own Reconciliation Action Plan. CEO schools create individual programs that best suit the needs of individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
  - The CEO has a full-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officer who provides advice and support on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education to principals and schools, and coordinates support and mentoring of Aboriginal Education Workers.
  - CEO has appointed three Aboriginal Education Workers/Home School Liaison Officers who work in all CEO Schools. They support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within the classroom and the broader school setting to enhance the partnership between families of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their school. They also support teachers and staff in matters relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
  - The CEO has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Advisory Committee which liaises with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities throughout the Diocese, providing support through cross cultural education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Committee includes a nominated Ngunnawal rep, a parent rep, CIT rep, as well as representatives from the CEO, principals and teachers from within the ACT
  - CEO Colleges each have a nominated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Contact person who liaises with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and promotes an environment where the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students feel welcome and valued
  - All CEO schools participate in Sorry Day activities and celebrations for NAIDOC Week both as a System and individual schools

The individual schools will report their achievement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students using the following measures:

<b>Transitions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of students successfully transitioning between stages of schooling</li> </ul>
<b>Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance data</li> </ul>
<b>Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student satisfaction surveys</li> <li>Students enrolled in ANUSCP</li> <li>Students identified through ASPIRE program</li> <li>Students successful in gaining scholarships</li> </ul>
<b>Attainment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PIPS</li> <li>NAPLAN</li> <li>Year 10 completions</li> <li>Year 12 Certificate attainment</li> <li>VET qualifications</li> </ul>

### Total Full-time Enrolments

According to the ABS National Schools Statistics Collection, in 2010 the total enrolment of full-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in years 9, 10, 11 and 12 in the ACT was 345. According to the August 2010 ACT Schools Census, the total enrolment of full-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in years 9, 10, 11 and 12 in ACT public schools was 261.

The ABS National Schools Statistics Collection includes non-government schools. The ACT data provided is for public schools only.

**Table 1: Total enrolment of full-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in years 9, 10, 11 and 12 in ACT Public Schools by gender and year level.**

Year 9 Female	Year 9 Male	Year 10 Female	Year 10 Male	Year 11 Female	Year 11 Male	Year 12 Female	Year 12 Male	Mature
35	40	31	46	33	28	29	18	1
<b>TOTAL ALL YEARS</b>		<b>261</b>						

Source: August 2010 ACT Schools Census

In 2010, of the 4214 ACT year 12 graduates, 44 graduates identified as being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, just over one percent (1.05%). (ACT August Census 2010).

The ACT is unable to accurately track individuals from school to VET training as there is no common identifier and many RTOs (including CIT) provide encrypted student names to the VET Provider Collection. It is therefore impossible to correctly identify all those students without a year 12 qualification and not enrolled in school but who are enrolled in a VET course.

Three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were identified as having left school without year 12 certification but who had achieved a Certificate II level as an Australian School-based Apprentice in 2010 (ACT VET Management System AVMS2).

The total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 15 to 19 year old students who enrolled in Certificate II or higher qualifications in 2010 in the ACT was seventy six (76), as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 15 to 19 year old students who enrolled in Certificate II or higher qualifications in 2010 in the ACT.**

Qualification/Course Name	Number of Enrolled ATSI Students
ACT YEAR 12 CERTIFICATE	2
ADVANCED DIPLOMA OF DESIGN (DIGITAL MEDIA)	1
ADVANCED DIPLOMA OF PHOTOGRAPHY	1
ADVANCED DIPLOMA OF SCREEN AND MEDIA	1
CERTIFICATE II IN ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURAL ARTS	6
CERTIFICATE II IN ACCESS 10 (YEAR 10 ALTERNATIVE)	27
CERTIFICATE II IN CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT	2
CERTIFICATE II IN CONSTRUCTION PATHWAYS	1
CERTIFICATE II IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES (MEDIA)	1
CERTIFICATE II IN LEARNING OPTIONS	2
CERTIFICATE II IN RETAIL	3
CERTIFICATE II IN TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS (WAREHOUSING AND STORAGE)	1
CERTIFICATE III IN AUTOMOTIVE MECHANICAL TECHNOLOGY	4
CERTIFICATE III IN BUSINESS	10
CERTIFICATE III IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	1
CERTIFICATE III IN CABINET MAKING	1
CERTIFICATE III IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES	1
CERTIFICATE III IN DISABILITY	1
CERTIFICATE III IN FITNESS	1
CERTIFICATE III IN HAIRDRESSING	1
CERTIFICATE III IN HORTICULTURE (PARKS AND GARDENS)	1
CERTIFICATE III IN HOSPITALITY (COMMERCIAL COOKERY)	1
CERTIFICATE III IN PLUMBING	2
CERTIFICATE IV IN MASSAGE THERAPY PRACTICE	1
CERTIFICATE IV IN YOUTH WORK	2
DIPLOMA OF GOVERNMENT	1

Source: 2010 VET Provider Collection.

**Real retention rates and priority enrolment areas (PEAs) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from August 2005 - 2010 in ACT public schools**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students system wide				
Number of students in year 7 in 2005 August census	Number of matched students still in the ACT in 2010 August census who started in 2005	Percentage of students who remained in 2010 from 2005	Number of students who progressed from their feeder high school to in area college	Percentage of students who remained in year 12 in the PEA based on high school
73	25	34.2%	13	52.0%
39	12	30.8%	8	66.7%
34	13	38.2%	5	38.5%
Network 1- Belconnen School Network				
13	4	30.8%	0	0.0%
7	2	28.6%	0	0.0%
6	2	33.3%	0	0.0%

Network 2 - Gungahlin/North Canberra				
15	4	26.7%	3	75.0%
10	3	30.0%	2	66.7%
5	1	20.0%	1	100.0%
Network 3 - South/Weston.				
13	7	53.8%	3	42.9%
6	3	50.0%	2	66.7%
7	4	57.1%	1	25.0%
Network 4 - Tuggeranong.				
32	10	31.3%	7	70.0%
16	4	25.0%	4	100.0%
16	6	37.5%	3	50.0%

Total Persons
Female
Male

Source: August Census 2005 and 2010

#### Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in ACT Schools 2009-2010

##### Year 9 to 10

Sector	Sector 2	Gender	Year Level 2009	Number of ATSI students in 2009	Year Level 2010	Number of ATSI students in 2010	Apparent Retention Rate Percentage
Public	Public	Female	Year 9	30	Year 10	31	103.3%
Public	Public	Male	Year 9	47	Year 10	46	97.9%
Public	Public	Persons	Year 9	77	Year 10	77	100.0%
Non-govt	CEO	Female	Year 9	9	Year 10	12	133.3%
Non-govt	CEO	Male	Year 9	12	Year 10	8	66.7%
Non-govt	CEO	Persons	Year 9	21	Year 10	20	95.2%
Non-govt	Ind	Female	Year 9	3	Year 10	4	133.3%
Non-govt	Ind	Male	Year 9	7	Year 10	6	85.7%
Non-govt	Ind	Persons	Year 9	10	Year 10	10	100.0%
Non-govt	All non - govt	Persons	Year 9	31	Year 10	30	96.8%
<b>All ACT Schools</b>	<b>All ACT</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Year 9</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>99.1%</b>

	<b>Schools</b>				<b>10</b>		
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### Year 10 to 11

Public	Public	Male	Year 10	30	Year 11	28	93.3%
Public	Public	Female	Year 10	24	Year 11	33	137.5%
Public	Public	Persons	Year 10	54	Year 11	<b>61</b>	<b>113.0%</b>
Non-govt	CEO	Female	Year 10	10	Year 11	7	70.0%
Non-govt	CEO	Male	Year 10	7	Year 11	7	100.0%
Non-govt	CEO	Persons	Year 10	17	Year 11	14	<b>82.4%</b>
Non-govt	Ind	Male	Year 10	3	Year 11	0	0.0%
Non-govt	Ind	Persons	Year 10	3	Year 11	0	<b>0.0%</b>
Non-govt	All non - govt	Persons	Year 10	20	Year 11	14	<b>70.0%</b>
<b>All ACT Schools</b>	<b>All ACT Schools</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Year 10</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>101.4%</b>

### Year 11 to 12

Public	Public	Female	Year 11	22	Year 12	30	136.4%
Public	Public	Male	Year 11	27	Year 12	18	66.7%
Public	Public	Persons	Year 11	49	Year 12	48	<b>98.0%</b>
Non-govt	CEO	Female	Year 11	6	Year 12	5	83.3%
Non-govt	CEO	Male	Year 11	8	Year 12	4	50.0%
Non-govt	CEO	Persons	Year 11	14	Year 12	9	<b>64.3%</b>
Non-govt	All non - govt	Persons	Year 11	14	Year 12	9	<b>64.3%</b>
<b>All ACT Schools</b>	<b>All ACT Schools</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>Year 12</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>90.5%</b>

Source: ABS 4221.0 Schools, Australia 2010, Table 2

## The Compact with Young Australians

The ACT *Education Act 2004* was amended so that from 1 January 2010 a compulsory education age replaced the former compulsory school age. This amendment requires young people to remain in education until achieving Year 10 and then participate full-time in education, training or employment until completing Year 12 or equivalent, or reaching age 17, whichever occurs first. In order to implement these changes the ACT Education and Training Directorate has amended existing policies and developed new policies. These policies will guide consistent and transparent decision-making and clearly outline roles and responsibilities and the approach the Directorate is taking in applying the changed legislative requirements.

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Implementation of the Compact will provide:

- young people aged 15-19 years with an entitlement to an education or training place for any government subsidised qualification, subject to admission requirements and course availability, effective from 1 July 2009
- young people aged 20-24 years with an entitlement to an education or training place for any government subsidised qualification which would result in the individual attaining a higher qualification, subject to admission requirements and course availability effective from 1 January 2010
- young people aged between 16-24 years of age are guaranteed a government subsidised place at the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) and admitted to a program subject to entry requirements and program availability
- 20-24 year olds are also able to access HECS-supported places at universities in the ACT, subject to entry requirements and program availability.



The year 12 or equivalent attainment rate for 20-24 year-olds is a strategic indicator of the Directorate for the 2011- 12 financial year and will be reported on in the Annual Report 2010-11. The data in the following table shows that in the ACT, 89.5 percent of people aged 20-24 years had a year 12 or equivalent qualification in 2010. This compares with 85.6 percent nationally. The next highest jurisdiction is Victoria at 88.1 percent.

Jurisdiction	Persons Percent
<b>ACT</b>	<b>89.5</b>
NSW	86.0
Vic.	88.1
Qld	87.9
SA	80.2
WA	79.5
Tas.	77.1
NT	73.1
<b>Australia</b>	
Males	82.4
Females	88.9
Persons	<b>85.6</b>

Source:ABS Education and Work, Australia, May 2010

For the 2011-12 financial year, year 12 or equivalent attainment rate for 20-24 year-olds will be a strategic indicator. This will be consistent with performance measures in the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions.

### *Background*

- To maximise the opportunities for all young people to make a positive transition from school to further education, training or work, the ACT Government has committed to increasing the proportion of 20-24 year- olds with a Year 12 Certificate or equivalent vocational qualification to 94.3 percent by 2012.
- Attainment of a year 12 (or equivalent) qualification is also one of three strategic targets of the Council of Australian Governments as part of its education reform in Australia.
- The 2010 data shows that in the ACT, 88.4 percent of people aged 19 years held a year 12 or equivalent qualification. This compares with 73 percent nationally. The next highest jurisdiction is Western Australia at 77.7 percent.

Jurisdiction	Males %	Females %	Persons %
ACT	90.1	86.8	88.4

### *ACT Priority Support Program*

The ACT Priority Support Program (PSP) provides training opportunities for Certificate I, II or III qualifications. PSP is designed to provide access to training opportunities for people who cannot readily access, or who do not have a high chance of success in, other government funded training programs. For such participants barriers to access and success may include cultural difference, physical or mental disability, length of time since previous education and training, lack of success in previous education, literacy and/or numeracy levels which are inadequate to support participation in other formal education and training and lack of emotional readiness and confidence to undertake formal education and training.

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In 2010 there were 202 commencements in PSP for participants aged between 20 and 24 years.

### ***ACT Productivity Places Program***

The Productivity Places Program (PPP) is part of the Commonwealth Government's Skilling Australia for the Future initiative and aims to reduce skills shortages and increase the productivity of industry and enterprises. PPP training places are available to job seekers and existing workers.

In 2010 in the ACT there were 137 PPP commencements for job seekers, and 161 commencements for existing workers for participants aged between 20 and 24 years.

## **Youth Connections and School Business Community Partnership Brokers in ACT**

### **National Summary**

In the early stages of 2010, the network of a 107 Partnership Brokers focused on engaging with stakeholders, and developing environmental scans and strategic plans for their region. As the year progressed, providers' focus shifted to exploring partnership opportunities and creating or enhancing partnerships to meet their region's needs.

### **Program Status**

By April 2011, there were approximately 1200 active and self-sustaining partnerships associated with Partnership Brokers nationally (excludes Victorian data<sup>14</sup>) involving over 8000 partner organisations. These partnerships are undertaking a range of activity to support the learning and development of young people in their community. Approximately 19 per cent of these partnerships have an Indigenous focus. There have been approximately 5800 Outcomes Framework Key Performance Measure (KPM) evaluations with approximately 1770 (30%) of those evaluations rating the partnership's progress as 'Considerable' or 'Achieved'. Approximately 80 per cent of the partnerships being supported by Partnership Brokers are newly created. The remaining 20 per cent are pre-existing partnerships that are being enhanced with support from the Partnership Brokers.

Providers have submitted their 2010 Case Studies which are currently under review with a number being developed to share good practice as well as for promotional purposes. Case Studies have provided some excellent examples of partnership initiatives across a broad range of focus areas involving a variety of stakeholders. They include examples of providers leveraging off and adding value to local, state and Commonwealth programs/initiatives, as well as examples of innovative partnership models being established to meet the needs of young people. Case Studies have also highlighted the complex, multifaceted nature of the Partnership Broker role.

### **Stakeholder engagement**

While these national figures and case studies indicate significant progress, individual providers and the program have also faced some challenges. One of these challenges has been connecting with education

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14 In Victoria, the Partnership Brokers program is delivered through the Victorian Government's Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) and is managed by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

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authorities in a way that enables Partnership Brokers to align their priorities for partnership development with the priorities for schooling at a systemic level.

Providers have also reported that some school leaders don't understand the role of the Partnership Broker as a facilitator, rather than service delivery provider. For historical reasons, confusion about the Partnership Brokers role is often centred around expectations that Partnership Brokers should be involved in coordinating Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) placements. This misunderstanding has resulted in tensions and impacted on some schools' willingness to consider how a partnership approach, supported by a Partnership Broker, can assist them to achieve the outcomes required under the Government's broad education reform agenda. Managing expectations and educating stakeholders about what Partnership Brokers can do, and importantly, what they don't do, has been an ongoing challenge for providers. In order to overcome this challenge, there is a need for education authorities to send a clear message to school leaders about the intent of the Partnership Brokers program and the benefits of schools partnering with business and community.

In terms of key stakeholder engagement, provider reporting has shown that parents and families represent just one per cent of the total number of organisations involved in partnerships. This data is supported by results from a recent provider survey which found that 75 per cent of Partnership Brokers felt that parents and families were the most challenging stakeholder to work with. While the number of parents in partnerships is low, the data shows that there are some emerging partnerships that involve parent bodies such as parent and citizen associations and state parent councils. There are a number of other partnerships that are focused on supporting parents without including them as formal members of the partnership.

Another challenge for providers is building cross-sectoral partnerships involving stakeholders that may not have worked together before. Within this context, an important part of the Partnership Brokers' work is building partners' understanding of each other's needs, developing trust between partners and securing commitment to a shared goal. To do this effectively, Partnership Brokers need to engage with organisations at a decision-making level where there is authority to enter into partnership arrangements and commit resources. Providers report that this is particularly challenging when working with schools and school systems.

### Variation in performance

It is clear that there are varying degrees of success amongst providers and some providers appear to be struggling to deliver the program in line with program expectations. There are a number of reasons for this, including:

- Some Partnership Broker organisations were contracted under previous programs in a 'hands-on' service delivery role. Some of these organisations have struggled to make the transition to a strategic, facilitation role.
- The varying nature of infrastructure, culture and capacity across Service Regions. There are different challenges for providers operating in metropolitan, rural and remote areas. Some Service Regions, and some communities within Service Regions, are more conducive to partnership development than others.
- The capacity of personnel undertaking the Partnership Broker role also varies across, and within regions. Some providers, particularly those in remote regions, have had difficulty finding people with the necessary skill set to deliver program outcomes.

### Support from DEEWR

DEEWR has supported the achievement of program outcomes through the provision of induction forums, regional forums, training on the information management system, professional development, support tools and the funding of jurisdiction-based and national provider networks. The contract management approach

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in the first year of operation has been intensive, focused on reinforcing provider understanding and on developing provider capacity.

Provider networks at both a jurisdiction and national level have been established and are developing and implementing strategies to support improved outcomes for the program. However, performance of the networks has been variable and significant examples of the networks proactively engaging with organisations and peak bodies at a state and/or national level are yet to be seen.

### **Program Priorities**

61 per cent of Partnership Brokers reported they were 'very effective' or 'extremely effective' in addressing their top regional priority for 2010. Among the most commonly reported priorities were:

- Increasing Indigenous engagement and attainment.
- Addressing regional or industry specific skills shortages.
- Minimising the impact of mental health, drug abuse and homelessness issues on retention and attainment.
- Enhancing parental and family engagement.
- Improving regional and remote service delivery.
- Engaging and improving outcomes for humanitarian refugees and culturally and linguistically diverse young people.
- Improving literacy and numeracy levels across all age groups
- Supporting youth mentoring arrangements.

### **Collaboration between Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections providers**

An important feature of the Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections programs is the requirement for providers to work together to identify and address the needs of their region. In some regions, providers are working well together and progressing partnership arrangements to improve support services, however, the level of collaboration in other regions is variable. In regions where collaboration has been limited, Youth Connections providers appear to have concentrated on delivery of case management services and Partnership Brokers have focused on stakeholder engagement and partnership development more broadly.

## **AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

### **Context**

There is one Youth Attainment and Transitions (YAT) service region in the ACT and the Partnership Brokers program is delivered by one organisation, the ACT and Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In the ACT, DEEWR and the ACT Department of Education and Training (DET) set aside a portion of Partnership Broker program funding to establish a Youth Attainment and Transitions Strategic Funding Pool (YAT SFP). The YAT SFP is jointly managed by DEEWR and ACT DET through a Joint Working Group, which includes the Partnership Broker and Youth Connections program providers as non-voting members. YAT SFP funds are used to support partnership initiatives that are generated through a submission process. Applications for funding can be submitted by schools, stakeholders from the broader community or the Partnership Broker. The Partnership Brokers role is to work with stakeholders to develop their funding submissions, and to assist them to explore other sources of support for initiatives not funded through the YAT SFP.

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## Program Status

By April 2011, there were over 20 active and self-sustaining partnerships associated with Partnership Brokers in the ACT involving approximately 70 partner organisations. These partnerships are undertaking a range of activity to support the learning and development of young people in their community. Approximately nine per cent of these partnerships have an Indigenous focus. There have been approximately 130 Outcomes Framework Key Performance Measure (KPM) evaluations with around four (3%) of those evaluations rating the partnership's progress as 'Considerable' or 'Achieved'.

At the end of 2010, the READY program adjusted its priorities in response to a growing strategic opportunity for improving the accessibility of mentoring for young people across the ACT. Organisations offering mentoring to young people have responded enthusiastically to this, and following research and consultation with all such organisations in Canberra, a summit was held in May and plans are well underway for a network of mentoring organisations for the ACT. Many other potential partnerships have been discussed and will be pursued in the coming months.

The Partnership Broker and Youth Connections providers in the ACT have a strong collaborative relationship, with regular meetings and a number of partnerships they are working together to support.

## Challenges

While the information above indicates significant progress, individual providers and the program have also faced many of the challenges outlined in the National Summary. In the ACT, some key stakeholders with well established relationships with the previous Local Community Partnership (LCP) program provider, initially resisted the implementation of the Partnership Brokers program and the provision of a more strategic, facilitation role. This is particularly true for schools that had become reliant on the direct service delivery provided under the LCP program.

Another challenge faced by the Partnership Broker in the ACT is the perception that the Partnership Broker is representing the Chamber of Commerce. Stakeholders with little understanding of the role of the Partnership Broker sometimes based their perception of the program's intent on assumptions about the role of the Chamber of Commerce in the local community. This led to expectations that the Partnership Broker would support partnerships by providing funding and employment opportunities, rather than through strategic facilitation and capacity building.

In 2010, the ACT Government announced a cut to funding for public schools of one per cent (\$4 million). One of the implications of this Efficiency Dividend is a reduction in DET staff. This reduction is occurring in the context of a commitment from DET to students in the form of the ACT Youth Commitment, and has been identified as a challenge for Partnership Brokers who are finding it more difficult to engage with DET personnel in a way that supports the development of strategic partnerships.

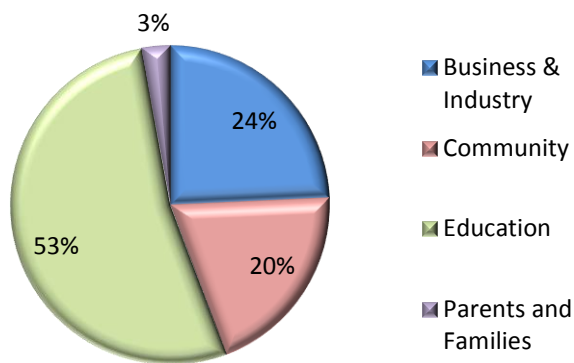
Table A – Number of Organisations in Partnerships by Stakeholder Group (as at 12 April 2011)

This table shows the stakeholder groups represented in partnerships added during the selected reporting period.

**Note:** this data includes organisations in partnerships with status active, self-sustaining, draft, inactive and terminated. National figures do not include Victoria.

Stakeholder Group	State (ACT)		National	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Business & Industry	17	24%	2475	29%
Community	14	20%	2297	27%
Education	37	53%	3741	43%
Parents and Families	2	3%	127	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8640</b>	<b>100%</b>

**ACT Partnerships by Stakeholder Group**



**National Partnerships by Stakeholder Group**

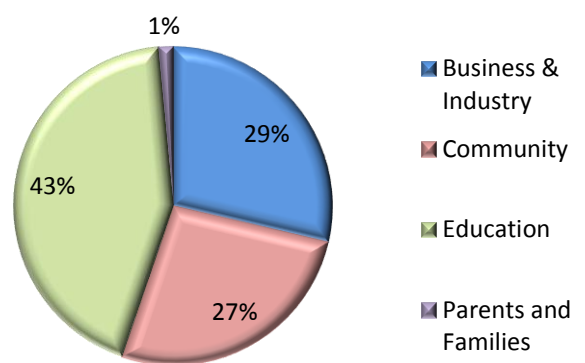


Table B – Key Performance Measure (KPM) Evaluation Ratings (ACT) (data as at 12 April)

This table shows the number of times each KPM evaluation value (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) has been selected, based on the latest evaluation rating recorded in the system (YATMIS). KPMs map to one of four program outcomes. Each evaluation value corresponds to a descriptor of the progress a partnership has made against a particular KPM. The values and their corresponding descriptors are outlined below:

Key: 1 = Limited Progress; 2 = Some Progress; 3 = Satisfactory Progress; 4 = Considerable Progress; 5 = Achieved

Outcome	Total KPM Evaluations	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Education and training providers partnering with stakeholders in their community to ensure all young people participate in challenging, relevant and engaging learning that broadens personal aspirations and improves education and transition outcomes.</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>24 (44%)</b>	<b>21 (39%)</b>	<b>7 (13%)</b>	<b>2 (4%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>

The following KPMs contribute to this outcome:

An increase in the number of education and training providers who accredit community-based learning	12	50%	33%	8%	8%	0%
An increase in the number of education and training providers who have increased opportunities for young people to access trained mentors	15	47%	40%	13%	0%	0%
An increase in the number of education and training providers who have increased their career practitioner capacity	12	50%	42%	8%	0%	0%
Opportunities for meaningful learning as a result of education and training providers partnering with other stakeholders	15	33%	40%	20%	7%	0%

The data above shows that:

- Providers reported 4% of partnerships that have been evaluated have *achieved* or made *considerable progress* against this outcome.
- Providers reported 83% of partnerships that have been evaluated have made *limited* or *some progress* against this outcome.
- There are 15 partnerships (75% of the total number of partnerships in ACT) that have made progress towards providing '*opportunities for meaningful learning as a result of education and training providers partnering with other stakeholders*'. Providers reported that 7% of these partnerships have *achieved* or made *considerable progress* against this KPM.

Outcome	Total KPM Evaluations	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Business and industry actively engaged in sustainable partnerships that support the development of young people, contribute to the skills and knowledge of the future workforce and improve young people's education and transition outcomes.</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>15 (47%)</b>	<b>12 (38%)</b>	<b>5 (16%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>

The following KPMs contribute to this outcome:

An increase in the number of businesses providing mentoring/coaching opportunities for young people	12	58%	33%	8%	0%	0%
An increase in the number of businesses providing professional development opportunities for teachers and career practitioners	10	40%	30%	30%	0%	0%
An increase in the number of businesses providing quality workplace and community learning opportunities for young people	10	40%	50%	10%	0%	0%

The data above shows that:

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- Providers reported 0% of partnerships that have been evaluated have *achieved* or made *considerable progress* against this outcome.
  - Providers reported 85% of partnerships that have been evaluated have made *limited* or *some progress* against this outcome.
  - There are 12 partnerships (60% of the total number of partnerships in ACT) that have made progress towards increasing '*the number of businesses providing mentoring/coaching opportunities for young people*'. Providers reported that 0% of these partnerships have *achieved* or made *considerable progress* against this KPM



Outcome	Total KPM Evaluations	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Partnerships that support parents and families to provide an informed and supportive environment for all young people to enable lifelong learning and career and pathway planning, and improve their education and transition outcomes.<sup>15</sup></b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9 (53%)</b>	<b>6 (35%)</b>	<b>2 (12%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>

The following KPMs contribute to this outcome:

An increase in the number of parents and families that are actively engaged in supporting learning inside and outside the classroom	2	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
An increase in the number of parents and families that are actively involved in career transition planning for their children	4	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
An increase in the number of parents and families that are better informed about learning and career options	4	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%
An increase in the number of parents and families that are confident to interact with education and training providers, employers and community groups to support participation and engagement of their children	4	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%
An increase in the number of parents and families that have improved understanding of the link between learning and career aspirations	3	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%

The data above shows that:

- Providers reported 0% of partnerships that have been evaluated have *achieved* or made *considerable progress* against this outcome.
- Providers reported 88% of partnerships that have been evaluated have made *limited* or *some progress* against this outcome.
- There are 4 partnerships (20% of the total number of partnerships in ACT) that have made progress towards providing ‘an increase in the number of parents and families that are better informed about learning and career options’. Providers reported that 0% of these partnerships have *achieved* or made *considerable progress* against this KPM.

Outcome	Total KPM Evaluations	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Community groups participating in partnerships that harness resources and build social capital to support young people to identify and achieve their goals and improve their education and transition outcomes.</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14 (47%)</b>	<b>9 (30%)</b>	<b>5 (17%)</b>	<b>2 (7%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>

The following KPMs contribute to this outcome:

An increase in the number of community groups that partner with stakeholders to align services for young people and reduce service duplication and resource wastage	4	50%	25%	0%	25%	0%
An increase in the number of community groups that partner with stakeholders to build networks and linkages among agencies to support young people	5	20%	20%	40%	20%	0%
An increase in the number of community groups that partner with stakeholders to harness and grow community resources for young people	3	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
An increase in the number of community groups that partner with stakeholders to identify and respond to emerging trends and skill needs with reference to young people	3	33%	33%	33%	0%	0%
An increase in the number of community groups that partner with stakeholders to improve young people's employability and life skills	5	40%	40%	20%	0%	0%

<sup>15</sup> In many cases, progress against Parent and Family KPMs has been achieved through partnerships that do not include parent or family groups as members. While there are some partnerships that do involve parent and family groups, these groups represent only one per cent of the total number of organisations in partnerships.

An increase in the number of community groups that partner with stakeholders to provide mentoring and coaching opportunities for young people	4	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
An increase in the number of community groups that partner with stakeholders to provide young people with opportunities to connect with the community	6	50%	33%	17%	0%	0%

	Total KPM Evaluations	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>

## Youth Connections – National Summary

In the first 14 months of operation, Youth Connections has provided individual support services to 24,738 young people. 11,320 young people have achieved a final outcome in the program, which represents re-engagement or a sustained improvement in a young person’s engagement with education, training or employment. A further 5,090 were assessed as making significant progress in addressing their barriers to full engagement in education. In addition, 3,578 activities were held to find and connect with at-risk young people, with providers linking with 125,900 young people through these activities. In this period, providers undertook a range of initiatives to strengthen services in the region, with 3,049 activities being held.

Under ‘*Individual Support Services*’, Youth Connections providers must deliver flexible and individualised services to young people at risk, including those who are most at risk of disengaging from learning or disconnecting from school or education through to those who are severely disconnected from education, family and community. Delivering services to individual young people has been a focus for providers in the first year of the program. Many providers had established services and were able to quickly deliver this aspect of the program. While Youth Connections has achieved significant results in 2010, the elements of the program relating to outreach and re-engagement activities, and activities to strengthen services in the region have been slower to be established and embedded in service delivery.

Under ‘*Outreach and Re-engagement Activities*’, Youth Connections providers must offer proactive, youth focused re-engagement activities and outreach services. Outreach and re-engagement services aim to find severely disengaged young people, and to connect these young people with activities to support their re-engagement with learning, family and community. In the first 14 months there has been considerable activity in this area, however not all of this activity has been well targeted or outcomes focused.

Under ‘*Strengthening Services in the Region Activities*’, Youth Connections providers must work to build capacity and strengthen services for young people at risk and ensure that providers of other services in a region are connected. Again, providers have been reporting effort in this area, however it appears provider understanding and capacity in this area is not strong. Some of this effort has been directed toward awareness raising and promotional activities or attendance at stakeholder group meetings, neither of which would be considered ‘Strengthening Services in the Region Activities’. This area of provider performance is most closely linked with the School Business Community Partnership Brokers program, and providers are expected to work together, where appropriate, to address the needs of their region. In some regions providers are working well together and progressing partnership arrangements to improve support services, however, the level of collaboration in other regions is variable.

The Youth Connections program includes a focus on Indigenous and humanitarian refugee young people. These two groups are more likely to be at risk, and may require mainstream programs to be tailored to meet their specific needs. The Youth Connections program has had mixed success in

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supporting these two target cohorts. Indigenous young people represent 18% of the caseload (more than 4,300 young people) receiving individual support services in the Youth Connections program, and 27% of outreach activities included an Indigenous focus. While the rate of Indigenous young people achieving outcomes is lower than for non-Indigenous, more than 1,500 Indigenous young people achieved a final outcome in the program, and a further 1,000 made progress in addressing their barriers to engagement. For humanitarian refugee participants, the program has been less successful at delivering support and achieving outcomes. Nationally, only 202 young humanitarian refugees have been provided with individual support services in the first 14 months of the program.

DEEWR has supported the achievement of program outcomes through the provision of induction forums, regional forums, training on the information management system, resource tools and the funding of jurisdiction based and national provider networks. The contract management approach in the first year of operation has been intensive and focused on reinforcing provider understanding and developing provider capacity. In February, DEEWR provided a redefinition of the service types, in an effort to clarify the intention of these activities for providers, and to focus their efforts. Case studies are being developed to strengthen provider understanding, and to demonstrate effective practice.

### Program Priorities

In 2011, DEEWR is working, with jurisdictions and provider networks, to improve program and provider performance in a number of areas. These focus areas have been identified based on the quantitative and qualitative data that providers have reported, through contract management activities, and through feedback from jurisdictions. These focus areas include:

- *Services to individual young people* – increasing the number and the quality of outcomes for severely disconnected young people
- *Outreach and Re-engagement Activities* – improving provider understanding and increasing the number of young people who are referred from outreach activities into case management
- *Strengthening Services in the Region Activities* – improving provider understanding and the effectiveness of activities delivered
- Indigenous young people and Closing the Gap – continuing the focus on this priority area
- Humanitarian refugees – building provider capacity and focusing effort for this cohort
- Youth Connections and Partnership Brokers – improving their relationships and translating these into outcomes for at risk young people
- Improving the quality of data and reporting from providers.

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## Australian Capital Territory Summary

### Context

In the ACT, the Youth Connections program is targeted to young people aged 12 to 18. There is one Youth Attainment and Transitions (YAT) service region in the ACT and the Youth Connections program is delivered by one organisation with four subcontractors. Youth Connections services are provided through 5 hub locations across the ACT in Civic, Belconnen, Gungahlin, Woden and Tuggeranong.

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government Disabilities, Housing and Community Services (DHCS) Office for Children, Youth and Family Support (OCYFS) offers a program called 'Youth Connection' that is similar to Youth Connections.

The Youth Connection Program run by the DHCS OCYFS offers a comparable albeit very small program. Youth Connections staff have had meetings with the program's manager to manage protocols set up in 2010 to ensure that the two services work collaboratively but do not duplicate services in the region. Youth Connection is able to offer short term case management and will often refer onto Youth Connections once this period is finished.

The ACT will have new programs after July 2011 that the provider may access for Youth Connections participants. Changes through the OCYFS DHCS Frame Work, will see new and or additional programs that will benefit young people and their families in the region.

### Program Status

In the first 14 months of operation in the ACT, Youth Connections has provided individual support services to 294 young people. 168 young people in the program achieved a final outcome, which represents re-engagement or a sustained improvement in a young person's engagement with education, training or employment. A further 62 were assessed as making significant progress in addressing their barriers to full engagement in education. In addition, 59 activities were held to find and connect with at-risk young people, with providers linking with 1,024 young people through these activities. In this period, providers undertook a range of initiatives to strengthen services in the region, with 29 activities being held.

Having a Youth Connections Outreach Worker based at each of the Hub services within youth centres has allowed clients to access support where they are located or where they have a connection. Each Youth Connections Outreach Worker also had a regular presence at the youth centre drop-in programs. This resulted in a high number of self referrals and allowed young people to connect with the service outside of scheduled appointment times and after traditional "business hours".

The ongoing support of ACT DET for Youth Connections created a strong platform for entry and collaborative partnerships with most schools in the ACT. The Youth Connections provider developed a referral pack, which was distributed to all ACT Department of Education and Training (DET) high schools and primary schools, targeting Welfare Teachers, Principals, Youth Support Workers, Counsellors and Pastoral Care Coordinators. The referral pack was developed in conjunction with DET ACT and provided a structured referral pathway flow chart for both case management and

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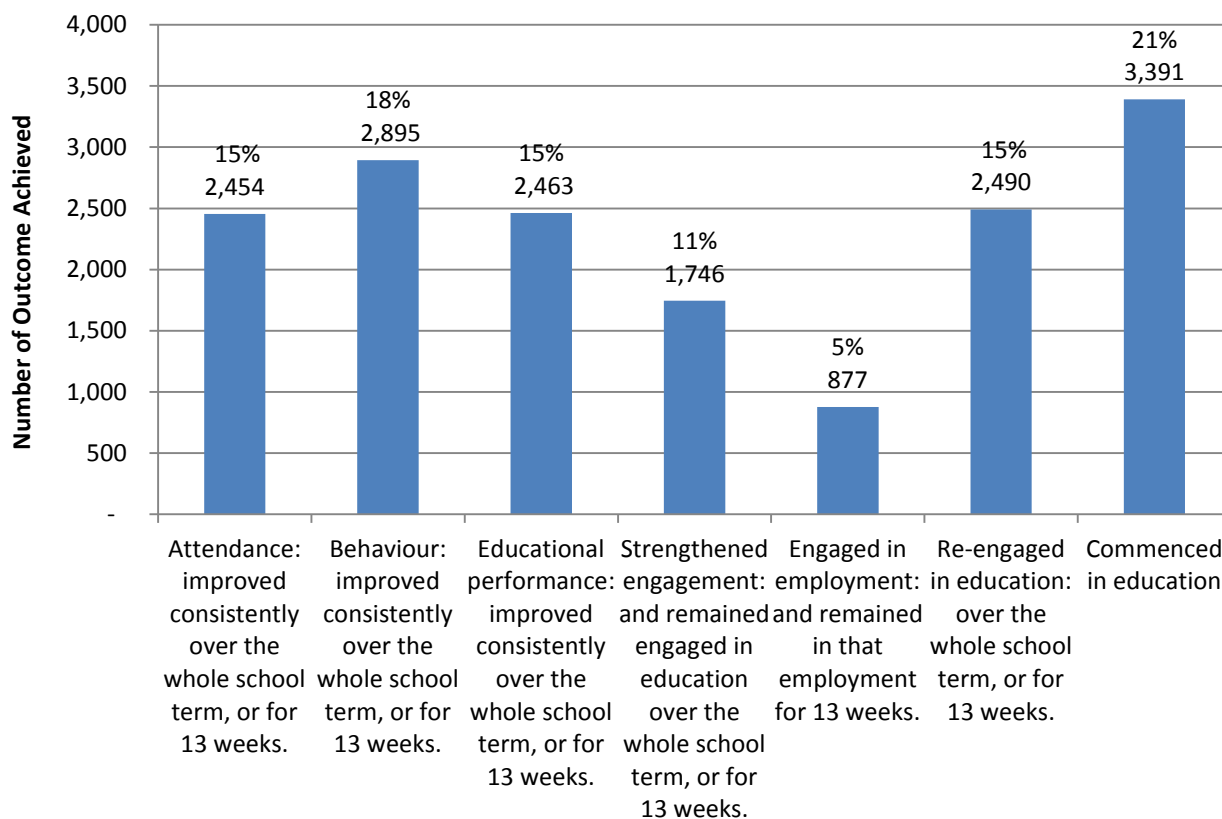
group work. The pack has been very successful in promoting Youth Connections and gaining trust and additional referrals from ACT schools.

### Challenges

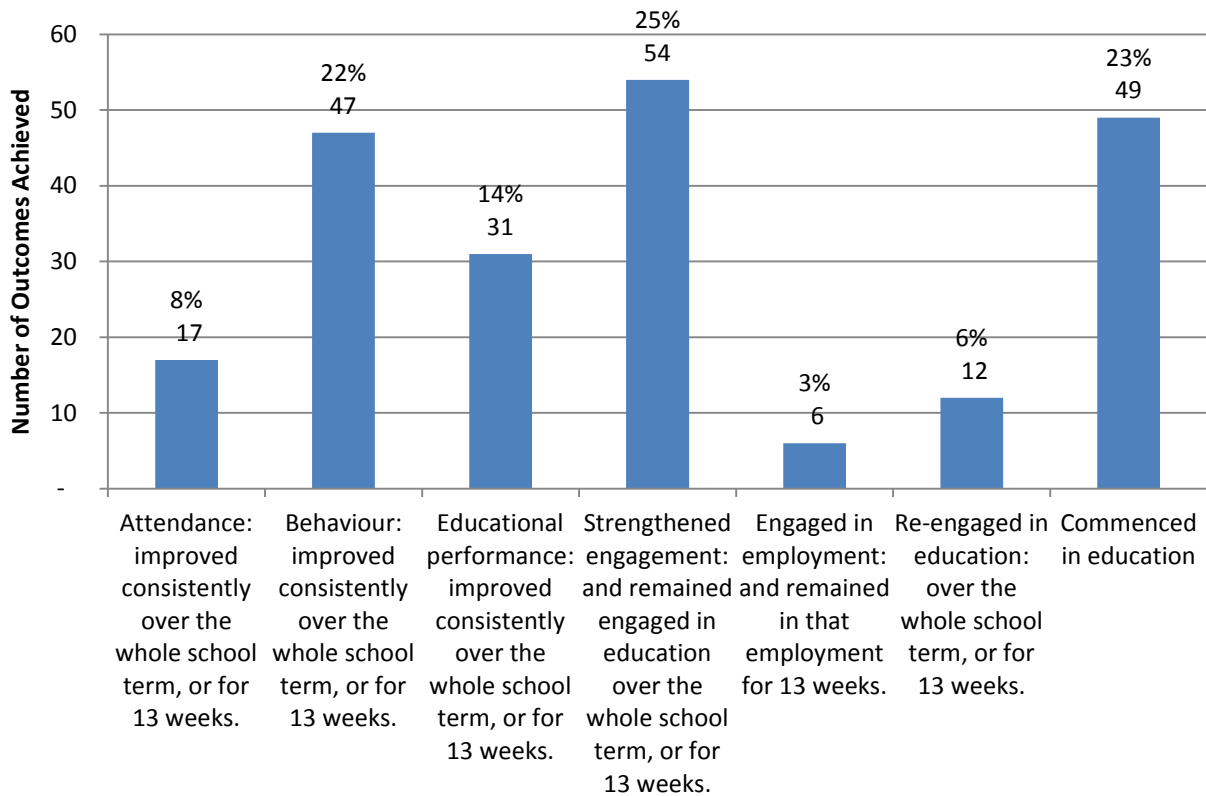
While Youth Connections has delivered significant outcomes, providers have faced many of the challenges outlined in the national summary. In addition, in the ACT the recruitment and retention of suitable and qualified staff into positions has been an ongoing challenge. This has been impacted by the inequitable pay difference between government youth workers and Non Government Organisations (NGO's). The average pay in government for qualified youth workers is up to \$20,000 more than in the non government sector. This has resulted in many staff starting their career in the NGO sector and moving into government once they have established a positive name for themselves.

The Youth Connections provider in the ACT has struggled to adequately service the young humanitarian refugees in the region. Additional training and development is required for the Youth Connections Outreach Workers to have the necessary skills and knowledge to work effectively with humanitarian refugees. Each Youth Connections staff member has been engaged in cultural awareness training, which supports the knowledge base needed to engage with Aboriginal young people in the ACT and the Youth Connections provider has organised training for staff in 2011 that will increase this knowledge and support staff to also work with humanitarian refugees.

### National - Final Outcomes Achieved



### Australian Capital Territory - Final Outcomes Achieved



	National		ACT	
Young people enrolled in individual support services (current and exited)	24,738		294	
Young people who have achieved a final outcome	11,320	46%	168	57%
Young people who have achieved an outcome - progressive or final <sup>16</sup>	16,410	66%	230	78%

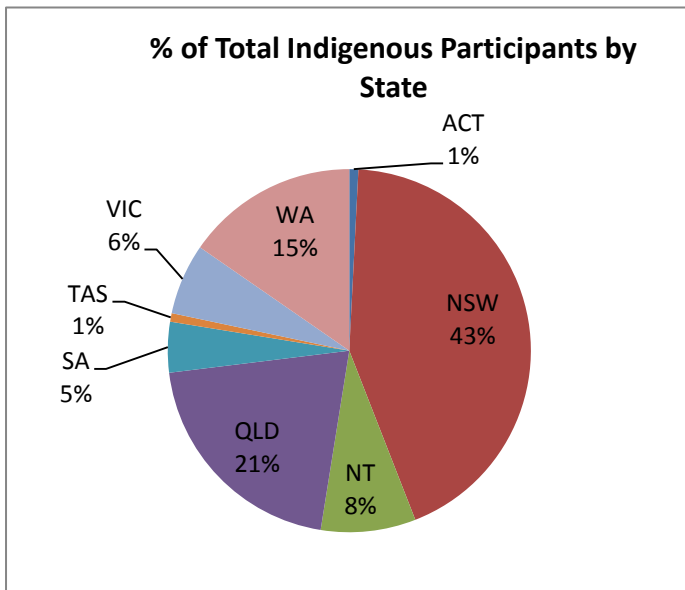
Final Outcomes Achieved <sup>17</sup>	National	ACT
Attendance: The participant's attendance at school or education setting improved consistently over the whole school term, or for 13 weeks.	2,454	17
Behaviour: The participant's behaviour at school or education setting improved consistently over the whole school term, or for 13 weeks.	2,895	47
Educational performance: The participant's educational performance improved consistently over the whole school term, or for 13 weeks.	2,463	31
Strengthened engagement: The participant's engagement was strengthened and they remained engaged in education over the whole school term, or for 13 weeks.	1,746	54
Engaged in employment: The participant started employment and remained in that employment for 13 weeks.	877	6
Re-engaged in education: The participant re-engaged in education over the whole school term, or for 13 weeks.	2,490	12
Commenced in education: The participant commenced in education.	3,391	49
	National	ACT
Outreach and Re-engagement Activities held	3,578 (125,900 young people attending)	59 (1,024 young people attending)
Strengthening Services in the Region Activities held	3,049	29

16 A final outcome represents re-engagement or a sustained improvement in a young person's engagement with education, training or employment.

A progressive outcome represents a young person making significant progress in addressing their barriers to full engagement in education.

17 A young person can achieve more than one final outcome.

## Indigenous



	National	ACT
Indigenous Participants	4,354	35
All Participants	24,738	294
% Indigenous	18%	12%

