

2015-2016 IMPACT REPORT



BUILDING INDEPENDENCE & PARTICIPATION

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A HOME

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AN INCOME



SAFETY



CONNECTIONS



HOPE FOR THE FUTURE



SKILLS

WHAT DOES INDEPENDENCE AND PARTICIPATION MEAN?

At YFS we work with people in Logan and surrounds to build independence and participation. In 2015-16 we spent some time thinking about what independence and participation really means, and how we can make sure our efforts make a significant difference towards it.

This annual report looks at how YFS contributed to the key things everyone needs if they are to be truly included in the social and economic life of our community: a home, enough money, safety, connections with others, skills and hope. Unfortunately there are still too many people in our area who don't have these basic elements in place.

YFS is uniquely placed to help the most vulnerable people in our community achieve active, capable, fulfilling lives through our many different services.

In 2015-16 we built on our ability to help people put the foundations in place, particularly by introducing an employment preparation service, ParentsNext, and remodelling our financial capability and counselling services. We focused on safety through our work on community planning for domestic violence and through the successful #R4Respect program.

In July, we opened our Browns Plains office and extended our work in the western region of Logan-Beaudesert, making YFS services more accessible for people in Logan and surrounds.

We launched a new Reconciliation Action Plan which increases the focus on engaging YFS staff and restates our commitment to closing the gap in Logan.

YFS continues to lead change in Logan. It is great to see the collective efforts of organisations like ours generating benefits through Logan Together and the Logan Leadership Team.

Many people and organisations contributed to our success last year, particularly our Board, our staff, volunteers, supporters, sponsors and funding bodies.

Looking forward: In 2016-17 we will collect organisational outcome information so we can see our impact across all our services in helping people improve their housing stability, their financial situation and their connections.

Cath Bartolo, CEO and Albert Hili, Chair





A STABLE HOME

Helping people gain and maintain stable housing continues to be a very significant part of YFS' work.

While our specialist housing programs helped 200 people or families find housing last year, across all our services we estimate we helped an additional 400 people or families into stable accommodation. Demand for help with homelessness continues to grow.

We were very pleased to welcome Tenants Queensland's QSTARS tenancy advice workers to share our premises. It is great to have this service up and running again to help people protect their rights as tenants.

Looking forward: YFS contributed to consultation for the Queensland Government's proposed housing strategy in 2015-16. We look forward to seeing the result, which will hopefully improve integration of housing and support for vulnerable people and increase housing affordability.

YFS believes: secure housing is a basic right. A stable home provides a foundation so people can focus on working, parenting, connecting with others and building successful lives. To achieve this, people may need to learn to pay rent, maintain their property and be a good neighbour.

Children need: children cannot thrive when their families don't have a secure home. Children need stable accommodation so they can connect with school, friends, community and services they need.

YFS does: YFS puts housing first in our case management work. We help our clients find a place to live or keep their current home, develop their ability to maintain a tenancy and link with supports they might need to stabilise their housing.

YFS wants: YFS advocates for a system that makes housing affordable for all, prevents homelessness, houses homeless people fast, and supports people to maintain stable housing.



Read Bill's story
on page 20





In **2015-16** our information, referral and assessment team, YFS Connect responded to

5,840 queries about homelessness, housing or tenancy matters

an increase of

13%

compared with 2014-15



Housing Minister Mick de Brenni was keen to hear from young people who had experienced homelessness when he visited YFS in April 2016.



A DECENT INCOME

YFS helps people manage their money, overcome financial problems and improve their ability to earn a decent income.

In 2015-16, we reshaped our financial services area to create YFS Connect, a hub bringing together services that help people deal with financial crisis and learn how to manage money for the future. YFS Connect incorporates our intake and referral service (formerly IRAS), our financial counsellors, Money Smart financial capability workers and emergency relief services.

In April 2016, YFS launched ParentsNext. ParentsNext is a new Federally-funded program for parents of young children to prepare to enter the workforce. In our first three months, we worked with 88 parents, helping them define career goals and make and implement plans to achieve them.

Looking forward: From 2016-17 on, YFS will offer no interest loans through Good Shepherd Microfinance's No Interest Loans Service (NILS). This will help people working with YFS to access funds for essential appliances or services. We are also looking forward to ParentsNext reaching full capacity, which will see more than 800 parents each year improve their chances of entering the workforce.

YFS believes: people need to live above the poverty line to achieve a reasonable quality of life and to avoid financial stress. Employment is the best pathway out of poverty for those who are capable of working.

Children need: resources to succeed. They need good food, education, opportunities to participate in other activities, and adequate clothing and shelter.

YFS does: YFS helps clients get control of their financial situation. We encourage people to learn to manage money well and make good financial decisions. We work with people to build their ability to earn a decent living.

YFS wants: better support for people from disadvantaged backgrounds to build the skills, confidence and resources to move into the workforce so they can be economically independent. For those who are not able to work, YFS advocates for increases to government benefits to enable people to live above the poverty line.



Read Amy's story
on page 21

Through the Queensland Government's Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative in 2015-16, YFS placed nine young people into paid traineeships, learning land management skills clearing land along the Bethania to Beaudesert Rail Trail.



YFS' WorkCrew maintenance enterprise provided paid work for 14 people during the year, while our TASK carwash employed 13 people.

14



13





SAFETY

YFS deals with people who are at significant risk – children whose families need support to improve their ability to keep kids safe, women who are experiencing domestic violence and young people whose drug and alcohol use is problematic.

In 2015-16, our work in the domestic and family violence area has set the stage for real change in Logan and surrounds. Our CEO, Cath Bartolo, has been a leader in the development of a community action plan for domestic and family violence (with the state government, Council, local businesses, community groups, churches and individuals).

We have been heavily involved in the development of an integrated response to domestic violence for Logan, which will realign services and supports to improve safety for victims and increase perpetrator accountability.

An ongoing evaluation of Responsible Men, our group behaviour change program for perpetrators of domestic violence, has led to improvements in the way this program operates, including streamlining initial engagement processes and improving referral pathways with Probation and Parole.

Our Intensive Family Support service began in July 2015, and quickly reached capacity, working with families with child protection concerns to help them keep their children safe.

Looking forward: We are realigning our supports for domestic violence victims to better fit an integrated model. From September 2016, one of our domestic violence specialist workers will be co-located with the Queensland Police Service Logan District Domestic Violence Unit in Beenleigh, to link people involved in DV with the services they need quickly and easily.



In 2015-16 YFS Legal experienced a 11% increase in the number of clients assisted for generalist legal advice and criminal law case work compared with the previous year.

YFS Legal also experienced significantly higher demand for civil advice, particularly in the areas of employment, debts, tenancy, wills and estates.



Read Sarah's story
on page 22

YFS' social enterprise 16C Creations donated their sale proceeds to the Working Against Violence Support Service, WAVSS, to help women and children living in domestic violence.



YFS believes: people have the right to be safe in their relationships and their communities. People who threaten other people's safety need to be held accountable and change their behaviour, particularly perpetrators of domestic and family violence. To achieve this, people need to learn how to have respectful relationships.

Children need: children cannot thrive in homes where they or their parents are not safe from abuse or violence. Children need parents and the wider community to put their safety and wellbeing first.

YFS does: YFS works with perpetrators of domestic and family violence to build accountability and relationship skills. We support victims of domestic violence to find safe ways to live and rebuild their lives. We promote respectful relationships through work with young people and the wider community to understand respect and live it every day.

YFS wants: YFS advocates for grass roots prevention work to help young people develop safe relationships in every aspect of their life. We want a legal system and properly-funded services that help victims of violence to leave without losing everything. We want perpetrators of violence to take responsibility for changing their behaviour.





CONNECTIONS WITH OTHERS

YFS helps people connect – or re-connect – with family, friends and community. Our programs for people with a disability are a good example. In 2015-16 we reshaped some of our community access activities to better align with the needs and interests of the people who use our services, and to help us prepare for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

During 2015-16, YFS supported people using our disability programs to begin planning for the NDIS, employing a worker to help with pre-planning, although we were disappointed to learn that the NDIS won't come to Logan until July 2018.

In 2015-16, our YouthLink team worked in an expanded catchment area taking in Redland City including the Bay Islands. The team has noted a change in referral patterns, with more young people referred from services like hospitals and mental health agencies rather than schools and families. As a result YouthLink case managers are working with young people who need intensive support to gain the skills for independence and to avoid disadvantage becoming entrenched.

YFS participants were treated to Christmas dinner by a group of south east Queensland hospitality industry leaders. The Hospitality with Heart Christmas function was a highlight for more than 100 people who boarded buses from Logan to attend the beautifully-designed, lovingly-catered event in Brisbane.

Looking forward: In 2016-17, YFS will rebrand our programs for people with a disability to reflect their role in helping participants increase their independence and their participation in community life.

19 additional people joined our programs for people with a disability in 2015-16

an increase of

16%

in people participating in our activities



Read Cassidy's story on page 23

Community Connections participants help design a program of group or individual activities every six months. For many, their time with YFS has become an important way to connect with friends and link with community activities.



YFS believes: people have fuller lives when they can participate in community life. Recreational, social and volunteering activities help people build relationships and be included.

Children need: building links with community helps families function better and gives children additional supports and role models.

YFS does: YFS' programs for people with a disability and people recovering from mental health issues focus on building links to the wider community and creating peer support networks.

YFS wants: YFS advocates for a wide range of affordable, accessible participation options for everyone.

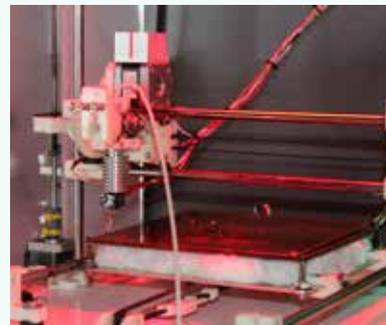




SKILLS, EDUCATION & TRAINING

Most YFS services help people develop skills to live independently and link with education and training.

At our electronic waste recycling enterprise, Substation33, a wide range of people learn workplace skills in a supportive environment as part of the pathway to mainstream employment. Substation33 built up its innovation hub in 2015-16, making 3D printer kits for sale to local schools. In 2015-16, more than 300 people did almost 35,000 hours of work experience at Substation33, learning how to function in a workplace as well as how to disassemble electronic goods and use 3D printers.



Our Money Smart workers and financial counsellors helped 988 people improve their financial literacy in 2015-16 through face to face work, and 1,469 through 44 community education activities.

Our Step by Step program builds parenting skills - in 2015-16 Step by Step participants



improved their parenting effectiveness by

17%

through working with YFS.



Read Malorie's story on page 24

As part of her plan to improve life skills for independent living, Maria learned budgeting, planning, shopping and cooking skills with YFS Community Connections worker Wendy.



YFS believes: everyone needs skills for life, and education and training are important for economic participation. Completing school or gaining a qualification is a foundation for success. We acknowledge that some people have had negative experiences in education settings, and need support to re-engage or find alternatives that meet their needs.

Children need: school attendance is critical for children, and high quality early learning before school age is important for their development. Sometimes school or child care can provide stability that might be missing in other parts of their life.

YFS does: we focus on good school habits with our clients, helping children and young people enrol, attend and complete school. We provide opportunities to learn skills through our social enterprises and all our case management programs encourage people to gain skills to avoid future crises.

YFS wants: a child care and pre-school system that is affordable for people on low incomes so their children get the benefit of early learning programs to prepare them for school. We need alternatives for people who can't engage in traditional schooling or haven't completed school. We want a system that enables all children and young people to succeed in learning.





HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

One of our values is optimism. 2015-16 was a very hopeful year. We saw our #R4Respect youth-led violence prevention initiative flourish, and saw many people we work with set themselves up for better futures.

In 2015-16 YFS Connect responded to 10,213 calls, emails, Facebook messages and visits about a wide range of issues. Our team gave each of those people information, linkages to supports, and a sense that change was possible.

Our #R4Respect domestic violence prevention program reached out to young people through social media and events. #R4Respect generated more than 300 social media posts, attracted almost 1,200 Facebook likes, and reached around 3,000 young people face to face through more than 15 events in schools and communities from its inception in September 2015 until the end of June 2016.

The coming National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) brings new opportunities for people with disability or mental illness in our community. The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) estimates that 5,600 people in our region who don't currently receive funded disability supports will be eligible for services through the NDIS, taking the total NDIS participant base in our region to 9,900 people. Our NDIS Get Ready team continued to spread the word in 2015-16, talking with 1,285 people about how best to make the most of the opportunities the NDIS will bring.

Looking forward: #R4Respect will continue to build in 2016-17, with funding from the Federal Government complementing an Advance Queensland grant for evaluation from the Queensland Government and almost \$40,000 in support from generous sponsors.



total expected
NDIS participant
base in our region



Read Mitchell's story
on page 25





YFS believes: having high expectations gives people the chance to fulfill their potential. People who live in generational disadvantage can believe that change is impossible – we know that people can improve their circumstances with the right support and opportunities.

Children need: goals, dreams and positive feedback, as well as appropriate boundaries, to learn and grow.

YFS does: in our work with clients, we encourage high expectations, realistic goals and stepped approaches to reaching them. We support people to succeed when they need our help, and we celebrate wins along the way.

YFS wants: YFS advocates for a system that aims high for everyone; that encourages everyone to achieve their potential.

Our #R4Respect ambassadors come from varied backgrounds, but they share a passion to spread the word about respectful relationships to other young people.



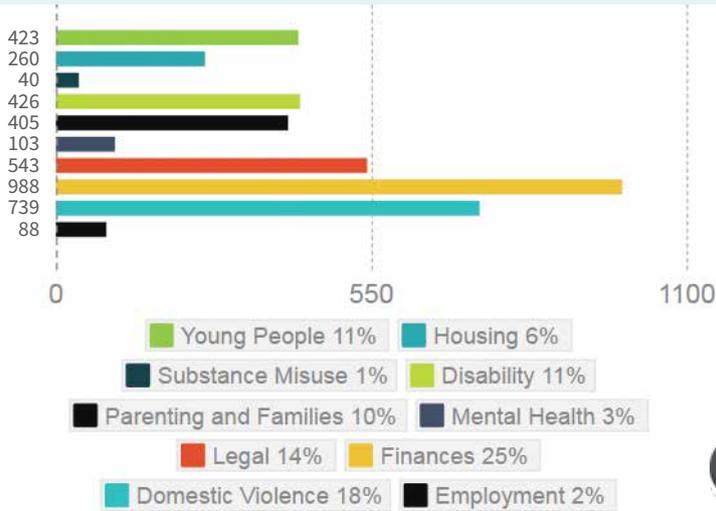
2015-16 STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

The people we worked with in 2015-16

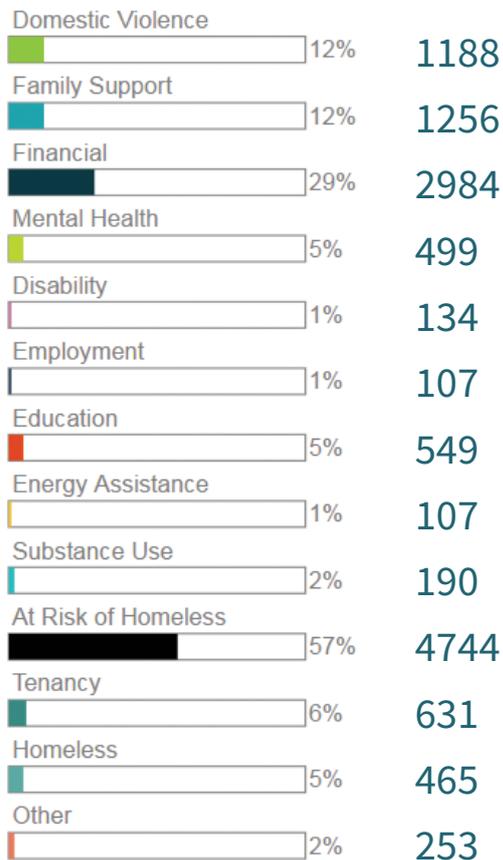
Case work and case management areas

Total number of case work and case management clients

Number of clients



Presenting issues % Number of requests



2015-16

requests
for advice
or assistance

10,213



Community education



Number of sessions



Number of attendees

Diversity



Case work and case management clients identifying as Indigenous



YFS Connect clients identifying as Indigenous



Case work and case management clients identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse



YFS Connect clients identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse

YFS Client Feedback July 2015 - June 2016 Annual Summary



of the responses indicated clients are satisfied with YFS services



of clients surveyed would recommend the services of YFS to people if they needed help



of clients surveyed also agreed that YFS respect them and their rights

2015-16 STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

YFS enterprises



Hours of work experience and volunteering



Hours of paid work



Kilograms of electronic waste diverted from landfill

YFS people



91% of staff report that YFS consistently meets clients expectations



Number of employees



Number of full time equivalent staff



Number of volunteers



TASK & 16c CREATIONS



Hours of paid work



Hours of grounds maintenance



Number of cars washed



Handmade goods sold



Staff who identify as Indigenous



Staff who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse



Staff who live in Logan



Staff who report that YFS is a "truly great place to work"



2015-16 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

YFS income grew by 3.3% over 2015 in challenging times for the sector as a whole.

YFS won a significant contract in 2016 to deliver the ParentsNext program in the Logan area which contributed \$80,000 to our income. This is budgeted to grow to \$542,000 in 2016-17 financial year.

Our social enterprise continues to expand with revenue growth of 53% in the 2015-16 financial year.

Expenditure has increased by 5.85% as the organisation continues to invest for the future including preparing for the NDIS, growing our social enterprises and developing our #R4Respect initiative.

YFS remains in an excellent financial position with a ratio of current assets to current liabilities of 2.6 times. This makes the organisation well positioned to develop and maintain high quality client services to the Logan and surrounding communities in an evolving regulatory environment.

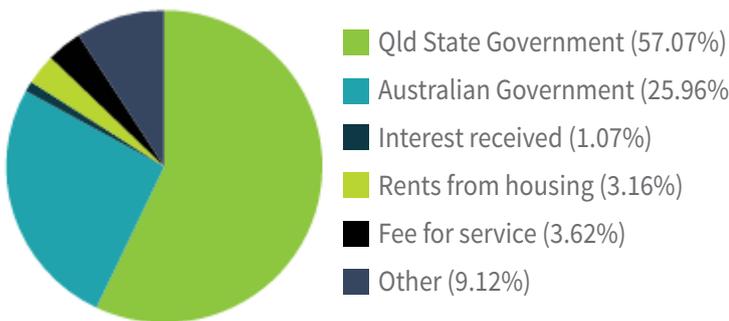
current ratio up to

2.6
times

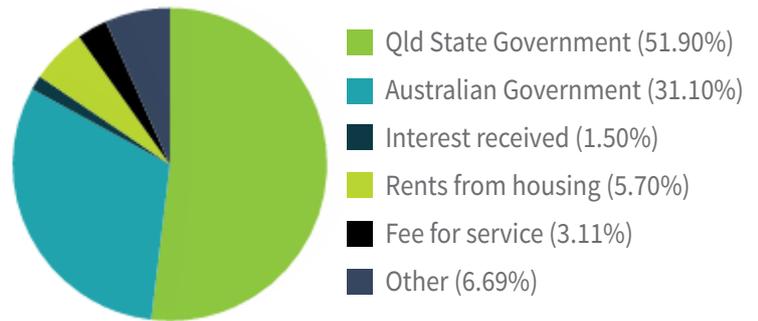


3.3%
growth
over 2015

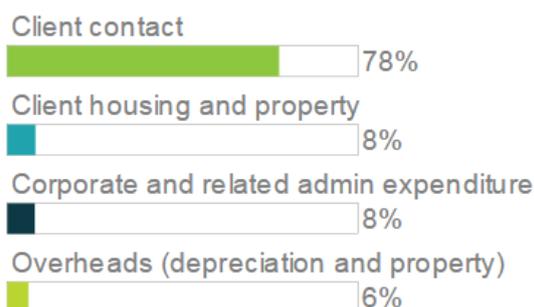
Income 2015 - 2016



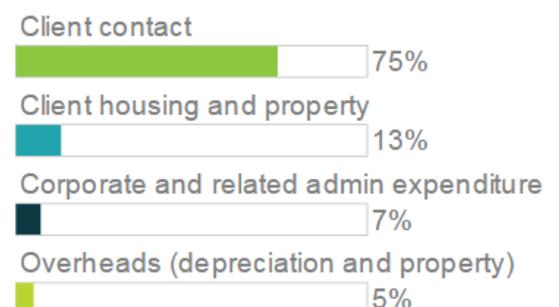
Income 2014 - 2015



Expenditure breakdown 2015 - 2016



Expenditure breakdown 2014 - 2015





Key ratios 2016

Assets Ratio
Assets: 13,500,454
Liabilities: 11,388,040
Ratio: 1.19:1

Current Ratio
Current Assets:
4,719,306
Current Liabilities:
1,817,666

2.6:1

Key ratios 2015

Assets Ratio
Assets: 13,393,588
Liabilities: 11,394,408
Ratio: 1.18:1

Current Ratio
Current Assets:
4,452,622
Current Liabilities:
1,653,186

2.69:1

Thanks to our supporters,
sponsors and funding bodies.

Funding partners 2015-16

Australian Government Department of Social Services
Australian Government Department of Employment
Queensland Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works
Queensland Department of Education and Training
Queensland Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation
Queensland Department of Infrastructure
Legal Aid Queensland
Commonwealth Community Legal Services Program
Salvation Army – Communities for Children
Logan City Council
Mater Health
AGL



BILL'S STORY



“I didn’t give up because YFS didn’t give up on me,” Bill says.

Bill is 44 years old and has been homeless, on and off, for 10 years after a family dispute. For the last two years, he was sleeping with his 14 year old son Jacob* in the toilets, underneath the hand basins at a local market place; or sometimes in the back of his ute in the car park.

He suffers from schizophrenia; he is illiterate and is currently on parole for domestic violence.

“Parole referred me to YFS. I’ve got eight months to go and it will be over.

“I came in six months ago looking for a house or some sort of accommodation. I never thought of asking for help before and no one ever offered to help me. I was already down. YFS picked me up. They found me a two bedroom unit. They knew I had nothing.”

Bill and his son were supposed to stay in the unit for 12 weeks but a new long term housing offer came along. It was music to his ears. His eldest son Tim*, who used to live with his mother, was coming from Tasmania to live with them too.

“Three weeks later, I walked into YFS and my case manager had the keys to my new three bedroom house.” Bill ended his tenancy with no debts owing and moved into his new house.

“I’ve signed my contract for three years. I had my wish come true. I wanted a house and I got a house but I never dreamed of living in a house like this.

“I’m not homeless now. I feel good. Sometimes I have flashbacks of my homeless life though. For a part of my life, being homeless - it’s all I knew.”

Before becoming a client, Bill wouldn’t ask for help or even admit his fear of being lonely. Working closely with a YFS case manager has allowed him to rid himself of pride and to move on with his life.

He has overcome many challenges and finds it really helpful to have a worker to talk to when he needs it. He’s gained control of his finances after attending Financial Counselling and will soon be joining the YFS’ Responsible Men domestic violence behaviour change program too.

He says he feels privileged to have the opportunity to live with his children and he wishes he could see his daughter from Tasmania one day. She was only nine months old last time he saw her.

Meanwhile, Tim* is settling in and looking for a job and Jacob* is going to school. “He’s got everything now. He’s got his own bed, his own clothes, a phone and even an Xbox.” he says.

Bill currently takes one day at a time and he sees his life as one filled with opportunity.

“I don’t want to take it all for granted. I want my children to be happy and let go; to not keep looking back in the past. There’s a future ahead. We’ve got a house now and it’s ours, no one can take it off us.”

*Names changed for privacy



AMY'S STORY



Amy, 24, has faced many challenges in life including single parenthood and domestic violence.

YFS' new ParentsNext project has given Amy a head start to return to the workforce.

She is determined, outgoing and bubbly.

"I came in for my first appointment at YFS and before I knew it I had started hands-on training in construction."

Amy had been out of the workforce since she had her two children, a five year old boy and a two year old girl.

Amy says dealing with domestic violence twice and the difficulties of being a single parent made it hard to imagine getting back into working.

"It took me a while to find myself. I lost the person I was," she said.

"Determination to be there for my children is what brought me back."

She had been to YFS before when she needed help getting her birth certificate and also attended counselling for her domestic violence issues.

This time, Amy was referred by Centrelink to YFS' ParentsNext project.

Through ParentsNext, Amy is back to work and going from strength to strength.

Within two weeks, YFS referred Amy to Break Thru, where she undertakes the theory part of her traineeship under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, with paid work experience at Stoddart Manufacturing and Substation33.

"It was awesome when I came back to YFS. My ParentsNext worker was a very easy person to talk to and she could see that I was determined to get out there and work, I didn't want to muck around."

"It was a very quick process. My worker gives me weekly phone calls to find out how I'm going; what I've been doing which I really enjoy. It's good to actually have that contact. Most job providers don't make the effort to do that."

"It's been four weeks now. I love it. Construction wasn't an industry I thought I would enjoy or something that I had actually looked into, but I wouldn't go back. I'm now looking into making it further; I want to get more skills. It has been an absolute joy. I now have pretty much a straight routine and I'm happy with it."

Working has brought a big change in Amy's life. She will finish her traineeship in November and she can't wait to go into a full time job or an apprenticeship.

"I feel excellent. This is something that I haven't done in a while and I needed it. It makes me happy to know for a fact that I'm actually making something with myself. I feel better as a person and as parent too, because I know I'm doing the right thing for my children."



SARAH'S STORY



Keeping women and children safe while holding domestic violence perpetrators accountable is a balancing act that YFS Client Service Manager, Sarah oversees every day across YFS.

Sarah leads the YFS domestic violence team, including the men's perpetrator program and a women's advocate service.

Sarah explains the service connects with women who are partners or ex-partners and have experienced the violence of the men who are in the group. It provides an opportunity for women to receive support that is separate to the men's time in the group.

"It enables the initial and ongoing assessment of women and children's safety through assessing risk factors and what's going on in their lives," Sarah said.

"It's about providing them with information, referral and support if they need to access other services in the community," she said.

Sarah says the case of Deb* and her former partner Paul* is typical of YFS' work.

When Paul* joined YFS' Responsible Men program, he only acknowledged physical violence, admitting he once hit Deb*.

However, as the YFS women's advocate supported Deb* a more complex story emerged.

Through the women's advocate, Deb* revealed how little by little, Paul* started taking control of her life.

During the four year relationship, Paul* had not only been physically abusive; he was also managing the finances, controlling who she would see and threatening her at all time.

YFS supported Deb* to apply for a protection order with standard conditions and to move out with her children.

Sarah says that when a woman is planning to leave or has left the relationship, she and the children are most at risk, so moving out doesn't mean she is no longer at risk.

Paul* started calling and asking her to help him with his children, using them to try to control her again. Paul* also seemed to know where Deb* was and would turn up unexpectedly at places Deb* visited.

Deb* made an urgent application to amend the court order adding 'a no contact' condition to it. Ten weeks into the perpetrator's program, Paul* acknowledged how much he had learned about the different types of violence in his own behaviour and admitted it was abusive.

Although not a cure, the intervention helped give Paul* insight to his behaviours. He stopped stalking Deb*; he didn't contact her again. She hasn't heard from him for quite a while.

Sarah says every woman's service is tailored to her needs.

"That could be a fortnightly call or it could be every day, to revisit her safety and her children's. We maintain contact with the woman for as long as she wants us to remain in contact."

"Everything links back to her safety. We offer services that will support them as a family, and across YFS we do many things in response to domestic violence. We are dedicated to provide a service that holds men accountable and keeps women and children safe. This could be the very first time a woman has accessed a service or it could also be the last," Sarah said.

*Names changed for privacy



CASSIDY'S STORY



Cassidy, 18, has been going to school for 10 weeks now. She's also been going to the beach, theme parks and having fun with her friends.

A while ago, she didn't feel like doing any of these things. She didn't want to. She didn't care.

Cassidy was referred to YFS by Education Queensland. She had high anxiety levels that caused her to disconnect from school and peers.

"My family and I were homeless for about three months. I was staying at a little bed and breakfast place and it was hard to get to school. I started to get really anxious. I wasn't able to go and do things, not even leave the house," she says.

"When I tried to leave the house I would feel sick, sweaty; like I constantly had this rock on my shoulders. All my friends were graduating and doing many things and I felt like I was stuck in this hole."

She joined YFS' YouthLink program and with her worker's help, Cassidy has managed to regain her confidence and learn how to deal with her anxiety.

"I met with my worker and I can say I was a bit lucky. We've taken it slowly, we've taken small steps. We sort of started venturing; we will go out and talk, have a little chat. I was feeling anxious the whole time, so we just worked at trying to get out of the house and feeling comfortable being at different places."

YFS helped Cassidy and her family find a new place to live. She's now living with her father and her brother. She doesn't feel lonely or isolated anymore.

"I'm back at school now and it's seriously the best feeling ever: being able to go and do something with my life again, especially after doing nothing for over a year."

She feels happy. She's positive and a lot more optimistic. She credits her case manager's work for that.

"I would definitely be in my room still, sad, if I wasn't here at YFS. I felt I couldn't be helped but my worker pushed me up those little steps to make me realise I can do whatever I want."

"I needed to get my life back on track and I just feel amazing now. I'm doing stuff, I'm getting up every morning and I'm fine."

With improved self-confidence and more motivation, Cassidy is ready to finish Years 11 and 12 next year. "I'm getting good grades and I'm so proud of myself."

She can also see herself doing exactly what her YFS worker does. "I want to help other people. I've always wanted to open a little shelter for young kids to come if they're homeless or need someone to talk to."

"I can definitely see a future and it makes me really happy."



MALORIE'S STORY



“I’ve made real friends in here and I’ve also learnt a lot, even how to use computer programs that I had never used before,” said Malorie-Kae.

Malorie-Kae is 25 and has been at YFS’ social enterprise, Substation33, for three months now, as part of her Work for the Dole placement.

She had been looking for a job before, “but no one had really been biting when I handed over my resume,” she said.

“Work for the Dole gave me a choice of where I wanted to be placed and I didn’t want to do retail anymore. I came in and they got me started on the tables disassembling electronic waste. I also went to the IT department, then expressed interest in the Innovation Hub and became the 3D Printers Manager a week after that.”

Malorie had never managed a 3D printer before she came to Substation33.

“They showed me how to do it here,” she says.

“It is wonderful. I wake up excited to come here every day. I never get tired of watching the first print because it’s just so fascinating.”

“I tell people this is a very nice place. I tell them how we recycle technology; how it all gets sorted and how it’s very much a group thing. The people that I work with are very friendly.”

She describes herself as a fast learner, pleasant and hardworking.

“I come here three days a week. I’m supposed to do 25 hours a week but I really love it here, so I do more than that.

Malorie believes she now has an engaging personality. Becoming the 3D Printers Manager at Substation33’s Innovation Hub has given her a lot more confidence and she’s really enjoying it.

“I wasn’t a very outgoing person. I would normally be in the library at lunch time in school, just doing my own thing until I graduated. But I’m feeling better and happier now. I just love it.”

A learning difficulty didn’t stop her from becoming an artist. Drawing is her passion and she combines it with her love for video games.

While working at Substation33, Malorie has also learned the value of team work and planning. She has a good sense of achievement and is also very optimistic about the future.



MITCHELL'S STORY



Anxiety became a constant in Mitchell's life after being assaulted by five people on his way home from school.

Back then, Mitchell was 14 years old. He turned 19 in September.

Mitchell's problem quickly escalated and he started avoiding school and social situations.

"I wasn't in a good place 12 months ago. I wouldn't leave the house at all. I wouldn't go past the letterbox. I didn't want to go to school and they actually kicked me out because of my low attendance", Mitchell said.

"I couldn't sit still. I had many panic attacks. I would hear a noise in my house and that would freak me out."

His mother sought help and in March 2015, a re-engagement officer from Education Queensland suggested Mitchell come to YFS. Mitchell worked with Kara, focusing on social exposure, counselling and learning about ways to handle bullying.

"My worker has helped me get out of the house, do different things and feel comfortable about them. She has also helped me get on an independent youth allowance and attend weekly driving lessons to get my licence" he said.

Mitchell currently goes to Headspace and attends maths tutoring on Mondays at Milestones Employment to prepare for an Electrical Apprenticeship with All Trades Queensland.

He says he is very excited now that he has found a new job at Illuminated Industries in Kingston.

"I feel very good. I have actually started doing something. When I left school I needed something to do, so I did a Certificate in Auto Electrics. I have always liked electrics."

He says YFS has played a huge part in his journey. Kara, his worker, believes he has completed great personal achievements.

"Mitchell has made significant progress in his long and challenging journey with anxiety. He is certainly living his life and kicking personal goals every week. He now socialises with friends, initiates and participates in new interactions. He feels confident to be independent," Kara said.

Mitchell also makes a conscious effort to take care of himself. "I've started going to the gym four days a week. My anxiety levels have reduced. I feel more relaxed now. I don't really get intimidated by people anymore."

His life has taken a turn for the better. "I'm happy, I'm optimistic. I'd like to be fully qualified as an electrician."

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YFS acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are Australia's First Peoples and the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we meet and work.

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