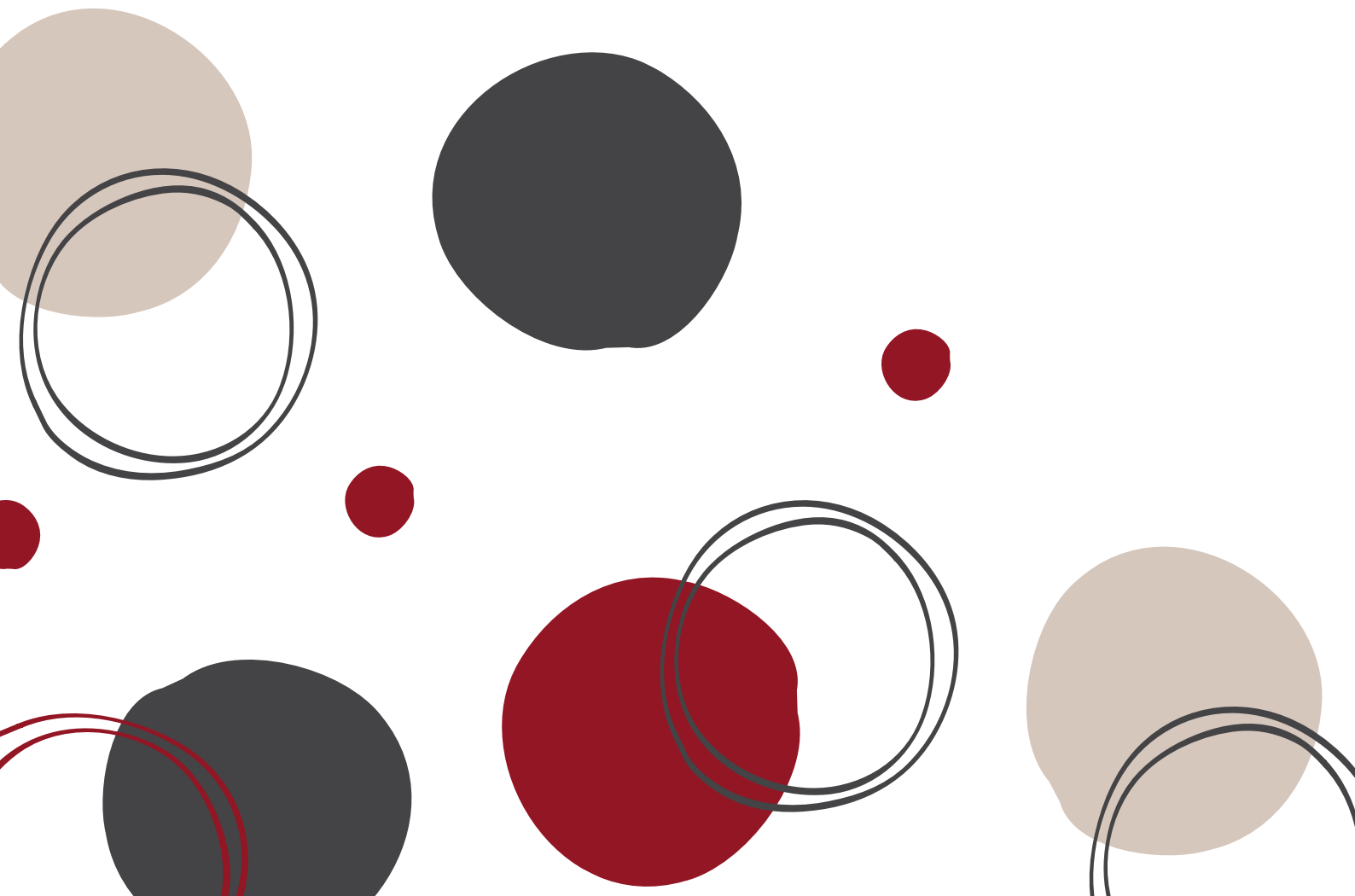


REPORT

**MID-WEST
YOUTH
SKILLS
PROGRAMME
SEM 2 2021**





ABOUT

The WA Justice Association (**WAJA**) is a not-for-profit organisation and a registered charity with the ACNC. WAJA's mission is to reduce incarceration rates and improve outcomes for people coming into contact with Western Australia's criminal justice system. We hope to achieve this by effecting law/policy reform and promoting student engagement with social justice organisations and the legal community.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report has been prepared by Maria Ambrose, Charlotte Salom, Helena Trang, Isabelle Bavcevic and Jit Neo.

Special acknowledgement must be made to Melanie Naylor and Lisa Kazalac for mentoring and supervising the project respectively.

The WA Justice Association acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and custodians of Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community.

We acknowledge and respect Aboriginal Elders past and present, and support emerging leaders across Western Australia and Australia.

As this paper focuses on the Mid-West region, we would also like to acknowledge the Yamatji, Amangu, Badimaya and Kaalimaya people as well as any other Indigenous people engaged in the region.

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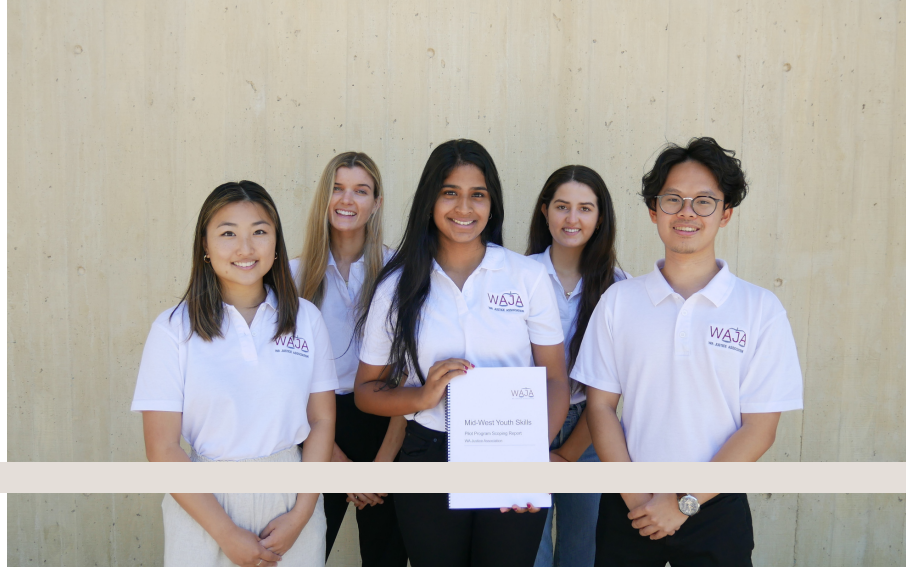
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THE PROJECT

Mid-West Youth Skills Programme



Supervisor: Lisa Kazalac (Professional Vogue)

Mentor: Melanie Naylor (Tottle Partners)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

REFERENCE

The WA Justice Association (WAJA) has completed an initial scoping project to ascertain essential features required for the development of a youth skills programme in Western Australia's Mid-West region. The WAJA team has conducted research, interviewed experts in employment and in the Mid-West region, and conducted a workshop with Mid-West service providers.

The WAJA team has completed the first phase of the model by implementing interview and research findings to the 'best practice design' of a youth employment programme.

This is a summarised public version of the Project Team's programme scoping document. It does not contain information obtained through confidential consultations and other sensitive information that is not appropriate for publication.

AIM

The aim of this project is to scope a potential programme which has been proposed to support young people who are vulnerable to becoming engaged in the criminal justice system in Western Australia's Mid-West region.

The recommendations made in this paper were developed based on an extensive literature review into youth justice, employment and education in the context of regional Western Australia.

The purpose of this project is to create an evidence base for future programmes which help young people in regional WA to gain and maintain employment which is vital to reducing offending. This abridged version of the final scoping document establishes a model for how an holistic on-site skills, training, education and support programme could be offered in collaboration with existing service providers in the Mid-West.

NEXT STEPS

The research presented in this scoping document and accompanying literature review will be used by stakeholders and service providers in the Mid-West region to develop future programmes to support young people throughout the region. This will improve Western Australia's capacity to reduce youth offending and recidivism in regional areas by supporting young people and nurturing their potential.

SCOPE OF YOUTH SKILLS PROGRAMME

STEP 1: PROGRAMME AIMS

NEED FOR THE PROGRAMME

Young people in the Mid-West face region-specific challenges including:

- Higher rates of unemployment, homelessness and offending
- Lower literacy and numeracy rates
- Limited resources

“Young people want to make the most of their lives, they just don't know where to start.”

- Department of Justice Representative

DESIRED OUTCOMES



PRIORITY OUTCOMES

- Improve employment outcomes
- Reduce homelessness
- Reduce offending
- Partner with other service providers
- Provide short-term accommodation



SHORT-TERM GOALS

- Increased awareness of the programme to referral agencies
- Involvement of Indigenous community leaders and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations
- Engagement with Department of Justice



MEDIUM-TERM GOALS

- Establish constructive relationships and trust between participants, service providers and the community
- Expand programme cohort



LONG-TERM GOALS

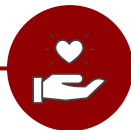
- Reduced recidivism
- Reduced severity and/or frequency of offending
- Stability in the lives of young people

HOW TO ACHIEVE THESE OUTCOMES



ACCOMODATION

Existing facilities in the region can be used to provide short-term accomodation. This will support young people facing homelessness. Recreational programmes may also be provided to foster a sense of community at the facility.



SUPPORT SERVICES

A range of support services should be provided through the programme and/or in collaboration with partner organisations. Some examples may include support to apply for Centrelink benefits or assistance to obtain a drivers licence.



TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT

Hospitality and agricultural training can be provided through the programme to assist young people to find local employment. Support to pursue educational pathways may also be provided.

STEP 2: INCLUDING THE TEN FEATURES OF AN EFFECTIVE YOUTH PROGRAMME

Review for Outcomes are an organisation that provides best practice tools and resources for youth employment service providers. They have identified 10 features of an effective youth employment program through conducting a literature review, youth interviews, employer engagement, and long-term surveys.

These features should be included in any Mid-West Youth Skills Programme. Some recommendations of how this can be done are outlined below.

The 10 features of an effective youth programme:

- Recognise strengths and aspirations
- Develop employment and life goals
- Identify and respond to issues faced by young people
- Build relationships
- Develop employability skills
- Develop technical skills to meet job needs
- Provide information to support work searches
- Provide opportunities for practical work experience
- Connect young people with employers
- Provide post-programme support

STEP 3: YOUTH CO-DESIGN

It is important to engage young people in the development and ongoing review of any programme. This provides an insight into how they will respond to the programme and also allows them to develop skills in articulating ideas and advocacy.

The Department of Communities has developed a series of publications for young people and organisations which provide advice on how to maximise input from young people. WACOSS has also developed a co-design toolkit which usefully outlines the process for co-designing a program in order for it to directly respond to and engage with the needs of participants.

Review for Outcomes recommends a survey before, after and 3 months following completion of the programme. These surveys are designed to be completed independently, though can be administered orally with staff if participants have literacy limitations.

WAJA recommends the following key features in developing an effective Youth Skills Programme in the Mid-West region:

1 Fostering a respectful and trusting relationship between the programme and the community by sponsoring creative and social events (such as engagement with 'Midnight Youth Basketball') to allow people to experience the facility without necessarily undertaking a program.

2 Centring the inherent potential of young adults to achieve and create value in their lives, with emphasis on supporting personalised and strengths-based programs which develop self-esteem, confidence, and eagerness in participants to continue their engagement with the programme.

3 Providing a web of support (of multi-sector, integrated stakeholders) who engage in meaningful and regular contact with participants during and post-programme. This will ensure that the programme leads to real and sustainable job opportunities.

i. Review. (n.d.). Ten features common to effective youth employment programs. https://reviewforoutcomes.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Ten-features-of-effective-programs_PDF_2.0.pdf

STEP 4: MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

OUTCOME FRAMEWORK

The programme requires an outcome framework to measure whether it is creating the outcomes outlined in the logic model or strategy.

Outcome Framework Best Practice

Measuring outcomes should be guided by a measure and evaluation plan that identifies:^x

- **Priority outcomes** - changes that the programme hopes to achieve
- **Indicators** - quantifiable measures which demonstrate that change has occurred*
- **Questions** - the information that is going to be collected about the indicators
- **Data source** - the tools that will be used to collect the information
- **People** - who will be asked questions
- **Frequency** - how often information will be collected
- **Data storage** - how data will be stored

*One or more indicators need to be identified for each of the priority outcomes in a logic model

CONCLUSION

WAJA has completed preliminary scoping of a potential youth skills and support programme and has isolated the core components that should be included to ensure it produces positive outcomes. This scoping document is based on recommendations obtained through consultations and research with a focus on the Mid-West region. We strongly recommend reading this scoping document in conjunction with the accompanying literature review.

Our team looked at research from many disciplines and interviewed various people with relevant interests and academic backgrounds. However, please note that there are constraints and limitations in our research. We encourage further research be undertaken to complement this paper, including more consultation in the youth employment space to cover broader considerations relating to youth employment programmes.

Utilising the Review Platform for data collection

The Review Platform is a data collection tool that enables providers to collect feedback from participants in a streamlined and automated way.

Features include:

- Free sign up
- Real-time tracking of how the programme is performing and actionable insights to inform programme improvements
- View real-time outcomes at organisation level, programme level and filter data by date range



