

Submission to the Parliamentary Enquiry into Building Resilience and Engagement for At-Risk Youth through Sport and Culture

Committee Name:

Community Development and Justice Standing Committee

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INQUIRY FOCUS

1. What works.
2. Gaps in Service delivery.
3. Difference in metropolitan and regional access to programs.
4. Challenges related to being Indigenous, female or from a culturally and linguistically diverse community.

This submission will outline the work of Role Models & Leaders Australia Girls Academies across Western Australia. The submission will detail the nature of our work in “building resilience and engagement for at-risk youth (particularly Indigenous secondary school aged girls) through sport and culture”.

The Submission will conclude with a set of observations and recommendations based on our work in this area.

OVERVIEW OF THE ACADEMY PROGRAM

The key objective of the RMLA Girls Academy programs is to focus on increasing retention rates and levels of attainment for young at risk Indigenous female students in Year 7 through to Year 12.

Specifically, the RMLA Girls Academy program seeks to improve Indigenous girls:

- Enrolments;
- Attendance;
- Engagement in schooling;
- Literacy and Numeracy;
- Retention to Year 12;
- Completion of Year 12;
- Graduation;
- Health and Wellbeing; and
- Transition to post school training and employment pathways.

RMLA believes Aboriginal women play a pivotal role in Australian Aboriginal families and communities, yet their needs are often overlooked. Our goal is to create an environment within schools where the girls receive the support and programs needed to help them realise their full potential.

Our mission put simply is to: “Develop a Girl: Change a Community.”

With a **focus on attendance, retention and achievement**, the Academy program supports the partner schools to:

- Build healthy attitudes to learning by using sport as a “motivator” and “tool” for engagement.
- Provide Indigenous role models to act as guides and mentors to the girls.
- Build strong partnership with the parent and Indigenous community to build bridges between the school and wider community.
- Improve Indigenous Literacy and Numeracy levels.

The program also supports those Indigenous students who may not be “as sporty” as others by offering a rich and broad programs that supports each individual student. This includes personal and health development, lifeskills development and other support programs.

The Girls Academies are based on the following components:

- **Mentoring and Role Modelling** to individual students by Academy Development Officers and staff who provide on site support and guidance, and act as positive role models to the girls.
- **Work Placement and Work Readiness** for students in Years 10-12 coordinated by the school’s VET Coordinators, with Role Models and Leaders Australia providing business networks and links to secure the best fit work placements and traineeships for the individual needs of the students.
- **Sports and Extracurricular Activities** including training, coaching and involvement in competitions arranged by the Academy as incentives for the girls to regularly attend school, graduate, and to seek employment and further education opportunities.
- **Leadership, Teamwork and Vision** development opportunities to improve the girls’ skills, sense of belonging and commitment, and capacity to explore the future in a positive way.

ACADEMIES

Currently Role Models and Leaders Australia provide TWELVE (12) Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C) Sporting Chance Girls Academy Programs across Western Australia, Northern Territory and New South Wales.

In WA our Girls Academies are located in EIGHT (8) sites across NINE (9) school sites. Our academies are located in city and towns and rural and remote locations.

The location of our WA Academies is listed below.

Western Australia

- Broome girls Academy (Broome Senior High School)
- Clontarf Girls Academy (Clontarf Aboriginal College)
- Derby Girls Academy (Derby District High school)
- Fitzroy Valley Girls Academy (Fitzroy Valley District High school)
- Kalgoorlie Girls Academy (Eastern Goldfields College and Kalgoorlie Boulder Community High School)
- Kununurra Girls Academy (Kununurra District High School)
- Newton Moore girls Academy (Newton Moore Senior High School)
- Roebourne Girls Academy (Roebourne District High School)

KEY PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The RMLA Girls Academies support Indigenous girls aged 12-18 years by providing unique, supportive programs that focus on attendance and engagement in schooling. Academies provide a range of activities focussed on increasing attendance, graduation and engagement in schooling. These activities have a focus on Mentoring and Role Model Support; Sports training and competitions; Workplacement and Workreadiness; Leadership, Teamwork and Vision Development; Health, Fitness and Wellbeing; Cultural Awareness and Understanding; and Classroom Activities. Together these Academy activities work to increase attendance and build engagement with the schooling process.

A summary of typical activities and strategies are outlines below.

Mentoring and Role Model Support

- **Home pick up** – Academy staff, in consultation with the schools, undertake home visits and student pickup from home to support the attendance strategy.
- **Attendance Monitoring and Tracking** – Staff track and monitor student attendance and liaise with parents/caregivers to facilitate attendance.
- **Team Building** - A range of Team Building activities and programs designed to build a sense of community, leadership and cohesion in the Academy. These activities link to sports, camps, trips and the range of Academy activities.
- **Community Links and Community Service** - Continue to build in the girls an understanding of community and service through involvement in a range of organisations providing services to the community.
- **External Mentoring** – Using a range of external role models, site visits and guest speakers to talk to the students about goal setting, motivation and commitment.
- **Internal Mentoring** – Academy staff provide comprehensive mentoring to students through the Academy Room (before, during and after school), and as part of the formal Academy Time and program activities.

- **In Class Mentoring** – Staff provide mentoring support, advice and guidance through class visits and observations.
- **School Meetings** – Attend school staff/students meetings as support for students.
- **Career Mapping** – Work with students to map potential careers and job requirements. Assist Year 10 students with selecting their choice of subjects for Years 11/12. Support Year 11 and 12 students in their transition to post school options.
- **Provision of Breakfast and Lunch Programs** – Encourage student attendance and ensure all students have a breakfast at the start of the school day and lunch. During these times staff undertake mentoring and provide support to students.
- **Induction Camp** - Girls participate in induction camps, where they are part of teambuilding challenges, high ropes, low ropes, and other activities that push them outside of their comfort zone and push them to work as a team.
- **Building confidence** – Overcoming issues of “shame” and providing incentives for positive attendance, behaviour and achievement changes.
- **Cultural Awareness** – Becoming aware and being proud of who they are and their Culture.

Sports and Extra-Curricular

- **Sports Coaching** – Provide a range of before, during and after school opportunities to coach the girls in a range of sports as incentives and rewards for positive attendance and engagement.
- **Inter-Academy Competitions and Tournaments** – Organise and participate in scheduled inter-Academy sports events. Attendance at these events are linked to attendance, participation and achievement goals.
- **Sports Mentoring with Professional Athletes** – Access the services and support of professional athletes from a wide range of sports exposing the girls to high level coaching.
- **Local Sports competitions** – Access local sports competitions to enhance opportunities for competition and participation.
- **University and TAFE Visits** – Provide opportunities for the girls to tour local tertiary training institutions as part of increasing student’s awareness and understanding of post-school options and opportunities.
- **Career Expos** – Opportunity to explore their post schooling options.
- **Health Programs** - Provide a range of health programs to build student’s understanding of Food and Sexual Health decision-making. These programs will access the services of a wide range of community organizations.
- **Cultural Understanding** – Provision of programs that build understanding and knowledge of student’s Indigenous culture. These programs draw upon the knowledge of Elders and Local Indigenous groups and bodies.
- **Nutrition and Wellbeing Programs** - Provision of the Nestle Mother and Daughters Food Program and Nutrition and Wellbeing Program in all Academies.
- **Fitness Workout Activities**- Workout Circuits, Gym activities, Camp Challenges.

Work Placement and Work Readiness

- **Work placements** – Provide opportunities for students to undertake work placements to build career understandings and employment skills.
- **School Career Adviser** – Work closely with the school’s Careers Advisors as another strategy for enhancing post schooling options and work placement opportunities.
- **External Resources** – The opportunity for students to participate in work placements and traineeships by networking with external job seeker agencies and training organisations
- **Traineeships** – Provide opportunities for students to undertake traineeships.

- **Mentoring Programs** – Company employees mentor students by sharing experiences and job opportunities and requirements through organized meetings and visiting workplaces.

Leadership, Teamwork and Vision Development

- **Camp and Leadership Development** – Provide camp opportunities with a focus on developing student's confidence, leadership and teamwork skills and abilities.
- **Problem Solving Activities** – As part of scheduled Academy time provide problem-solving activities for the girls.
- **Sport** – Give the girls opportunities to participate in sports that will involve leadership and teamwork skills.
- **Journals** – Provide journals for the girls to map goal setting for career, sport, and personal prospects.
- **Leadership Camp** – Provide camp opportunities with a focus on developing leadership and teamwork skills outside the school environment.
- **Building Self-Esteem and Sense of Belonging** – Provide opportunities through program delivery to build student's confidence and sense of belonging.
- **Cultural Awareness** – Providing opportunities to become a team member, a leader and a vision setter within their culture.

Literacy and Numeracy

- **Classroom Tutoring:** Academy staff provide extra support within the classroom, acting as tutors/mentors in all areas of the curriculum including Mathematics and English classes.
- **Cross Curricular Planning:** Regularly meet with teachers to gain an understanding of where the students are struggling and integrate the various issues they are facing into academy sessions.
- **One-on-One Academic Interviews:** Goal Setting: Set targets and assist students with achieving these targets in a one-on-one basis.
- **Coaching Young People for Success Workshop:** This program covers a range of literacy skills as the students are required to participate in comprehension, discussion and written aspects of the course.
- **Personal Training:** A progress chart/ log book is kept by the girls in order to track their progress. This will involve numeracy and literacy skills development.
- **Team Building:** Reflection of each team building activity requires reflection, comprehension and literacy skills.
- **Academy Team Challenges:** Reading and comprehension of set challenges.
- **Peer Mentoring:** Students having a 'buddy system' where they have to look out for a younger peer. This will also involve assistance with homework.

Classroom based learning

- **Academy Program** – Opportunity provided for all students to participate in an engaging program of activity with a focus on sports, health and wellbeing, and cultural knowledge and understanding.
- **Health Programs** – Provide a range of health programs to build students understanding and confidence in decision-making. These programs will access the services of a range of local organisations and the school nurse.
- **Mothers-Daughters Food Program** – Provision of the Nestle Mothers and Daughters Nutrition Program to groups of students and mothers to build skills and understanding of healthy cooking and good nutrition.
- **Literacy Programs** – Provide literacy lessons/support as part of the learning program.

- **Team Building/Problem Solving** – A range of activities and programs to build a sense of community and cohesion within the academy.

All of the above activities have a focus on getting students to school by developing a sense of belonging through mentoring support and connection counselling, and providing a range of programs that celebrate and reward student's improved attendance, increased engagement and achievements.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Girls Academy program has a strong focus on the achievement of program outcomes. With this goal in mind RMLA have developed Performance Indicators and related monitoring processes around FOUR clear targets:

1. **Attendance.**
2. **Achievement.**
3. **Year 12 Graduation.**
4. **Post-School Transition & Destinations.**

The success of the Girls Academies has been achieved through a clear focus on these targets. The Program Manager role has been instrumental in leading this success. Our success has been based on our leaders (PM's) having a strong results orientation which guides and directs the activities of the academy and the work of the Development Officers. Our programs are designed around successful strategies that will work to achieve the Program Targets.

ACCOUNTABILITY

RMLA remains committed to the establishment of systems and processes that track, monitor and report on the achievement of program outcomes. Program accountability measures include:

- Production of evidence based Mid-Year Progress and End of Year Annual Reports of program activity and achievements. These reports comply with Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C) and participating school and community expectations.
- Provision of scheduled data reports to PM&C on enrolments, attendance, and achievement against expected standards, and graduation.
- Alignment of program activities and anticipated outcomes against education system/department directions and priorities
- Regular collection of performance data against identified Performance Indicators.
- Regular Advisory Committee Meetings of key stakeholders to monitor program activities and achievements.
- Performance Management of all staff.

ENROLMENTS

Between 2010-2015 there were 4,100 Indigenous girls enrolled in Role Model & Leaders Australia Girls Academies. During this period there were:

- 2,202 enrolments in WA;

In 2016 there are approximately 565 Indigenous girls enrolled in our academies.

ATTENDANCE:

The Academies have also been successful in making a difference in improving attendance rates. The following table outlines the average attendance rates for WA between 2012-2015 data collection periods. The tables compare the Academy Average Attendance Rate to the Average Indigenous Attendance Rate.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Academy Average Attendance	RMLA Academy Attendance Rate	All Indigenous Student Attendance Rate
Semester 1: 2012	71%	66%
Term 1: 2013	70.8%	67.6%
Term1-3: 2013	62.5%	58.5%
Term 1: 2014	69.25%	62.5%
Terms 1-2: 2014	66%	59%
Semester 1: 2015	65.3%	62.2%
Semester 2: 2015	60.8%	58%

In all data collection periods, the RMLA Girls Academy Average Attendance Rate exceeds the rate for Indigenous students. The data is based on information provided by participating schools to DEEWR and PM&C as part of the required contractual data collection process.

YEAR 12 ENROLMENTS

Completion of Year 12 remains a key goal of the RMLA Academies and is a key PM&C outcomes. The following is a summary of Year 12 enrolments in WA between 2010-2015.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

- In 2010 there were 21 Year 12 Girls in WA Academies
- In 2011 there were 30 Year 12 Girls in WA Academies
- In 2012 there were 34 enrolled Girls in WA Academies
- In 2013 there were 52 enrolled Girls in WA Academies
- In 2014 there were 19 enrolled Girls in WA Academies (note the half cohort)
- In 2015 there were 58 enrolled Girls in WA Academies
- Between 2010-2012 this represents a 62% increase
- Between 2010-2013 this represents a 148% increase¹

YEAR 12 GRADUATION

Year 12 Graduation has also improved over the same period. Since 2010, Year 12 Graduation has increased by 59%.

Western Australia

- 2010 17
- 2011 15
- 2012 18
- 2013 31
- 2014 12 (Note the half cohort year)
- 2015 27

In 2015, 92% of RMLA Year 12 participants either completed Year 12, gain their Year 12 certificate or gained employment before completing Year 12.

STAFFING

- Girls Academies employ 33 staff
- RMLA directly currently employs 27 staff
- 22 staff members are Indigenous.

PROGRAM COSTINGS

Currently, the cost of program provision is based on Australian Government funding and cost estimates.

The current cost of program provision for an Academy of 65 Indigenous girl is estimated at \$432,000pa. This includes salaries, program operational expenses, administration and equipment.

Note: The cost of each individual Academy will vary according to the number of participants and site and school factors.

FUNDING

The current RMLA Girls Academies funding model is based on:

- 1/3 from the Australian Government's PM&C Sporting Chance Program;
- 1/3 from Schools; and
- 1/3 raised corporate sponsors.

Between 2010-2017

- Between 2010-2015, PM&C and formerly DEEWR Sporting Chance Program has committed \$8,145,174 to conducted Girls Academy programs in WA, NT and NSW.
- In 2015 PM&C committed \$5,000,000 (exc GST) to RMLA to continue to conduct twelve Girls Academy programs from 1 July 2015 until December 2017.

- Currently, 78% of funds support salaries and program delivery.

FUTURE EXPANSION OF PROGRAM DELIVERY

Over the past six years RMLA has continue to receive requests from schools and communities seeking to provide programs to Indigenous secondary school girls. Based on this feedback we are look to progressively expand to other Western Australian and Australian sites.

The costings are based on the request to the Australian Government for 1/3 of the operating cost. A similar request to cover 1/3 would be made to participating schools and/or Department of Education (NSW), and 1/3 would be sought from corporate and community sponsors.

In late 2016 we are looking to expand to the following Western Australian Sites:

Western Australia (275 Indigenous Girls)

- Cecil Andrews (65 Indigenous girls) A Year 5-10 model between Challis PS and Cecil Andrews SHS
- North Albany (50 Indigenous Girls)
- Warburton (65 Indigenous Girls)
- John Tonkin College (35 Indigenous Girls) and Coodanup (60 Indigenous Girls)

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Girls Academy program has worked successfully to build resilience and engagement in schooling of at-risk girls secondary school Indigenous girls. Programs have worked successfully in city/town and rural/remote locations. The data provided, highlights the success of these programs to build attendance, engagement and achievement. Mid Year and Annual Reports provide detailed information of the success of the Academies. (These reports provided to prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C) are available on request.)
2. The Australian Government has continued to support program provision across Western Australia until December 2017 and has committed to fund for expansion. It is the aim of RMLA to have Twelve (12) Girls Academies across Fifteen (15) school sites by late 2016. These Academies will aim to reach 840 Indigenous girls. Furthermore it is the aim of RMLA to provide Girls Academy programs to a target of 2,406 Indigenous girls by December 2017.
3. There is a major challenge around securing Western Australian Government and/or Department of Education support for the required 1/3 funding. In some cases, individual schools have been able to identify monies to provide this support. However, some schools have struggled to provide the level of funding support needed. The lack of certainty of State Government contribution to the programs has impacted on the levels of funding for desired resourcing and staffing of programs.

4. It is recommended that to ensure program continuation the WA Government and/or Department of Education work to meet the 1/3 funding commitment to ensure program provision in line with funding provided in others schools and States/Territories.

Should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

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APPENDIX 1

**ROLE MODELS AND LEADERS AUSTRALIA
GIRLS ACADEMIES
ATTENDANCE AND ENROLMENT DATA**

ATTENDANCE: WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Academies have also been successful in making a difference in improving attendance rates. The following table outlines WA Academy attendance rates (2012-2013) compared to All Indigenous Female students (2012) and All Indigenous students (2013).

Semester 1: 2012

Academy	RMLA Academy Attendance Rate	All Indigenous Female Student Attendance Rate
Broome GA	72	71
Clontarf GA	80	80
Fitzroy GA	44	40
Kalgoorlie GA (Senior)	79	71
Kalgoorlie GA (Middle)	82	68
Newton Moore GA	70	65
Academy Average	71%	66%

Term 1: 2013 (15 March)

Academy	RMLA Academy Attendance Rate	All Indigenous Student Attendance Rate
Broome GA	72	72
Clontarf GA	88	88
Derby GA	53	57
Fitzroy GA	60	46
Kalgoorlie GA	75	66
Kununurra GA	83	86
Newton Moore GA	73	74
Roebourne GA	62	52
Academy Average	70.8%	67.6%

Terms 1-3 : 2013 (2 September)

Academy	RMLA Academy Attendance Rate	All Indigenous Student Attendance Rate
Broome GA	72	71
Clontarf GA	88	88
Derby GA	73	60
Fitzroy GA	44	36
Kalgoorlie GA	62	64
Kununurra GA	65	50
Newton Moore GA	73	71
Roebourne GA	23	28
Academy Average	62.5%	58.5%

Term 1: 2014 (March)

Academy	RMLA Academy Attendance Rate	All Indigenous Student Attendance Rate
Broome GA	67	69
Clontarf GA	90	93
Derby GA	62	40
Fitzroy GA	51	62
Kalgoorlie GA	69	72
Kununurra GA	62	52
Newton Moore GA	77	76
Roebourne GA	76	36
Academy Average	69.25%	62.5%

Term 1-2: 2014 (29 August)

Academy	RMLA Academy Attendance Rate	All Indigenous Student Attendance Rate
Broome GA	63.4	66.7
Clontarf GA	93	84
Derby GA	55.3	44.5
Fitzroy GA	51	54.6
Kalgoorlie GA	68.4	70.6
Kununurra GA	54	55
Newton Moore GA	78	74
Roebourne GA	69.4	28.2
Academy Average	66%	59%

Semester 1: 2015

Academy	RMLA Academy Attendance Rate	All Indigenous Student Attendance Rate
Broome GA	67	72
Clontarf GA	73.3	73.3
Derby GA	50.4	54.3
Fitzroy GA	35	40
Kalgoorlie GA	79.2 (EGC) 62.2 (KBCHS)	76 (EGC) 58.3 (KBCHS)
Kununurra GA	73.8	66.7
Newton Moore GA	84	79
Roebourne GA	58.7	36.5
Academy Average	65.3%	62.2%

Semester 2: 2015

Academy	RMLA Academy Attendance Rate	All Indigenous Student Attendance Rate
Broome GA	72	72
Clontarf GA	84	86
Derby GA	60	53
Fitzroy GA	34	36
Kalgoorlie GA	69 (EGC) 57 (KBCHS)	71 (EGC) 56 (KBCHS)
Kununurra GA	53	48

Newton Moore GA	80	76.7
Roebourne GA	38.5	26.3
Academy Average	60.8%	58%

ENROLMENTS: 2010-2015 (WESTERN AUSTRALIA)

Broome Girls Academy

Year	Year 7-10	Year 11-12	Total
2010	36	19	55
2011	45	20	65
2012	43	26	69
2013	69	15	84
2014	62	17	79
2015	73	57	130

- Over the past SIX (6) years 482 students have been enrolled in the Academy.

Clontarf Girls Academy

Year	Year 7-10	Year 11-12	Total
2010	18	12	30
2011	24	18	42
2012	17	18	35
2013	26	14	40
2014	40	22	62
2015	49	24	73

- Over the past SIX (6) years 282 students have been enrolled in the Academy.

Derby Girls Academy

Year	Year 7-10	Year 11-12	Total
2013	51	7	58
2014	51	7	58
2015	55	8	63

- Over the past THREE (3) year 179 students have been enrolled in the Academy.

Fitzroy Valley Girls Academy

Year	Year 7-10	Year 11-12	Total
2012	29	22	51
2013	52	13	65
2014	36	9	45
2015	58	14	72

- Over the past FOUR (4) years 233 students have been enrolled in the Academy.

Kalgoorlie Girls Academy

Year	Year 7-10	Year 11-12	Total
2010	40	17	57
2011	45	19	64
2012	35	30	65
2013	61	12	73
2014	58	15	73
2015	79	18	97

- Over the past SIX (6) years 429 students have been enrolled in the Academy.

Kununurra Girls Academy

Year	Year 7-10	Year 11-12	Total
2013	44	5	49
2014	70	12	82
2015	73	11	84

- Over the past THREE (3) year 215 students have been enrolled in the Academy.

Newton Moore Girls Academy

Year	Year 7-10	Year 11-12	Total
2010	30	12	42
2011	33	16	49
2012	25	22	47
2013	33	17	50
2014	39	9	48
2015	52	9	61

- Over the past SIX (6) years 297 students have been enrolled in the Academy.

Roebourne Girls Academy

Year	Year 7-10	Year 11-12	Total
2013	28	6	34
2014	24	1	25
2015	24	3	26

- Over the past THREE (3) year 85 students have been enrolled in the Academy.

Over the past six years 2,202 Indigenous students have participated in the RMLA Girls Academy Program in WA.
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The Girls Academy is an initiative of Role Models and Leaders Australia.
www.rolemodelsaustralia.com.au www.girlsacademy.com.au info@rolemodelsaustralia.com