

Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1

Page 24

Measurements of participation are quantitative rather than qualitative and do not necessarily capture the nature and duration of involvement.

Finding 2

Page 35

The cessation of Commonwealth funding for Aboriginal Sports Development Officers in Western Australia has resulted in the withdrawal of these officers in locations where they play a vital role in sports delivery.

Recommendation 1

Page 36

That the State Government urges the Federal Government to reinstate the funding for Aboriginal Sports Development Officers, and, if unsuccessful, explore alternative sources of funding.

Finding 3

Page 45

The PCYC model is in a transitional stage and needs to better identify the demand for its services and provide greater clarification of its role.

Finding 4

Page 52

There is no system for collating demographic information relating to participants in sport and cultural programs across the State, making it impossible to accurately determine gaps in service delivery.

Finding 5

Page 52

There are more sports and recreation programs targeting at-risk youth in the metropolitan area than in regional areas.

Finding 6

Page 54

There are more arts and culture programs and recreation/cultural programs targeting at-risk youth in regional areas than in the metropolitan area, largely as a result of rural Indigenous programs.

Finding 7

Page 54

Culturally and linguistically diverse youth are not specifically targeted and catered for in regional Western Australia, both in terms of sport and recreation programs and arts and culture programs.

Finding 8 **Page 54**

Where programs targeting at-risk girls are provided, they are generally for Indigenous or culturally and linguistically diverse groups. Girls that do not fit into either of these two groups face the prospect of missing out.

Finding 9 **Page 55**

Services for at-risk youth are not evenly distributed within the metropolitan area and across regional Western Australia.

Finding 10 **Page 55**

Single-focus programs are unable to transform the lives of young people with multiple problems and complex needs.

Finding 11 **Page 57**

The role of sport and the arts in assisting vulnerable young people is not acknowledged in the Department for Child Protection and Family Support’s At-Risk Youth Strategy 2015-2018.

Finding 12 **Page 58**

The cross-government Youth Strategic Framework “Our Youth – Our Future” contains admirable strategies for the engagement of at-risk youth in sport and culture, but the extent to which this has guided and continues to guide practice is unclear. In addition, no specific resources have been allocated to implementing the strategy.

Finding 13 **Page 59**

The Department of Sport and Recreation’s policy and strategy documents demonstrate a commitment to the inclusion of marginalised groups, including at-risk youth.

Finding 14 **Page 61**

The Department of Culture and the Arts does not have any dedicated programs to address youth or youth at risk, and these groups are largely absent from policy documents.

Recommendation 2 **Page 61**

That the Department of Culture and the Arts review its strategy and policy documents to ensure that they address the needs of at-risk youth.

Recommendation 3 **Page 62**

That the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs acts to include the Department of Culture and the Arts as a member of the Aboriginal Affairs Cabinet Sub-Committee.

Finding 15 **Page 66**

Delivery of sports and arts programs to at-risk youth is fragmented, due to a lack of coordination of government agency and non-government organisation programs. This can lead to duplication in some areas and a paucity of programs in others.

Finding 16 **Page 67**

Ancillary arts and sports programs are most vulnerable when State Government departments (other than the arts and sport portfolios) are subject to budgetary constraints.

Finding 17 **Page 70**

Measurement of outcomes of arts and sport programs for at-risk youth is either absent or lacking in clarity due to its complexity.

Recommendation 4 **Page 71**

That appropriate resources be made available to government departments to conduct rigorous evaluations of the programs they fund. Evaluations should include a qualitative component.

Finding 18 **Page 74**

Short-term funding of arts and sports programs does not generally lead to long-term benefits for at-risk youth. It also impedes the ability of organisations to attract and retain staff with the skills to interact with this cohort.

Finding 19 **Page 74**

The complex criteria to be met for Department of Culture and the Arts grants is a deterrent for groups seeking funding for projects for at-risk youth.

Finding 20 **Page 97**

Economic analysis shows that investment in programs for at-risk youth deliver a very high social return.

Finding 21 **Page 112**

Sport and culture-based programs that successfully assist at-risk youth to build resilience and enhance engagement:

- Use art or sport as a “hook” or incentive for young people to engage in the program;
- Include young people and target communities in the development of programs to develop culturally-relevant and effective solutions to challenges facing at-risk youth;

- Ensure that programs are accessible to young people in terms of location and hours of service provision;
- Develop and maintain welcoming and supportive environments, which includes some degree of mentoring and staff to whom at-risk youth can relate;
- Ensure programs are adaptable in order to respond more effectively to youth interests and youth needs;
- Provide a reliable, long-term and ongoing service for young people;
- Involve the families of at-risk youth;
- Empower young people by offering leadership-focused and/or employment pathways;
- Collaborate with other services to reduce duplication and increase the support received by young people;
- Focus on building or enhancing the identities of young people, particularly their cultural identities.