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Dear Ms Calvert

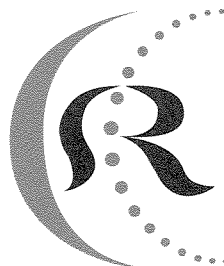
Inquiry into Children, Young People and the Built Environment

Thank you for providing the Community Relations Commission For a multicultural NSW with the opportunity to provide input for the Inquiry into Children, Young People and the Built Environment.

The Commission is currently looking into the issue of Young People and the Public Spaces. This project was developed as a result of the Youth Partnership with Arabic Speaking Communities evaluation completed early 2005. The evaluation recognised that young people came to the attention of Security Guards at shopping centres which at many times resulted in a misunderstanding and the situation escalating to where the young person is banned or evicted from the centre. It was identified that security guards needed training in how they approach and communicate with young people in their everyday operations. This Project will look at developing competence based training for Security Guards and be completed by the end of December 2006.

The Commission would like to make the following comments that should be considered by the inquiry.

- The creation of space is needed for children and young people to express their opinions and understandings about the built environment. Often children and young people are excluded from dialogue. It is necessary for the design, planning and provision of the built environment to have wide consultation with children and young people and families from culturally, religiously and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Part of this consultation process is the provision of interpretation services, especially in areas of large migrant populations. This is particularly important for large development projects including the creation of new urban and home estate areas.
- It is necessary when designing and planning built environment to provide relevant information for children and young people of Non-English Speaking



Community Relations Commission

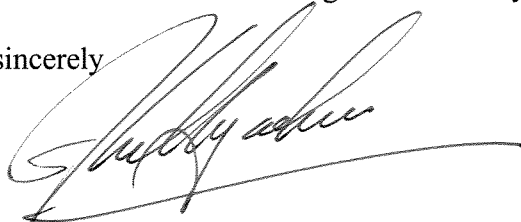
For a multicultural NSW

background. This information could be made available through ethnic radio and press media.

- Children and young people from cultural diverse backgrounds may have different understandings and interactions with the built environment. For example, youths from Pacific Islander communities interact in groups. They often feel they are victimised because of this interactions.¹ It is necessary to provide passive spaces and parks areas in urban and large development for children and young people. The provision of seating and benches in parks and local shopping centres can provide areas where children, young people and families can interact together.
- All Children, young people and families have a right to use public space. There is a need to establish positive relationships between youths, Security Guards and Police Officers paroling public spaces. By establishing an arena for the development of strategies; it could improve the already established relationships between children, young people, families and the wider community.
- It is recommended that the planning and designing of the built environment could incorporate elements of different cultural groups. By integrating icons and artworks of culturally diverse groups, is could create a space where youths and young people of cultural diverse background feel like they belong to the wider Australian community.
- The designing and provision of the built environment would benefit from community participation. This involvement could take the form of youth designed artwork in public spaces. This could create a space youths could identify with.
- The planning of lighting, signages and community safety are important issues affecting children and young people's built environment.² By improving these facilities and services it would not only benefit children and young people but also the wider community.

I trust that these comments have been useful to enhance the Commissions inquiry into the trends and issues affecting children and young people.

Yours sincerely



Stepan Kerkyasharian AM
Chairperson

¹ NSW Council for Pacific Island Communities, Youth Network committee meeting 9th October 2003.

² Lighting, signage and community safety were seen as important community issues in Cabramatta, CityWatch project.

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