

## CHAIR'S FOREWORD

The Social Issues Committee was asked, by the previous government, to examine the issue of youth violence. This Report represents the findings of that Inquiry. Having considered the issue in detail, the Committee is convinced the emphasis to be taken must be that of prevention, increased safety measures for the community and effective and integrated responses to offenders.

The Terms of Reference issued to the Committee were particularly broad and necessitated a thorough and extensive examination of youth violence in New South Wales. As a result of our investigations, this Report addresses a range of issues that are relevant to youth both as perpetrators and victims of violence. It looks, for example, at the role family breakdown, unemployment and the media play in violence. The Committee also spent considerable time examining and analysing data on the occurrences of youth violence with its findings and conclusions presented across several chapters.

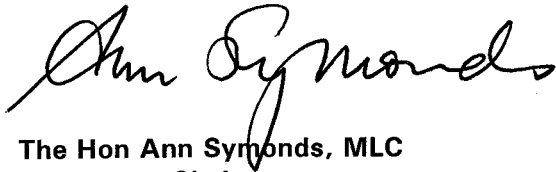
Although the recommendations call for State Government action, the Committee considers it imperative that all of society play a role in the prevention and management of violence. The responsibility cannot lie with government agencies alone. The Committee therefore calls upon the community and the business sector to take an active role in cooperating to limit the incidence of violence in our society.

I would like to thank all Committee members who participated in this Inquiry which spanned the life of two Parliaments. In addition to those Members who continue to sit on the Committee, the Hon Keith Enderbury, Hon Franca Arena, Hon Helen Sham-Ho, Hon John Ryan, Hon Lloyd Coleman, and Rev Hon Fred Nile were part of the Committee that commenced the Inquiry. This group heard most of the evidence, visited schools and organisations and set the Inquiry's overall direction and focus. The Hon Dr Marlene Goldsmith chaired the previous Committee and oversaw the bulk of the work. While I am happy to bring the Inquiry to its conclusion, I acknowledge the primary contribution made by Dr Goldsmith.

The Committee's Secretariat staff provided, as always, research assistance of the highest quality. The Inquiry was primarily coordinated by Senior Project Officer, Mr Glen Baird. In addition to research and preparation of the Report, Mr Baird coordinated the extensive schedule of hearings and site visits. His attention to detail and persistence in data gathering is greatly appreciated by all members. Committee Director, Dr Jennifer Knight, Senior Project Officer, Ms Alex Shehadie, and Committee Officer, Ms Heather Crichton provided invaluable input and assistance to realise this Report.

My Research Assistant, Ms Julie Langsworth, provided me with background briefing details and editorial input which was enormously valuable. Ms Magda Lebon worked with the staff in word processing and formatting the Report in its numerous draft forms. Her professional approach to the task and high standard of work is evident in the final product.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who appeared before the Committee. The range of people we spoke to was extremely broad ranging from Year 1 school students to Departmental Directors-General. All gave freely and generously of their time and experience and we are indebted to them for this.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ann Symonds". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'A'.

**The Hon Ann Symonds, MLC  
Committee Chair**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report represents the results of an extensive Inquiry into Youth Violence conducted by the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues. The Inquiry was referred to the Committee in May 1993 by the Hon Virginia Chadwick, then Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

The scope of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference was particularly broad necessitating the Committee conduct an extremely wide-ranging investigation. During the course of its Inquiry, the Committee received 65 written submissions and heard testimony from 142 witnesses in hearings conducted in Sydney, Lismore, Broken Hill, Wellington, Dubbo and Wagga Wagga. The Committee also visited 10 schools to gain a first hand understanding of anti-violence programs currently underway in primary and secondary schools. During these visits the Committee was encouraged to observe positive, proactive strategies and perceived a strong sense of school and personal pride and self-esteem.

This final Report contains 181 recommendations. From these recommendations the Committee has drawn seven which they consider to be Key Recommendations. These deal with family support, employment and leisure, planning issues, alcohol, education and schools, police and community action and young offenders. The Committee recognises the scope for the community and Government to deal with violence at both the individual and social level, and recommendations deal with interventions at both these levels.

During the course of this Inquiry, considerable media attention was given to an alleged increase in "gang" activity. The Committee is fully aware that the term "gangs" is often used erroneously and emotively to denote any group of young people. Teenagers and young adults gravitate together through ties of friendship, sport, school, or ethnic background and form support networks. These are usually a normal and beneficial aspect in the lives of young people. The Committee acknowledges that a number of gangs involving young people do exist, but it feels their number and prevalence is greatly exaggerated by the media. The Committee heard evidence of gangs operating in schools, but no evidence of criminal behaviour was presented. The Committee feels that caution needs to be exercised in the usage of the term and it calls upon both the media and politicians to be responsible in their reporting of so-called youth "gangs".

**Chapter One** of the Report examines the issue of youth violence from a theoretical perspective and various approaches explaining violent behaviour are examined. The chapter reviews individual and psychological aspects of violence and the social and cultural aspects of society.

The Committee is very aware that violence cannot be viewed in isolation from the life experiences of young people and young people may learn violent behaviour through peers, the family and the media. The social climate in which young people develop is also significant and the Committee recognises that structural factors such as unemployment may alienate young people and lead to destructive behaviours directed against both property and other people.

This chapter also presents information on a number of alternative approaches to the prevention of crime and violence and reviews a range of crime prevention projects in a number of international and Australian jurisdictions to illustrate the variety of available approaches to

prevention. Programs that reduce the exposure of young people to violence, increase opportunities for them to contribute to their community and be financially secure and provide appropriate recreation and leisure options can all contribute to reducing youth violence.

**Chapter Two** provides an extensive review of available data on the incidence and characteristics of youth violence. The data are drawn from court statistics, police records and data from institutions including Juvenile Justice Centres and correctional centres. Having examined available data thoroughly, the Committee determined it is not possible to draw firm conclusions on trends in crime rates from annual statistics over a limited period of time.

The Committee recognises the limitations of the various sources of data. Court statistics do not, for example, reveal the complete pattern of judicial intervention. Recorded crime statistics only record those offences reported to the police where police action has been taken against an alleged offender. These statistics record the offender's age. Different reporting and recording practices impact upon the reliability and comparability of data sets.

This chapter also examines a number of discernible characteristics of violent offending by young people. Included in the discussion are the rates of offending in the statistical divisions of New South Wales and statistical sub-divisions of Sydney, and the environments in which offenders allegedly commit assault offences. Other factors examined include the gender of alleged perpetrators; the extent to which weapons are involved; the ethnicity of youth, including Aboriginal youth, in the justice system; racial tension; gang violence; and violence against homosexuals and lesbians.

**Chapter Three** reviews data on the incidence of violence in schools brought to the attention of the Committee during the course of its Inquiry. Data are available from a number of different sources including the Department of School Education; police statistics; surveys and research papers; and evidence presented to the Committee.

While the available data show that in 1994 there were increases in violent critical incident reports made by schools to the Department of School Education, long and short suspensions, and reports to police of assaults on school grounds, the Committee recognises the methodological difficulties in determining the level of school violence with any certainty. For example, it is difficult to identify the extent to which increases in the new critical incident reporting mechanisms, introduced in 1991, are due to changes in reporting practices as more schools report or an actual increase in school violence. It will not be possible to identify a trend until uniform reporting practices have been in place for some years. The evaluation of the seriousness of different types of incidents, and reporting requirements to both the Department of School Education and the Police, remain ambiguous at the school level, and the Committee recommends action in this regard. Despite data limitations, the Committee is confident that the risk of being assaulted outside school grounds is substantially higher than that of being assaulted within school grounds. The most dangerous place for children in our society is the family home.

The Committee is particularly concerned with the occurrence of bullying in schools. While research suggests that one in seven children experience serious bullying, the Committee found it difficult to draw firm conclusions of the exact incidence of bullying in schools in New South Wales. However, it is clear bullying is a far more serious aspect of youth violence than has been acknowledged in the past.

Data also suggest that female students and teachers, students from ethnic minorities and homosexual and lesbian students experience victimisation in and around schools. The Committee has developed a number of recommendations to address these problems

The Inquiry's Terms of Reference required the Committee to consider a number of factors, including family breakdown, that may contribute to youth violence. **Chapter Four** considers this and other issues relating to the family environment. Violence within the family can result in behavioural problems in some young people. The Committee heard that many young violent offenders appearing before the court have either experienced or witnessed violence, often in their own family. The effect of this violence can lead to the victimisation of peers at school, and the perpetration of violence against family members. The Committee was not able to find a simple causal relationship between family breakdown and youth violence as family breakdown may have occurred in conjunction with, or be followed by, a range of factors contributing to feelings of anger and frustration. Family separation which removes children from violent situations can be beneficial.

The Committee recognises that not all children who have been abused will go on to abuse others. However, it appears the majority of those who abuse others have themselves been abused, and this learned behaviour must be addressed.

It is essential that appropriate advice and assistance be extended to those working with families experiencing violence. As teachers have a mandatory responsibility to report the abuse of children, they may benefit from additional training to assist them in this responsibility. Appropriate counselling and support for children taken into care is also necessary.

The Committee is aware that adverse social and economic pressures on parents may lead to a lack of support for children. Emphasis needs to be placed on providing adequate physical and emotional nurturing in all families, working or not. The issue of child-care is central to supporting families in this regard. As part of the Committee's key recommendation on employment and leisure, government agencies are called upon to develop appropriate after-school programs, particularly for students in the twelve to fifteen year old age group. Another of the Committee's key recommendations specifically endorses programs that support families, and believes they should be fully evaluated and successful programs offered to parents throughout the State, especially to parents of children in the crucial first three years of their life.

The Committee was asked to examine the impact of unemployment in relation to youth violence. To do this, the available evidence linking variables of socio-economic status with levels of violent crime is examined in **Chapter Five**. High levels of youth unemployment can lead to frustration and anger and may manifest in the form of violence. Unemployed people are highly represented among persons who appear before the courts. Poverty is also a concern: disadvantaged areas consistently tend to have higher rates of convictions for offences against the person and property offending.

The chapter looks at employment and job training, and alternate means for young people to be provided with support to enable them to contribute to their community. The Committee considers governments, in consultation with the community and business, have a responsibility to develop a range of opportunities for young people to contribute to their community in constructive ways. As a key recommendation the Committee proposes that government

agencies, in partnership with community organisations and the private sector, give priority to job creation in areas of high youth unemployment and sponsor the development of learning and recreational activities for unemployed youth. The Committee believes it fundamental to this key recommendation that all training and employment initiatives be structured to maximise the likelihood of on-going employment for young people.

The issue of homeless young people who, research suggests, are at particular risk of becoming involved in crime and violence, particularly violent victimisation, is also considered in this chapter. The chapter looks at the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program and the Young Homeless Allowance and recommendations relating to the availability of supported accommodation services for needy young people are made.

The experiences of, and attitudes towards, young people using public spaces are among issues considered in **Chapter Six**. For many young people, leisure and recreation includes congregating in public places such as shopping centres. However, young people experience a considerable level of harassment when they meet and gather in groups in such places. The Committee is concerned that this type of harassment can result in feelings of resentment and hostility toward authority figures. While anti-social behaviour cannot be condoned, it should be recognised that young people have the same rights to access and use of public places as any other group in the community.

The Committee wishes to see local campaigns developed to ensure young people are made aware of the range of facilities and recreational options available to them. Young people should have access to areas that offer recreational opportunities, and be empowered to participate in the planning and operation of youth programs. A key recommendation of the Committee is for the review of state planning provisions and the development of guidelines to ensure the needs of young people are considered in planning development decisions to contribute to the safety and enjoyment of the entire community.

The impact of sport on the lives of young people, both in terms of the positive benefits and its contribution to legitimising aggression and violence in society, is considered. The Committee is supportive of the positive benefits of sport played for fun and fitness and would like to see sporting programs for young people encourage the positive aspects of health and team-building, with an increased emphasis on non-competitive sport in schools.

The Committee acknowledges the proven health risks associated with boxing, and recommends the development, at the federal level, of a strategy to phase out amateur and professional boxing. The Committee believes an inquiry into the health risks associated with kick-boxing should be undertaken before an appropriate policy response to this sport can be considered.

The Committee considers alcohol to be a primary factor linked to violent behaviour. Chapter Six discusses issues surrounding the recreational use of alcohol and violence in and around licensed premises, and the link between violence and the abuse of alcohol and drugs and strategies for harm minimisation. The Committee believes that increasing the availability of alcohol exacerbates the problems associated with its use and abuse. As a key recommendation, the Committee calls for the revision of the Liquor Act to ensure it clearly indicates the responsibility of licensees to limit the likelihood of violence on their premises by initiatives encouraging responsible serving, design and management practices. Initiatives encouraging the non-violent management of conflict in licensed premises are also supported.

Violent behaviour may also be triggered by a reaction to such drugs as amphetamines or other stimulants, and to steroid abuse. Recommendations are made aimed at the allocation of appropriate resources to reduce drug and alcohol abuse by young people.

**Chapter Seven** examines the relationship between violence in the media and youth violence. In the Committee's opinion television alone cannot be blamed for increases in rates of violent crime. However, the Committee is concerned with a number of effects of television violence. Given the frequency with which children are bombarded with violent images, heavy viewers may be desensitised to the effects of violence. The media may also present a model of dispute resolution that is mainly confrontational and violent and contribute to the development of a youth culture that includes values which glamorise violence.

The Committee also examined strategies for addressing violence in films and videos. Recommendations address restricting access to violent films and videos; the adequacy of complaint mechanisms; reviewing media codes of conduct; promoting non-violence in the media; and encouraging responsible and critical viewing.

Violence in a number of other media including video and computer games, and issues relating to game parlours; computer bulletin boards; virtual reality; and music are also considered and recommendations for change made.

Chapters Eight, Nine and Ten review the Department of School Education's policies and actions on violence. In considering the role of schools in addressing violence, the Committee does not want them to be seen as the focus of the problem nor should they be solely responsible for addressing the problem. In the Committee's opinion, the community as a whole must share the responsibility for its young people. Collaboration between schools, parents, the community and government is therefore essential.

A number of broad issues are examined in **Chapter Eight** including the role and nature of schools, their relationship to the community and parents, and strategies in place to manage violence.

School staffing is considered. Specialist staff are seen as playing an important role in reducing youth violence and the Report makes a number of recommendations specifically addressing the needs of school counsellors. The role of classroom teachers is also fundamental and the Committee would like to see behaviour management training become an integral part of pre-service teacher training.

In recognising that authoritarian style schools tend to have discipline problems, there is a role for students in the development of anti-violence initiatives and decision-making processes in schools. Programs aiming to build self-esteem and mutual respect in students, such as peer support, are considered important violence prevention strategies. The Committee is particularly concerned about bullying which in its prevalence and impact on students may well be the most serious form of violence in schools. It is an area that needs attention.

The Committee recognises that all students have a right to receive an education. However, this involves balancing the rights of a minority who may be disruptive with the rights of the majority of students to have a safe and harmonious learning environment.

The Report looks at current disciplinary options including corporal punishment, and the provisions to suspend, exclude or expel a student. Recommendations include, among other concerns, the responsibility of the state to ensure the welfare, educational and behavioural needs of these students are met. In the Committee's opinion, corporal punishment must be removed as a disciplining option in government schools.

**Chapter Nine** examines a range of anti-violence initiatives and programs that are being developed or have been introduced in certain schools, regions or throughout the school education system. A range of staff development, whole school programs and programs for targeted groups of students with problem behaviours are discussed. As a key recommendation, the Committee wishes to see sufficient resources made available to schools to enable them to function as models of co-operative, tolerant and non-violence communities.

Issues relating to the school curriculum, retention rates and alternative approaches to education are also examined. The Committee recognises that the student population is changing, with more young people for whom an academic curriculum may not be appropriate remaining in the education system. A commitment to a general education must be maintained in a changing society to give people knowledge and skills which extend beyond any particular job which may become obsolete. However, the education system needs to examine the broadest possible range of abilities young people may have and ensure these abilities are fostered and nurtured. Vocational courses and extended educational pathways may be the most appropriate way of ensuring a particular range of non-academic abilities are nurtured.

**Chapter Ten** examines the responses of the Department of School Education to specific forms of violence in schools and factors underlying this behaviour. Procedures for resolving complaints about discrimination against students are discussed, together with initiatives targeting sex-based harassment, bullying and racism.

The Department's response to specific groups of students including Aboriginal students, students with conduct/learning disorders, homosexual and lesbian students and homeless students is discussed and a range of recommendations made.

The Committee makes recommendations calling for the development a number of specific policies and strategies in the areas of anti-harassment, gender equity, bullying and anti-racism. In implementing these recommendations the Committee calls for input from the entire school community to achieve a sense of ownership and contribute to a change in the culture of the school.

The police play a major role in many aspects of youth violence. For most young violent offenders, they are the first point of contact with the juvenile justice or adult criminal justice systems. **Chapter Eleven** deals with a range of strategies and approaches used by the police in dealing with youth violence.

The Committee considers there is sufficient legislation to give police powers to deal with youth violence. The provisions of the Summary Offences Act dealing with offensive language should not, however, be used by police officers to harass young people. The maximum penalty for offensive language by juveniles should be a formal police caution.



The Committee identified a need for a number of education campaigns. It recommends a campaign directed at police officers to ensure they are aware of their powers to act regarding weapons and a second to discourage young people from carrying offensive implements and prohibited weapons. With regard to the training of police, the Committee calls for training to emphasise non-violent policing methods and the needs of special groups.

The Committee considers it important that the NSW Police Service reflects the state's ethnic diversity. It calls for positive recruitment strategies and increased numbers of male and female Ethnic Community Liaison Officer and Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers.

It is recommended that positions of one or more Police Youth Liaison Officer should be established in every police patrol where there is a significant youth population, and young people be appropriately represented in existing and new consultative mechanisms. A key recommendation is made suggesting all patrols of the NSW Police Service collaborate with community and government agencies to undertake Safety Audits to identify potential, perceived and/or actual locations of violent activity. Appropriate strategies are to be devised to deal with such violence and ensure public environments are conducive to community safety.

The Committee was particularly concerned with evidence it received concerning the inappropriate and violent methods used at times by some police in their interactions with young people. Accordingly, the Committee recommends an independent state-wide review be undertaken to examine the extent of alleged police violence against young people and strategies developed to deal with incidents of police violence against young people. Recommendations directed at the Office of the Ombudsman are made including the creation of a position of Children's Ombudsman.

In **Chapter Twelve** the Committee examines a range of issues relevant to the young violent offender who has been processed through the Juvenile Justice and adult criminal justice and correctional systems. Issues such as court diversion, recidivism, community based and institutional sentences are discussed as well as the existing and proposed programs that focus on the violent behaviour of young offenders. Chapter Twelve also discusses sentencing and court-related issues including parole and supervision, and the emergence of so-called homosexual panic defence in homicide trials. Fundamental to Chapter Twelve is the notion that young violent offenders be accountable for their deeds but that they also be provided with appropriate intervention, supervision and management at both the community and custodial level. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the government provide adequate resources to ensure effective intervention at the time young violent offenders first come in contact with the justice system, that the multiplicity of problems of incarcerated young violent offenders, such as alcohol and drug abuse, are adequately addressed and that effective preventative strategies are developed to break the cycle of recidivism among young violent offenders. The Committee considers that the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services have a responsibility to ensure that violent offenders who come into their system are provided with appropriate and effective management to maximise their successful reintegration into the community.

The chapter identifies a number of programs and initiatives undertaken by the Department of Juvenile Justice that are violence-focussed. Among them are the Violent Offenders Program, Robinson Program for Boys and the Sex Offenders Program. It also discusses programs within and initiatives proposed by the Department of Corrective Services such as the Special Care

Unit, the Violence Prevention Unit, the Young Offenders' Program and Crisis Support Units which the Committee recommend be established as a matter of priority. A Crisis Support Unit is especially urgently needed at Mulawa Correctional Centre.

**Chapter Thirteen** examines the responses of a range of other government departments to youth violence. The Department of Community Services, through its responsibilities for young people in care, supported accommodation assistance, and responding to child abuse, has, for example, particular importance. The Committee is aware that many offenders have a history of contact with the welfare system. Services provided by the Department of Community Services are therefore relevant to violence prevention. The Committee wishes to see a continuum of services for young people in supported accommodation, recognising that the primary needs of these young people include long-term secure accommodation, reintegration into the education system and drug and alcohol counselling. The needs of young people under sixteen years of age, either accompanying their parents or entering supported accommodation alone, must be met, as a primary means of deflecting them from destructive behaviour.

Crime prevention strategies in place on government transport services are reviewed. The Committee would like to see current pricing policies continue to encourage young people to use public transport to increase their access to venues providing recreation and leisure options, and reduce the risk of drink-driving and road accidents.

The Committee would like to see public housing integrated into the broader community. In particular, it calls for access to adequate indoor and outdoor facilities for young people in private and public housing estates, and families with children and teenagers to be housed in areas with adequate facilities for the whole family. Strategies for increasing the access of young people to public housing, such as special purpose-built housing for single unsupported young people, should also be pursued.

The Committee reviews the government's responsibility for youth affairs and recommends the re-establishment of the Office of Youth Affairs.

The Committee envisages that the new Juvenile Crime Prevention Unit in the Attorney General's Department has a role in the development of public education campaigns targeting boys and young men. The campaigns would encourage non-violent conflict resolution, non-sexist and non-violent relationships and condemn violence against minority groups.

An integrated approach to dealing with violence in the community is essential. Interagency collaboration through initiatives such as the Community Youth Support initiatives in Moree, Walgett and Marrickville are promising and, dependent upon the project's evaluation, the Committee would like to see the initiatives extended to other areas of the state.

After extensive consultation with the community, the Committee recommends the report as a thorough, considered examination of public policies affecting youth violence and offers an integrated set of proposals to reduce violent behaviour in our community.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **KEY RECOMMENDATION ONE - POLICE AND COMMUNITY ACTION**

That the Minister for Police ensure all patrols of the New South Wales Police Service collaborate with government and community agencies to:

- undertake a Safety Audit in their Local Government Area to identify potential, perceived, and/or actual locations of violent activity;
- devise appropriate strategies to deal with such violence and ensure public environments are conducive to community safety (see Recommendation 127).

#### **KEY RECOMMENDATION TWO - EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS**

That the Minister for Education ensure sufficient resources are available to schools to enable them to function as models of cooperative, tolerant and non-violent communities. In achieving these goals schools are to:

- provide programs which foster tolerance and acceptance;
- offer integrated programs which provide skills in acceptable problem solving behaviour;
- work to eliminate the destructive practices of bullying; and
- support students exhibiting problem behaviours through appropriate means and environments with the well-being of all students being paramount (see Recommendation 86).

#### **KEY RECOMMENDATION THREE - ALCOHOL**

That the Minister for Gaming and Racing review the Liquor Act to ensure it clearly indicates the responsibilities of licensees to limit the likelihood of violence on their premises by measures including:

- ensuring appropriate hotel management and design practices affecting alcohol consumption and the safety of patrons are a condition of licence renewal;
- requiring all licence applicants to undertake a course on strategies to minimise such violence; and
- ensuring the Licensing Court can compel attendance at training courses for licensees who fail to meet these standards (see Recommendation 42).

#### **KEY RECOMMENDATION FOUR - FAMILY**

**That the Minister for Community Services and Minister for Health ensure that family support programs are fully evaluated and coordinated and successful programs offered state-wide, especially to parents of children in the crucial first three years of their life (see Recommendation 12).**

#### **RECOMMENDATION FIVE - YOUNG OFFENDERS**

**That the Government provide adequate resources to ensure:**

- **effective intervention at the time young violent offenders first come in contact with the justice system;**
- **the multiplicity of problems of incarcerated young violent offenders, such as alcohol and drug abuse, are adequately addressed; and**
- **effective preventative strategies are developed to break the cycle of recidivism among young violent offenders (see Recommendation 132).**

#### **KEY RECOMMENDATION SIX - EMPLOYMENT AND LEISURE**

**That Government agencies, in partnership with community organisations:**

- **develop appropriate after-school programs, particularly for students in the twelve to fifteen years age group (see Recommendation 11);**
- **sponsor the development of learning and recreational activities for unemployed youth (see Recommendation 20); and, with the private sector,**
- **give priority to job creation in areas of high youth unemployment (see Recommendation 15).**

#### **KEY RECOMMENDATION SEVEN - PLANNING**

**That the Minister for Planning review state planning provisions to develop guidelines which ensure the needs of young people are considered in:**

- **public places, parks and recreation areas;**
- **the planning and development of new housing estates; and**
- **the development of commercial premises involving public access;**

**to contribute to the safety and enjoyment of the entire community (see Recommendation 29).**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee's recommendations are listed under the responsible Ministers as follows:

- Minister for Education
- Minister for Community Services
- Minister for Police
- Attorney General and Minister for Industrial Relations
- Minister for Corrective Services
- Minister for Health
- Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning and Minister for Housing
- Minister for Local Government
- Minister for Gaming and Racing
- Minister for Sport and Recreation
- Minister for Transport
- Minister for Consumer Affairs
- Treasurer
- Premier and government agencies

### **Minister for Education**

#### **RECOMMENDATION 1**

That the Minister for Education ensure that records relating to the suspension of students include

- the sex of the student; and
- the reason for the suspension

so that information on suspensions for violent behaviour can be obtained, trends monitored, and appropriate intervention strategies developed.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 2**

That the Minister for Education ensure that suspension, exclusion and expulsion data are published in the Department of School Education's Annual Report.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 3**

That the Minister for Education ensure that information is distributed to all government schools which:

- contains a comprehensive definition covering the types of violent behaviour which should be the subject of a Critical Incident Report;

- contains a comprehensive definition covering the types of violent behaviour which should be the subject of a Critical Incident Report;
- includes examples of these types of violent incidents; and
- advises that the degree of malice and the nature of injuries incurred should be considered in decisions on completing Critical Incident Reports.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

**That the Minister for Education**

- amend the guidelines on suspension, exclusion and expulsion to clarify the parameters of the discretion of principals regarding the reporting of violent incidents to the police and define cases in which reporting is essential;
- require schools to review procedures for decisions relating to reports to police when judgment must be exercised, with appropriate input by the school community; and
- require schools to lay down a set of clear guidelines on the reporting of violent incidents to police that apply both to cases in which reporting is essential and cases in which the exercise of judgment is required.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 6**

**That the Minister for Education appoint sufficient specialist officers to ensure school counsellors and teachers are appropriately trained to recognise and provide support to children experiencing violence in their homes and meet their mandatory reporting obligations.**

#### **RECOMMENDATION 11**

**That the Ministers for Community Services, Sport and Recreation and Education collaborate on the expansion of outside school hours programs specifically designed to meet the needs of 12 to 15 year olds.**

#### **RECOMMENDATION 30**

**That the Minister for Education encourage principals and School Councils to ensure that school sporting and recreation facilities are available to young people after hours.**

**RECOMMENDATION 39**

That the Minister for Education, and Minister for Sport and Recreation ensure

- that sporting programs offered to young people encourage the positive aspects of health and team-building;
- increased emphasis is placed on non-competitive sport in schools; and
- the establishment of a code of ethics to apply to the conduct of contact sports.

**RECOMMENDATION 49**

That the Minister for Education review the K-6 syllabus and Year 7-10 English syllabus to ensure that students are equipped with adequate media criticism skills to facilitate a responsible approach to their media diet.

**RECOMMENDATION 59**

That the Minister for Education encourage the extension of the use of schools for community-based programs and services, especially for initiatives providing support, training and leisure activities for young people.

**RECOMMENDATION 60**

That the Minister for Education authorise and encourage school administrators and teachers to involve youth workers in the development of school based strategies to prevent and respond to violence at school.

**RECOMMENDATION 61**

That the Minister for Education continue and extend the Department of School Education's involvement in parenting programs, both within the Department and in conjunction with other government departments.

**RECOMMENDATION 62**

That the Minister for Education, in consultation with other relevant agencies:

- develop interagency policies and protocols on dealing with school violence and violent students; and
- produce resource material outlining the roles and responsibilities of all agencies that have a role in confronting and addressing youth violence.

**RECOMMENDATION 63**

That the Minister for Education encourage education regions to consider the involvement of outside experts working in the areas of youth programs, youth education and violence prevention in the development and implementation of programs addressing youth violence.

**RECOMMENDATION 64**

That the Minister for Education ensure that schools establish and disseminate procedures for decision-making, with clearly delineated areas of responsibility and with a view to improving opportunities for teacher, student and parent input.

**RECOMMENDATION 65**

That the Minister for Education increase the number of homework centres in schools.

**RECOMMENDATION 66**

That the Minister for Education ensure that the Department of School Education support, encourage and extend peer support programs linking Year 6 students to secondary schools for all Year 6 students.

**RECOMMENDATION 67**

That the Minister for Education encourage the involvement of parents on matters relating to student welfare and discipline, and ensure that schools:

- develop effective processes in their management plans which guarantee genuine community participation; and
- inform parents of their rights, responsibilities and opportunities for involvement in the school community.

**RECOMMENDATION 68**

That the Minister for Education require the Department of School Education to review, on a regional basis, existing policies for non-violent schools and produce a resource for schools that outlines standards of best practice and encourages student involvement in developing such a policy, including an outline of their rights and responsibilities.



#### **RECOMMENDATION 69**

That the Minister of Education undertake a review of the school counsellor service to examine:

- the adequacy of counsellor numbers in each region;
- the basis upon which the allocation of counsellors occurs; and
- the services provided by school counsellors.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 70**

That the Minister for Education allow the appointment of selected experienced psychologists without teaching diplomas to the position of school counsellor.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 71**

That the Minister for Education:

- introduce a policy regarding the operations and protocols of the school counselling service;
- ensure students are advised of the availability of school counsellors and support teachers; and
- ensure that all students have access to appropriate guidance and counselling and that, if necessary, this be enshrined in legislation.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 72**

That the Minister for Education ensure that school counsellors have access to:

- telephones with sufficient privacy to deal with student issues in schools, in accordance with the registered psychologists' Code of Conduct; and
- accommodation within schools which ensures privacy and confidentiality.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 73**

That the Minister for Education bring the issue of adequate pre-service teacher training in strategies to deal with violence, including behaviour management, to the attention of University Vice-Chancellors.

**RECOMMENDATION 74**

**That the Minister for Education examine the feasibility of recruiting mature age persons with appropriate skills into the teaching profession.**

**RECOMMENDATION 75**

**That the Minister for Education:**

- **review student involvement in decision-making in schools;**
- **urge schools to ensure that students are consulted in the development of anti-violence initiatives; and**
- **produce information on standards of best practice regarding student participation for dissemination to all schools.**

**RECOMMENDATION 76**

**That the Minister for Education**

- **ensure that education regions develop inservice courses for teachers to provide them with the skills for developing peer mediation programs and offering training to students; and**
- **trial and evaluate the New Zealand model of mediation involving mediators from outside the school system.**

**RECOMMENDATION 77**

**That the Minister for Education amend the Department of School Education's Fair Discipline Code to remove corporal punishment as a disciplinary option in government schools.**

**RECOMMENDATION 78**

**That the Minister for Education amend the suspension, exclusion and expulsion procedures to**

- **include definitions of the type of violent behaviour that should lead to suspension, while maintaining the discretionary power of principals; and**
- **ensure that the welfare and behavioural needs of such students are met through means such as informing school counsellors of all short suspensions and involving them in discussions on appropriate actions to be taken.**

**RECOMMENDATION 79**

That the Minister for Education ensure that appropriate alternative education strategies are introduced in all regions for students displaying inappropriate and aggressive behaviour, and that these strategies include:

- tutorial centres offering in-school suspension programs; and
- pre-suspension programs offered at off-campus facilities.

**RECOMMENDATION 80**

That the Minister for Education ensure that:

- students excluded from schools for violent behaviour are offered behavioural or social skills programs that assist in addressing that behaviour and facilitate placement in an alternative school; and
- schools in isolated areas have access to appropriate strategies to provide alternatives to exclusion to deal with aggressive and violent students.

**RECOMMENDATION 81**

That the Minister for Education ensure decisions to recommend the expulsion of students are made by the principal in consultation with school welfare and discipline committees, and parents/care-givers.

**RECOMMENDATION 82**

That the Minister for Education recognise the right of students to receive an education by ensuring:

- appropriate alternative education options for those students expelled from the state education system who are less than 15 years of age; and
- appropriate liaison with agencies offering education and training options to inform young people expelled from the state education system who are aged 15 years or over of their options.

**RECOMMENDATION 83**

That the Minister for Education commission an independent review of the declaration of place vacant option, including the reasons underlying such declarations, to assess the appropriateness of this option.

**RECOMMENDATION 84**

That the Minister for Education ensure procedures for suspension, exclusion and expulsion are:

- written in plain English;
- distributed widely to students and parents; and
- available in community languages.

**RECOMMENDATION 85**

That the Minister for Education instruct the various regional offices of the Department of School Education to examine and report on the allegations that many young people have been removed from schools through means other than the formal mechanisms of expulsion, exclusion and declaration of place vacant.

**RECOMMENDATION 86**

That the Minister for Education ensure sufficient resources are available to schools to enable them to function as models of cooperative, tolerant and non-violent communities. In achieving these goals schools are

- to provide programs which foster tolerance and acceptance;
- offer integrated programs which provide skills in acceptable problem solving behaviour;
- work to eliminate the destructive practices of bullying; and
- support students exhibiting problem behaviours through appropriate means and environments with the wellbeing of the student being paramount.

**RECOMMENDATION 87**

That the Minister for Education ensure

- the Department of School Education produce and distribute to all schools standards of best practice in playground supervision and programs; and
- schools review their playground supervision practices to minimise the potential for playground violence.

**RECOMMENDATION 88**

That the Minister for Education recognise the diverse range of abilities and talents that young people may possess and make provisions for developing such abilities within the education system, through initiatives such as extended educational pathways.

**RECOMMENDATION 89**

That the Minister for Education ensure that the current initiatives being trialed in schools and TAFE colleges based on competency assessment are appropriately evaluated.

**RECOMMENDATION 90**

That the Minister for Education ensure regional education offices assist schools to recognise and address sex-based harassment by:

- offering appropriate information resources to schools;
- developing in-service workshops for teachers; and
- developing in-service workshops for school counsellors providing counselling for boys regarding their behaviour towards girls.

**RECOMMENDATION 91**

That the Minister for Education encourage schools to formulate a school anti-harassment policy, with appropriate attention to sex-based harassment by students and teachers, and appropriate input from students, teachers and parents.

**RECOMMENDATION 92**

That the Minister for Education evaluate mentoring programs for boys with a view to their possible extension as an interim measure to develop positive constructions of masculinity.

**RECOMMENDATION 93**

That the Minister for Education develop a gender equity strategy which includes:

- an acknowledgment of the gendered nature of violence;
- strategies to eliminate gender stereotyping in schools;

- an appropriate focus on communication and alternative conflict resolution; and
- strategies to encourage alternative non-violent constructions of masculinity.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 94**

That the Minister for Education ensure regional education offices:

- offer appropriate information resources to schools to assist them in identifying and intervening appropriately when bullying occurs;
- develop in-service workshops for teachers to assist them in addressing bullying;
- direct schools to formulate a school policy on bullying, with appropriate input from students and parents; and
- develop or approve self-administered, anonymous questionnaires to offer to schools to assist them in evaluating the extent of the problem and in developing an appropriate, co-ordinated response to bullying.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 95**

That the Minister for Education collate and review regional reports on the implementation of the Anti-racism policy to produce standards of best practice for distribution to all schools.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 96**

That the Minister for Education allocate adequate resources to fund appropriate numbers of Community Liaison Officers to ensure ethnic communities are involved in the education and welfare of their young people, and potential ethnic disputes impacting on schools can be identified and addressed.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 97**

That the Minister for Education support the continued development of appropriately resourced Language High Schools, in areas with high proportions of students from non-English speaking backgrounds, provided such schools continue to demonstrate the acquisition of English is also facilitated.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 98**

That the Minister for Education ensure that, in areas with significant Aboriginal populations:

- strategies are in place to develop appropriate links between schools and the Aboriginal community; and
- adequate numbers of both male and female Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers are employed in schools to establish and maintain these links and increase awareness of Departmental practices and policies, support at-risk students, and encourage parental involvement in programs.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 99**

That the Minister for Education ensure the *Resources for Teaching Against Violence* kit continues to be reviewed, and that this review includes an analysis of attitudes towards homosexuals and lesbians among high school students.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 100**

That the Minister for Education develop strategies to

- encourage the introduction of the revised *Resources for Teaching Against Violence* kit in the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education curriculum; and
- monitor its use and effectiveness.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 101**

That the Minister for Education ensure students identifying as homosexual or lesbian and reporting harassment are advised of appropriate agencies and counselling services.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 102**

That the Minister for Education ensure

- all school counsellors are adequately prepared and receptive to handling sexual orientation inquiries from all students, and to provide support for students with HIV; and
- teachers have access to in-service training to assist them in countering negative attitudes towards homosexuals and lesbians by school students, both within and outside the classroom.

**RECOMMENDATION 103**

That the Minister for Education undertake a review of educational services for students with long-term psychiatric disorders.

**RECOMMENDATION 104**

That the Minister for Education review the support available in schools for students with learning disorders and disabilities which result in violent behaviour, recognising the need for a multi-disciplinary approach involving, where desirable, experts from fields other than education.

**RECOMMENDATION 105**

That the Minister for Education ensure students entering or returning to mainstream schools from alternative education facilities are provided with appropriate support.

**RECOMMENDATION 106**

That the Minister for Education and the Minister for Health ensure additional alternative day and residential programs are made available for conduct disordered students.

**RECOMMENDATION 107**

That the Minister for Education, in consultation with other relevant agencies, develop protocols on dealing with homeless young people attending school.

**Minister for Community Services**

**RECOMMENDATION 5**

That the Ministers for Community Services and Health develop an awareness campaign and training strategies to assist those working with families where violence by young people towards parents or other family members is occurring.

**RECOMMENDATION 8**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that sufficient resources are provided for adequate investigation and follow-up of reports of child abuse received in response to campaigns.



**RECOMMENDATION 9**

That the Minister for Community Services develop and implement community education campaigns to discourage the physical punishment of children and provide information about non-violent disciplinary methods.

**RECOMMENDATION 11**

That the Ministers for Community Services, Sport and Recreation and Education collaborate on the expansion of outside school hours programs specifically designed to meet the needs of 12 to 15 year olds.

**RECOMMENDATION 12**

That the Minister for Community Services and Minister for Health ensure that family support programs are fully evaluated and coordinated and successful programs offered state-wide, especially to parents of children in the crucial first three years of their life.

**RECOMMENDATION 13**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that pilot programs to assist Aboriginal parents are fully evaluated and successful programs are offered statewide.

**RECOMMENDATION 20**

That the Government, in partnership with community organisations, sponsor the development of learning and recreational activities for unemployed youth. As one means of advancing this process, the Minister for Community Services should seek expressions of interest and fund the development of a pilot scheme providing training for unemployed young people to develop anti-violence programs and workshops to educate their peers.

**RECOMMENDATION 22**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that adequate funding is allocated to programs attempting to develop work preparation skills in behaviour-disordered young people.

**RECOMMENDATION 23**

That the Minister for Community Services closely monitors the delegation of accommodation, care and maintenance of wards to the non-government sector to ensure his statutory obligation to provide adequate support is met.

**RECOMMENDATION 24**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that appropriate placements are available to young people with severe acting-out behaviours, and that these placements minimise risks to other residents and staff.

**RECOMMENDATION 25**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that staff of supported accommodation services are provided with information on best practices in intervening in violent incidents, to reduce risks to themselves and other residents, and on appropriate strategies for encouraging residents to deal with anger and aggression in non-violent ways.

**RECOMMENDATION 26**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that

- services funded under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program which target young people with behaviour disorders are provided with adequate resources to ensure two staff members are on duty at any one time; and
- the additional staffing be used to provide further services, especially training for residents in the management of violence.

**RECOMMENDATION 27**

That the Minister for Community Services urge his Federal counterpart to ensure that adequate services are available through the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program to provide needy young people in all areas with appropriate accommodation services.

**RECOMMENDATION 28**

That the Minister for Community Services urge Federal counterparts to develop further mediation services for families of children applying to receive the Young Homeless Allowance.

**RECOMMENDATION 118**

That the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Police ensure Aboriginal communities are consulted on policing practices, and a report on the outcome of these consultations is prepared. The report should include strategies for the recruitment of Aborigines to the Police Service.

**RECOMMENDATION 134**

That the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Police implement recommendation numbers 35 to 50 of the Standing Committee on Social Issues Report into Juvenile Justice in New South Wales, 1992.

**RECOMMENDATION 136**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure, as a matter of priority, that adequate resources are available to Department of Juvenile Justice Offices throughout New South Wales to enable the consistent and relevant supervision and counselling of young violent offenders serving community based sentences.

**RECOMMENDATION 137**

That in order for Juvenile Justice Offices to adequately supervise and counsel a young violent offender in the community the Minister for Community Services must ensure that there is a wide range of suitable programs within the community from which they can draw assistance. Those community organisations offering relevant services should be provided with adequate government funding so that co-operative service delivery between the government and the non-government sector can be fostered.

**RECOMMENDATION 138**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that:

- adequate resources are available and relevant support services able to be drawn upon to assist Juvenile Justice officers in all regions to adequately supervise and to offer a range of community work to those young offenders placed on Community Service Orders; and
- counselling programs for violent offenders on Community Service Orders can be offered as part of the fulfilment of Community Service Orders in addition to other work orders.

**RECOMMENDATION 139**

That conditional upon the implementation of Recommendation 138 the Minister for Community Services amend the Children (Community Service Orders) Act, 1987 to allow the maximum number of hours which can be given to young offenders under a Community Service Order to be 250 hours.

**RECOMMENDATION 140**

**That the Minister for Community Services ensure appropriate counselling and support is extended to violent offenders on conditional release.**

**RECOMMENDATION 141**

**That the Minister for Community Services establish the violent offenders program as a priority and ensure that it is appropriately resourced to enable its utilisation throughout New South Wales.**

**RECOMMENDATION 142**

**That the Attorney General and Minister for Community Services ensure that judicial education is undertaken by members of the magistracy and judiciary likely to preside over matters involving violent juvenile offenders, to facilitate such offenders being referred to the Violent Offenders Program as appropriate.**

**RECOMMENDATION 143**

**That the Minister for Community Services ensure that, having regard to the evaluation of the pilot scheme, Attendance Centres and programs are established throughout New South Wales.**

**RECOMMENDATION 144**

**That the Minister for Community Services ensure that, in developing guidelines for the Attendance Centre orders and programs:**

- **due regard is given to the availability of the Attendance Centre sentencing option to violent offenders, where appropriate; and**
- **programs are developed which address violent offending behaviour.**

**RECOMMENDATION 145**

**That the Minister for Community Services ensure that:**

- **the level of recidivism among young offenders in the juvenile justice system is consistently monitored to assess the rate of graduation to more serious and violent offences; and**
- **the impact of detention on recidivism and the nature of offending behaviour is evaluated.**

**RECOMMENDATION 146**

**That the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Corrective Services conduct research, involving the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services, that examines the graduation of juvenile offenders to the adult system.**

**RECOMMENDATION 147**

**That the Minister for Community Services ensure that the Robinson Program for Boys addresses the underlying causes of violence, including issues relating to gender construction.**

**RECOMMENDATION 148**

**That the Minister for Community Services ensure adequate resources are consistently provided to the Department of Juvenile Justice's Sex Offender Program so that the program can function effectively.**

**RECOMMENDATION 149**

**That the Minister for Community Services ensure adequate funding is provided to meet the management and treatment needs of juvenile sex offenders in rural areas.**

**RECOMMENDATION 150**

**That the Minister for Community Services assess the need for and feasibility of providing specialist, community based residential services for juvenile sex offenders who do not receive control orders or who are released into the community.**

**RECOMMENDATION 151**

**That the Minister for Community Services facilitate the introduction of pilot Aboriginal Juvenile Bail Support Schemes, and evaluate the potential to extend the Scheme to other communities.**

**RECOMMENDATION 152**

**That the Minister for Community Services ensure that any program developed by the Department of Juvenile Justice that targets young violent offenders both in custody and the community, and includes young Aboriginal offenders, has appropriate input from Aboriginal communities and is culturally sensitive.**

**RECOMMENDATION 153**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that any program developed by the Department of Juvenile Justice that targets young violent offenders both in custody and the community, and includes young offenders of non-English speaking background, has appropriate input from relevant ethnic communities and is culturally sensitive to the offender's background.

**RECOMMENDATION 154**

That the Minister for Community Services:

- develop appropriate programs and counselling services for young female offenders in the community and in detention, that focus on violent offending among young women; and
- ensure that such programs and counselling services are sensitive to the specific needs of young female offenders.

**RECOMMENDATION 155**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure adequate pre-discharge units are established, and the programs offered from these units are extended into community settings and to all young offenders leaving custody.

**RECOMMENDATION 156**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure

- the potential for all young offenders to be reintegrated into their families is assessed prior to their release from Juvenile Justice Centres;
- a family mediation project is developed for young offenders to assist in this reintegration, where desirable; and,
- where re-integration is not possible, the young offenders are given appropriate support in re-entering the community.

**RECOMMENDATION 165**

That the Minister for Community Services and the Attorney General ensure, following the amendment of s.27(4) of the *Sentencing Act*, judicial education is provided to ensure that the changes to the legislation are understood and accepted to facilitate the use of appropriately supervised parole as a feature of custodial sentences for young offenders.

**RECOMMENDATION 167**

That the Minister for Community Services maintain a commitment to ensuring programs for young people at Ormond and Minali address the needs of young people with acting-out or violent behaviour.

**RECOMMENDATION 168**

That the Minister for Community Services

- monitor the audits conducted by the Department of Community Services to ensure that the needs of each young person currently in the Department's care will be met by future services under the substitute care reforms; and
- evaluate the effectiveness of the reforms after three years to ensure these needs are being met.

**RECOMMENDATION 169**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure the NSW Government's funding commitment to SAAP is maintained at a level enabling the program to meet the needs of young people through support services which

- provide appropriately supervised accommodation for unaccompanied children under 16 years;
- assist children under 16 years accompanying their parents in other crisis accommodation facilities; and
- address the long term needs of all groups of young people.

**RECOMMENDATION 170**

That the Minister for Community Services undertake a review of the Department's responsiveness, and adequacy of staff to respond, to notification of child physical abuse and ensure immediate action is taken to guarantee the safety of the child by

- prompt investigation; and, where desirable
- removal of the child.

**Minister for Police**

**RECOMMENDATION 43**

That the Minister for Police, together with the liquor industry and relevant trade unions, review the training pre-requisites for the issues of Class 1 Security Licences to ensure that doormen of licensed premises have appropriate training in interpersonal skills, non-violent restraint and conflict resolution.

**RECOMMENDATION 47**

That the Minister for Police act to:

- monitor cinemas to ensure that they adhere to the law and not admit underage children to MA and R rated films; and
- monitor video outlets in regard to access and hiring of R-rated material by underage children.

**RECOMMENDATION 51**

That the Minister for Police act to monitor retail outlets selling classified video games and computer software to ensure that the demonstration and sale of games and software rated MA is restricted to adults and children under 15 who have parental or guardian consent.

**RECOMMENDATION 52**

That the Minister for Police act to monitor video game parlours to ensure that access to games rated MA (15+) is appropriately restricted.

**RECOMMENDATION 108**

That the Minister for Police ensure the provisions of the *Summary Offences Act, 1988*, dealing with offensive language are not used by police officers to harass young people.

**RECOMMENDATION 110**

That the Minister for Police develop and conduct a community education campaign to discourage young people from carrying offensive implements and prohibited weapons and informing them of the law in this respect.



**RECOMMENDATION 111**

That the Minister for Police conduct an education campaign to ensure all police officers are aware of their powers to act regarding offensive weapons and that knives which are clearly being carried for unlawful purposes are confiscated.

**RECOMMENDATION 112**

That the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Police:

- survey and review the local manufacture and sale of cutting weapons to determine whether a broader range of knives and weapons should be prohibited under the *Prohibited Weapons Act 1989*; and, if so,
- support a ban on the import of such weapons in the Ministerial Council for the Administration of Justice.

**RECOMMENDATION 113**

That the Minister for Police introduce positive recruitment strategies to ensure an increasingly representative membership of the New South Wales Police Service and to reflect the State's ethnic diversity.

**RECOMMENDATION 114**

That the Minister for Police develop a Police Service Anti-Racism Policy and Prevention Plan as a matter of priority.

**RECOMMENDATION 115**

That the Minister for Police ensure anti-discrimination and anti-racism modules are key components in police training and extend these as in-service modules for senior officers.

**RECOMMENDATION 116**

That the Minister for Police develop initiatives that encourage better relations and facilitate communication between local police and ethnic communities.

**RECOMMENDATION 117**

That the Minister for Police establish additional positions of Ethnic Community Liaison Officer to enhance community relations.

**RECOMMENDATION 118**

**That the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Police ensure Aboriginal communities are consulted on policing practices, and a report on the outcome of these consultations is prepared. The report should include strategies for the recruitment of Aborigines to the Police Service.**

**RECOMMENDATION 119**

**That the Minister for Police:**

- **increase the number of positions of Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers to make the service provided by them available to more communities; and**
- **develop and implement strategies to encourage more Aboriginal women to take up positions as Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers.**

**RECOMMENDATION 120**

**That the Minister for Police encourage police to use alternatives to arrest, such as court attendance notices and summons, when dealing with young Aboriginal people.**

**RECOMMENDATION 121**

**That the Minister for Police inform media organisations that stories on gangs risk creating the problem they purport to reveal.**

**RECOMMENDATION 122**

**That the Minister for Police ensure police liaise with school personnel in patrols in which extortion is identified as occurring against young people.**

**RECOMMENDATION 123**

**That the Minister for Police ensure positions of one or more Police Youth Liaison Officer are established in every police patrol where there is a significant youth population.**

**RECOMMENDATION 124**

**That the Minister for Police:**

- **ensure police training emphasises non-violent policing methods;**

- introduce Youth Violence Studies into the Police Academy curriculum; and
- implement in-service training for police on the needs of special groups, including young women, young Aborigines and young people from a non-English speaking background.

**RECOMMENDATION 125**

That the Minister for Police encourage appropriate youth representation on Community Consultative Committees and Customer Councils.

**RECOMMENDATION 126**

That the Minister for Police establish Police-Youth Liaison Committees as a pilot project in selected patrols.

**RECOMMENDATION 127**

That the Minister for Police ensure all patrols of the New South Wales Police Service collaborate with government and community agencies to:

- undertake a Safety Audit in their Local Government Area to identify potential, perceived, and/or actual locations of violent activity;
- devise appropriate strategies to deal with such violence and ensure public environments are conducive to community safety.

**RECOMMENDATION 128**

That the Minister for Police establish and enhance high profile community policing activities within specific communities where youth violence is identified.

**RECOMMENDATION 134**

That the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Police implement Recommendation numbers 35 to 50 of the Standing Committee on Social Issues Report *Juvenile Justice in New South Wales* (1992).

**RECOMMENDATION 171**

That the Minister for Police examine the feasibility of establishing a specialist unit to be responsible for investigating child abuse cases.

**Attorney General and Minister for Industrial Relations**

**RECOMMENDATION 7**

That the Attorney General direct the Juvenile Crime Prevention Unit to review peer education projects that address family violence, such as the Victorian Young People in Need project, and consider supporting the development of a New South Wales equivalent.

**RECOMMENDATION 38**

That the Attorney General urge the Standing Committee of Attorneys General to request the federal government to pressure media organisations to develop tighter controls to reduce violence in the advertising and promotion of sport in the electronic media.

**RECOMMENDATION 45**

That the Attorney General urge the Standing Committee of Attorneys General to commission a national research project to examine the effects of television, film and video game violence on the learning outcomes and behaviour of Australian children.

**RECOMMENDATION 46**

That the Attorney General consider legislation requiring video outlets to prevent access to MA and R-rated material by underage children by displaying such material in restricted areas.

**RECOMMENDATION 48**

That the Attorney General encourage the Standing Committee of Attorneys General to call on the federal government to:

- pressure television networks to eliminate television violence during children's viewing hours;
- monitor the televising of MA material after 9.00 p.m. and consider extending it to 9.30 p.m;
- pressure the media to review its code of conduct to ensure that material that condones, glorifies or promotes violence is appropriately recognised and restricted;

- review the effectiveness of the complaints process in responding to community concerns;
- levy a fee on commercial television networks to be allocated to the Australian Children's Television Fund for the production of prosocial programs encouraging non-violence; and
- develop programs to educate parents and other adults to assist children to become more discerning media consumers.

#### RECOMMENDATION 54

That the Attorney General urge the Standing Committee of Attorneys General to develop national strategies to reduce violence in the electronic visual media, including Bulletin Board Systems accessed through computers.

#### RECOMMENDATION 55

That the Attorney General urge the Standing Committee of Attorneys General to review interactive virtual reality technology and assess policy options that could ensure appropriate restrictions on violent materials are introduced and enforced.

#### RECOMMENDATION 56

That existing powers to restrict the sale of audio and compact discs that contain violent lyrics be investigated by:

- the Commissioner of Police reporting to the Attorney General on the reasons police are reluctant to act on complaints relating to the sale and distribution of such materials considered by the Attorney General's Department to be indecent articles under the provisions of the *Indecent Articles and Classified Publications Act*; and, if considered necessary following this report,
- the Attorney General reviewing the provisions of the *Indecent Articles and Classified Publications Act* to ensure that provisions relating to indecent articles extend to audio tapes and compact discs.

#### RECOMMENDATION 57

That the Attorney General urge the Standing Committee of Attorneys General to

- support and encourage the introduction of state and federal legislation to classify audio music;

- prohibit the sale of restricted material to minors; and
- refuse classification to material that promotes violence.

**RECOMMENDATION 58**

That the Attorney-General develop a public education campaign outlining the illegality of incitement to violence, as provided in the Crimes Act and anti-vilification legislation.

**RECOMMENDATION 109**

That the Attorney General ensure the maximum penalty for offensive language by juveniles be a formal police caution.

**RECOMMENDATION 133**

That the Attorney General ensure young people are appropriately represented on and consulted by the Juvenile Crime Prevention Advisory Committee and the Juvenile Crime Prevention Division in developing strategies to prevent or reduce violence.

**RECOMMENDATION 135**

That the Attorney General ensure that where appropriate, courts continue to utilise community based options in the sentencing of young offenders, including young violent offenders.

**RECOMMENDATION 142**

That the Attorney General and Minister for Community Services ensure that judicial education is undertaken by members of the magistracy and judiciary likely to preside over matters involving violent juvenile offenders, to facilitate such offenders being referred to the Violent Offenders Program as appropriate.

**RECOMMENDATION 164**

That the Attorney General amend s.27(4) of the *Sentencing Act* to ensure

- all parole involving young offenders is supervised; and
- the Department of Juvenile Justice accepts responsibility for the supervision of juvenile offenders where the court has failed to specify a parole agency.

**RECOMMENDATION 165**

That the Minister for Community Services and the Attorney General ensure, following the amendment of s.27(4) of the *Sentencing Act*, judicial education is provided to ensure that the changes to the legislation are understood and accepted to facilitate the use of appropriately supervised parole as a feature of custodial sentences for young offenders.

**RECOMMENDATION 166**

That upon the release of the report from the Criminal Law Review Division the Attorney General give priority to examining the validity and legality of the "homosexual panic defence".

**RECOMMENDATION 181**

That the Attorney General ensure the responsibilities of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Unit include the development of public education campaigns targeting boys and young men and

- encouraging non-violent conflict resolution;
- encouraging non-sexist and non-violent relationships; and
- condemning violence against minority groups.

**RECOMMENDATION 10**

That the Minister for Industrial Relations ensure the continuation of workplace reform to provide more flexible working arrangements to support families.

**RECOMMENDATION 14**

That the Minister for Industrial Relations encourage the Federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training to extend the Youth Strategy Action Grants Program to ensure funding continues beyond the establishment grant.

**RECOMMENDATION 16**

That the Minister for Industrial Relations act to ensure that appropriate opportunities are provided for part-time work and job sharing to increase the availability of employment options.

**RECOMMENDATION 17**

That the Minister for Industrial Relations ensure, in consultation with Federal counterparts, that all training and employment initiatives are structured to maximise the likelihood of on-going employment for young people.

**RECOMMENDATION 18**

That the Minister for Industrial Relations consult appropriate Federal Ministers to ensure that taxation penalties against Aboriginal workers in CDEP programs are removed.

**RECOMMENDATION 19**

That the Minister for Industrial Relations, in consultation with appropriate Federal counterparts, consider the expansion of the CDEP scheme to non-Aboriginal unemployed young people in selected communities.

**RECOMMENDATION 21**

That the Minister for Industrial Relations, in consultation with his federal counterparts and community groups, ensure that unemployed young people are given information on alternative ways of contributing to the community through volunteer programs.

**Minister for Corrective Services**

**RECOMMENDATION 145**

That the Minister for Community Services ensure that:

- the level of recidivism among young offenders in the juvenile justice system is consistently monitored to assess the rate of graduation to more serious and violent offences; and
- the impact of detention on recidivism and the nature of offending behaviour is evaluated.

**RECOMMENDATION 146**

That the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Corrective Services conduct research, involving the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services, that examines the graduation of juvenile offenders to the adult system.



**RECOMMENDATION 157**

**That the Minister for Corrective Services ensure systematic programs such as the Special Care Unit are supported by the provision of appropriate follow-up programs for inmates when they leave the Special Care Unit and return to the mainstream prison system.**

**RECOMMENDATION 158**

**That the Minister for Corrective Services:**

- **facilitate the establishment of the Violence Prevention Unit at Long Bay Correctional Centre; and**
- **examine the feasibility of extending the therapeutic program developed for the Violence Prevention Unit to other Correctional Centres.**

**RECOMMENDATION 159**

**That the Minister for Corrective Services:**

- **establish, as a matter of priority, a Crisis Support Program at Mulawa Correctional Centre; and**
- **continue to establish Crisis Support Units and Programs throughout New South Wales Correctional Centres.**

**RECOMMENDATION 160**

**That the Minister for Corrective Services develop pilot programs:**

- **for victims of sexual assaults in prisons; and**
- **for victims of past sexual assaults, including a program designed specifically for female inmates.**

**RECOMMENDATION 161**

**That the Minister for Corrective Services:**

- **develop prison and community-based pilot programs for young sex offenders; and**
- **evaluate the effectiveness of such programs after a reasonable time.**

**RECOMMENDATION 162**

**That the Minister for Corrective Services**

- **investigate the feasibility of allowing the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) to conduct weekend workshops in Correctional Centres;**
- **provide appropriate premises within Correctional Centres to conduct AVP workshops; and**
- **ensure disruptions to AVP workshops in Correctional Centres are minimised and participants are not removed during the course of the workshops.**

**RECOMMENDATION 163**

**That the Minister for Corrective Services consider including Alternatives to Violence Project workshops as a staff training option for personnel of the Department of Corrective Services.**

**Minister for Health**

**RECOMMENDATION 5**

**That the Ministers for Community Services and Health develop an awareness campaign and training strategies to assist those working with families where violence by young people towards parents or other family members is occurring.**

**RECOMMENDATION 12**

**That the Minister for Community Services and Minister for Health ensure that family support programs are fully evaluated and coordinated and successful programs offered state-wide, especially to parents of children in the crucial first three years of their life.**

**RECOMMENDATION 40**

**That the Minister for Health, in liaison with his federal counterparts, consider a strategy to phase out amateur and professional boxing.**

**RECOMMENDATION 41**

**That the Minister for Health conduct an Inquiry into the health aspects of kick-boxing.**

**RECOMMENDATION 44**

That the Minister for Health ensure that appropriate resources are allocated to

- prioritise the reduction of alcohol and drug abuse by young people as a primary objective;
- continue publicity campaigns on the dangers of steroid use to target young people; and
- monitor prescription practices to minimise the abuse of prescription drugs by young people.

**RECOMMENDATION 176**

That the Minister for Health review the availability of counselling at Community Health Centres for young people aged 18 to 24 years, particularly the perpetrators of violence.

**RECOMMENDATION 177**

That the Minister for Health ensure adequate funding levels are provided for sexual assault, drug and alcohol, mental illness and crisis and long term support services for young people.

***Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning and Minister for Housing***

**RECOMMENDATION 29**

That the Minister for Planning review state planning provisions to develop guidelines which ensure the needs of young people are considered in:

- public places, parks and recreation areas;
- the planning and development of new housing estates;
- the development of commercial premises involving public access;

and contribute to the safety and enjoyment of the entire community.

**RECOMMENDATION 173**

That the Minister for Housing pursue a policy of integrating public housing into the broader community, both in new and existing housing developments.

**RECOMMENDATION 174**

That the Minister for Housing ensure consideration is given to

- providing access to adequate indoor and outdoor facilities for young people in housing estates; and
- housing families with young people in areas with adequate facilities for young people.

**RECOMMENDATION 175**

That the Minister for Housing examine strategies for increasing the access of young people to public housing, including special purpose-built housing for single unsupported young people.

***Minister for Local Government***

**RECOMMENDATION 31**

That the Minister for Local Government, in consultation with the executives of the Local Government Association and Shires Association, encourage local government agencies to ensure that sporting and recreation facilities are accessible for extended hours.

**RECOMMENDATION 32**

That the Minister for Local Government, in consultation with the executives of the Local Government Association and Shires Association, encourage local government agencies to consult with youth service providers and allocate appropriate resources to developing campaigns informing young people of the range of youth facilities and recreational options available to them.

**RECOMMENDATION 33**

That the Minister for Local Government, in consultation with the executives of the Local Government Association and Shires Association, encourage local government to:

- ensure that young people are actively consulted regarding planned youth facilities;
- seek sponsorship in developing youth facilities; and
- encourage retail shopping centre management to develop youth facilities on their premises.

**RECOMMENDATION 53**

That the Minister for Local Government, in consultation with the executives of the Local Government Association and Shires Association, encourage local government agencies to limit the number of game machines in local business establishments where this is considered appropriate for the community.

***Minister for Gaming and Racing***

**RECOMMENDATION 35**

That the Minister for Gaming and Racing ensure that hotels be permitted to hold alcohol-free events in closed-off areas while allowing alcohol to be served in other areas.

**RECOMMENDATION 36**

That the Minister for Gaming and Racing amend the Registered Clubs Act to allow young people to join non-sporting clubs as junior members.

**RECOMMENDATION 37**

That the Minister for Gaming and Racing ensure that restricted areas can be defined in terms of "physical separation" from the rest of the clubhouse to enable smaller clubs to allow access for junior members and encourage their integration.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 42**

That the Minister for Gaming and Racing review the Liquor Act to ensure it clearly indicates the responsibilities of licensees to limit the likelihood of violence on their premises by measures including:

- ensuring appropriate hotel management and design practices affecting alcohol consumption and the safety of patrons are a condition of licence renewal;
- requiring all licence applicants to undertake a course on strategies to minimise such violence; and
- ensuring the Licensing Court can compel attendance at training courses for licensees who fail to meet these standards.

#### **Minister for Sport and Recreation**

#### **RECOMMENDATION 11**

That the Ministers for Community Services, Sport and Recreation and Education collaborate on the expansion of outside school hours programs specifically designed to meet the needs of 12 to 15 year olds.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 39**

That the Minister for Education, and Minister for Sport and Recreation ensure

- that sporting programs offered to young people encourage the positive aspects of health and team-building;
- increased emphasis is placed on non-competitive sport in schools; and
- the establishment of a code of ethics to apply to the conduct of contact sports.

#### **Minister for Transport**

#### **RECOMMENDATION 172**

That the Minister for Transport continue to ensure

- crime prevention strategies are considered in the provision of transport services; and

- pricing policies encourage young people to use public transport.

**Minister for Consumer Affairs**

**RECOMMENDATION 112**

That the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Police:

- survey and review the local manufacture and sale of cutting weapons to determine whether a broader range of knives and weapons should be prohibited under the *Prohibited Weapons Act 1989*; and, if so,
- support a ban on the import of such weapons in the Ministerial Council for the Administration of Justice.

**Treasurer**

**RECOMMENDATION 178**

That the Treasurer review the limitation on the availability of pick-up funding for Departments sponsoring projects under the Area Assistance Scheme.

**Premier and Government Agencies**

**RECOMMENDATION 15**

That Government agencies, in partnership with community organisations and the private sector, give priority to job creation schemes in areas of high youth unemployment.

**RECOMMENDATION 20**

That the Government, in partnership with community organisations, sponsor the development of learning and recreational activities for unemployed youth. As one means of advancing this process, the Minister for Community Services should seek expressions of interest and fund the development of a pilot scheme providing training for unemployed young people to develop anti-violence programs and workshops to educate their peers.

**RECOMMENDATION 34**

**That NSW Government agencies funding youth programs encourage the participation of young people in the planning and operation of these programs.**

**RECOMMENDATION 50**

**That the Government develop a campaign explaining ratings and penalties for retailers selling classified video games and computer software.**

**RECOMMENDATION 129**

**That the Government commission an independent state-wide review examining the extent of police violence against young people and developing strategies to deal with incidents of violence against young people.**

**RECOMMENDATION 130**

**That the Premier ensure the Office of the Ombudsman has sufficient resources to:**

- **monitor the investigation of complaints of police violence referred to the Police Internal Affairs Branch when the complainant is 17 years of age or younger; and where desirable,**
- **deal directly with these complaints, and refer appropriate cases to the Director of Public Prosecution for suitable action.**

**RECOMMENDATION 131**

**That a position be created in the Office of the Ombudsman, with the status of Deputy Ombudsman, responsible for the coordination of complaints made by children and young people, including those in the Juvenile Justice system, and that:**

- **adequate resources be made available to assist in the creation of this position; and**
- **an information campaign for children and young people about the role of the Ombudsman be conducted.**

**RECOMMENDATION 132**

**That the Government provide adequate resources to ensure:**

- **effective intervention at the time young violent offenders first come in contact with the justice system;**



- the multiplicity of problems of incarcerated young violent offenders, such as alcohol and drug abuse, are adequately addressed; and
- effective preventative strategies are developed to break the cycle of recidivism among young violent offenders.

**RECOMMENDATION 179**

That the Premier re-establish the Office of Youth Affairs as a matter of urgency and ensure it is sufficiently resourced to meet its objectives fully.

**RECOMMENDATION 180**

That NSW Government agencies support the Community Youth Support initiatives in Moree, Walgett and Marrickville as models for interagency co-operation and, dependent on the evaluation of the operation of the initiatives, they be extended to other areas of the state.

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