



Award Winners 2007

proudly presented by

Deputy Chief Minister Katy Gallagher, MLA

A Youth Coalition of the ACT Initiative

proudly sponsored by the
Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

13 December 2007

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as the traditional owners and continuing custodians of the lands of the ACT and we pay our respects to the Elders, their families and ancestors.

We acknowledge that the effects of the forced removal of Indigenous children from their families as well as past racist policies and actions continues today.

We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold distinctive rights as the original peoples of modern day Australia, including the right to a distinct status and culture, self-determination and land.

We celebrate Indigenous cultures and the invaluable contribution to the community.

About the Youth Coalition of the ACT

The Youth Coalition is the peak youth affairs body in the Australian Capital Territory and responsible for representing the interests of people aged between 12 and 25 years of age, and those who work with them.

The Youth Coalition is represented on many ACT Government Advisory structures and provides advice to the ACT Government on youth issues as well as providing information to youth services about policy and program matters.

We actively promote the human rights, well being and aspirations of young people in the ACT with particular respect to their social, political, cultural, spiritual, economic and educational development.

email: info@youthcoalition.net
web: www.youthcoalition.net
phone: 02 6247 3540
post: PO BOX 5232 Lyneham ACT 2602
visit: 46 Clianthus St., O'Connor ACT



The Yogie Awards

The Yogies Awards (the Yogies) recognise, celebrate, promote and reward outstanding practice in working with young people in the ACT and surrounding area.

The Yogies highlight the exceptional commitment, talent and innovation that exists in the sector.

The Yogies are presented annually by the ACT Minister for Children and Young People at the Youth Coalition of the ACT's End-of-Year function. Awards are presented in 9 categories that recognise the work of groups and individuals.

Nominations are promoted towards the end of each year. Services, workers, young people and members of the community are encouraged to nominate any programs, services and individuals. A judging panel determines the winners.

The Yogies are an excellent opportunity for youth and allied services to promote their initiatives, programs and workers to the sector and the community as a whole.

For further information about the Yogies visit www.youthcoalition.net.

Table of Contents

Organisation, Service, Program or Project Award Winners	3
Outstanding Achievement in Youth.....	3
Participation Award.....	3
Innovation in Practice Award	4
Collaboration for Change Award	5
Innovation in Evaluation Award.....	6
Excellence in Organisational Practice Award	6
Individual Awards	8
Outstanding Youth Worker Award.....	8
Outstanding New Talent Award	8
Outstanding Contribution to Young People Award	9
Lifetime Achievement Award	9

Organisation, Service, Program or Project Award Winners

Outstanding Achievement in Youth Participation Award

This award recognises an organisation, service, program or project that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to developing meaningful partnerships with young people.

Winner: **G.U.T.S.**
Northside Community Service

Get Up and Tell Your Story (G.U.T.S.) Project involved young people undertaking a photo documentary depicting their experiences and perceptions of growing up in Canberra's Inner North.

The Project demonstrated youth participation in several ways such as working with young people to develop and design the Project, employing a young person as Project Leader, young people were the Project photographers, and young people organised and promoted the photography exhibition.

The Project mentored a young person to move from a volunteer to a paid worker, to develop project management skills, to complete a Certificate IV, and to manage and successfully implement a project with his peers.

An outcome of the Project was the significant reduction in social isolation that was experienced by the participating young men. Over 400 people attended their exhibition and many of their photos were sold. The Project was also an opportunity for young people to

Yogies 2007

contribute to Northside Community Service's strategic planning and program development.

Commendation: **The Oaktree Foundation**
ACT Branch

The Oaktree Foundation is Australia's first youth run aid and development agency whose mission is "to empower developing communities through education in a way that is sustainable".

The Oaktree Foundation (ACT Branch) is entirely run by 17 young volunteers. The team developed creative ways of working with their 500 local supporters to raise funds to for reconstruction initiatives in East Timor. The team raised \$13,000 this year.

Oaktree provides a range of opportunities for young people to develop skills in advocacy, fund raising, and awareness raising.

Commendation: **YWCA Mura Lanyon**
Youth Centre
YWCA of Canberra

The YWCA Mura Lanyon Youth Centre is multipurpose and the only youth service for people aged 12 – 25 in the Lanyon Valley.

The youth workers, young people and the centre are committed to youth participation and have worked together to embed youth participation in every aspect of the service.

As a result they have established a Youth Advisory Committee. The Committee is made up of 15 young people who meet once a week with the centre's youth workers to discuss and determine the centre's activities. All key decisions are made in partnership between the youth workers and the young people.

Innovation in Practice Award

This award recognises an organisation, service, program or project that has demonstrated exceptional “thinking outside the square” to create beneficial change for young people.

Joint Winner: MoodGYM

Centre for Mental Health Research,
Australian National University

MoodGYM is an interactive, internet-based cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) program designed to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression in young people aged 15 - 25 years.

Developed in 2001, the program is available free of charge at www.moodgym.anu.edu.au.

MoodGYM aims to modify dysfunctional thoughts and beliefs, improve self-esteem and teach important life skills such as problem solving and relaxation. The MoodGYM program consists of five interactive modules, which each include information, animated demonstrations, quizzes and ‘homework’ exercises.

There is promising scientific evidence that the MoodGYM program is an effective mental health resource for adolescents in the classroom. There have been three trials, the largest of these was conducted with 30 schools across Australia, including nine schools in the ACT. The evaluations show that students who completed the MoodGYM program showed significantly greater improvements in mental health than students who undertook normal personal development lessons.

Joint Winner: Lifeline Youth Network Peer Skills Program

Lifeline Canberra

The Lifeline Canberra Peer Skills program trains young people in schools to provide support, care and assistance to their peers.

The program was developed in response to research that indicates that young people are more likely to speak to their peers about issues and concerns before they talk to anyone else. The program works with natural confidants in peer groups to enhance their listening and problem solving skills to enable them to provide effective support to their peers whilst also looking after themselves.

Over 200 young people have been involved in the program and 25 workers have been trained as Peer Skills Workshop Facilitators. Over 95% of participants indicating they found the workshop relevant, interesting, useful and highly satisfying.

Commendation: Up Your Art Two

YWCA of Canberra

Up Your Art Two was an exhibition designed to promote the talents of emerging young artists in the ACT.

Eight young people showed their work in the exhibition, they used a range of mediums including painting, installation, and sculpture. Young people were mentored by local professional artists throughout the process and their work was a product of this relationship. The professional artists provided the young people with role modelling, skill development, and advice on how to prepare and exhibit their final work.

The young people would not normally have had these art making opportunities and were supported by both youth workers and artists to produce, promote and exhibit their work.

Collaboration for Change Award

This award recognises an organisation, service, program or project that has demonstrated an outstanding collaboration or partnership in their community as a means to achieving positive outcomes for young people.

Winner: **Positive Futures Caring Together**
Learning and Community Education Unit,
Office for Children, Youth and Family
Support, Department of Disability, Housing
and Community Services

Positive Futures Caring Together is an accredited pre-service training program for foster carers in the ACT to develop essential knowledge and skills that will assist them in their caring role.

The program is the first of its kind in Australia, as it is based on four nationally accredited competencies that form part of the Certificate IV in Community Services (Protective Care). The training is assessed and each participant will be awarded a Statement of Attainment on successful completion of these units of competency.

The program was developed in recognition of the diverse needs which children and young people entering care have, to better equip carers, to improve the care experience of children and young people in the ACT.

Out of home care agencies in the ACT already had an established training program for carers. The program therefore required each agency to reflect on current practice and to commit to a training

program based on national competencies. To achieve this aim, the initiative required agencies to enter and commit to investing knowledge, staff, time and funding into a long term 'change' process that included training staff to become workplace assessors.

The program was led by the Learning and Education Unit, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Unit, Office of Children, Youth and Family Support, ACT Care and Protection Services, ACT Foster Care Association, AXIS Development, Barnardos, CREATE Foundation ACT, Galilee, Life Without Barriers, and Marymead Child and Family Centre.

Commendation: **Gungahlin Youth Centre**
Gungahlin Regional Community
Services

Gungahlin Police Station
ACT Policing

The Gungahlin Youth Centre and the Gungahlin Police Station formed a partnership to improve relationship between the youth centre, young people, police and the community and to provide opportunities for early intervention and prevention.

A key outcome has been to reduction of barriers and challenging stereotypes between youth workers, young people and police.

Young people now associate the police with support rather than with being in trouble, police view young people as important members of the community rather than trouble-makers, and the youth centre and the police station work together to support young people in the area.

For example, in addition to the regular police's rounds, they now drop in to the youth centre particularly on a Friday night to get to know some of the young people. If police need to make enquires with a young person do so using the office space at the youth centre and with a youth worker present.

The Gungahlin Police Station values the close working relationship they now have with the Gungahlin Youth Centre and see it as essential to servicing the community and supporting young people in the area.

Innovation in Evaluation Award

This award recognises an organisation, service, program or project that has conceived or implemented a new or improved way of evaluating their activities when working with young people, or has demonstrated their commitment to best practice evaluation as a means to continuously improve their activities.

Winner: **Warts and All Project**
Barnados Transition Program

The 'Warts and All' Project was a qualitative study of the Barnados Transition Program to obtain an honest, independent appraisal of their service.

The Transition Program provides accommodation and support to young people 15 - 21 who are chronically homeless in the ACT.

15 young people were interviewed using a peer research methodology developed by a consultant from the Australian National University. The researcher was a paid young person trained in Peer Research who interviewed former clients. The study was conducted without the involvement of Barnados staff. All interviewees were paid and the study was successful in identifying program strengths and previously unidentified needs.

The participatory, peer led research methodology represents an improved method of evaluating youth services and has enabled the Transition Program to improve its service delivery.

Excellence in Organisational Practice Award

This award recognises an organisation, service, or program that has demonstrated excellence in organisational development as a means to achieving positive outcomes with young people.

Winner: **Children of Parents with a Mental
Illness Project**
Mental Health ACT

The Children of Parents with a Mental Illness (COPMI) Project began in 2004 and sits within Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Mental Health ACT (MHACT). The Project is focused on the needs of COPMI and their families, a significantly at risk and hidden group of children and young people.

The COPMI Project demonstrates excellence in organisational practice through its significant systemic changes, professional development and participative and inclusive practices. Substantial systemic changes have occurred within MHACT, CAMHS and the Psychiatric Services Unit, including improvements in routine identification, assessment and service provision.

Professional development opportunities were developed and implemented, including a now mandatory COPMI training package for MHACT staff, along with in-services and awareness raising opportunities to over 390 professionals. The establishment of inclusive consultative mechanisms, such as an Interagency Steering Committee, the ACT COPMI Network, and a mental health

interest group, were important to provide support, momentum and embed change cross sectorally.

The Project developed resources, including three pamphlets on COPMI for MHACT, and The Coloured Kit, a resource that provides support and information for young people who have a parent with a mental illness / dual diagnosis and their families. This was developed in collaboration with the Youth Coalition, which is just one example of the Project's commitment to partnerships.

Individual Awards

Outstanding Youth Worker Award

This award recognises an individual youth worker who has advanced the rights and wellbeing of young people by advocating for systemic change, supporting young people to access full membership of society and to be decision-makers in their own lives.

Winner: Kerry Bargas

Kerry is a youth worker who has committed herself to advancing the rights and wellbeing of young people in the Woden area. She has worked passionately to continuously improve disability services and to implement integrated service delivery.

As Coordinator of the Woden Youth Centre she has sought to implement practices that enhance positive perceptions of young people, particularly those with a disability.

Her commitment to inclusive practice influences everything she does. She has strongly advocated for intra and cross sectoral partnerships and developing innovative programs for young people with complex needs.

Kerry frequently goes beyond the call of duty to support young people whether it's being a friendly ear, a source of knowledge and advice or offering practical support - Kerry is always willing to spare some time.

She is held in very high regard by young people and staff alike, and always works tirelessly to support people wherever she can.

Outstanding New Talent Award

This award recognises an individual youth worker, youth work trainee or volunteer that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to improving the wellbeing of young people.

Winner: Abbey Tizzard

Abbey is LYNX Youth Worker at Lifeline Canberra. Abbey started with Lifeline just over 12 months ago and in that time has made a significant and positive impact on the youth sector and the young people she has had contact with.

Abbey's role includes organising and facilitating the 'Peer Skills' Program and the 'Shut up and Listen' Program as well as attending health fairs and conducting information sessions in schools.

She manages to combine her effervescent personality with a solid grounding in ethics and best practice to ensure that young people are engaged in what she is doing and benefit from each interaction.

Abbey consistently receives praise from young people on evaluation forms and is identified as being approachable, friendly, knowledgeable, vibrant and fun by young people.

Young people comment that Abbey makes them feel valued and respected and that she accepts their views and ideas.

Outstanding Contribution to Young People Award

This award recognises an outstanding individual who works to improve the wellbeing of young people in the ACT.

Joint Winners: Betty Shaw Ian Lynch

Betty and Ian have been committed to the young people of Woden for over 10 years. They volunteer on a weekly basis to run The Bus Stop Café and band nights at the Woden Youth Centre.

Betty, also known as Grandma by the young people, is 74 years of age. At 61 Ian is “retired” but keeps himself busy by dedicating his time to young people.

“They bring fun and energy to all of us with a sincere and caring nature which includes actions such as taking the time to ask people about their day or how they are feeling and listening and not being judgemental.”

Betty and Ian have brought humour, laughter and lasting memories to Woden Youth Centre staff and hundreds of young people over the years. Young people who access the Youth Centre have adopted them as family. Those who have known them over the years still come back to visit to share and update them about their lives.

Lifetime Achievement Award

This award recognises an individual who has consistently demonstrated a commitment to supporting and improving the wellbeing of young people in the ACT.

Winner: Fred Monaghan

Fred is a Ngunnawal man who has been a fierce advocate for the rights, wellbeing and health of young people. He has worked in the community and government sectors for over 20 years.

His house and heart are always open to everyone. He is affectionately known within the community as ‘Uncle Fred’ and he is a role model for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people and youth workers. His dedication, talents and unwavering commitment to social justice have been fundamental to improving the lives of some of Canberra’s most marginalised young people and families.

Fred has a lofty and courageous spirit and a generosity of mind. He is willing to do whatever needs to get done, and young people know they can depend on him.

He has been a champion for Aboriginal rights. He is a member of the Aboriginal Justice Centre, an Elder who contributes to Circle Sentencing in the ACT and has worked with Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation for over 6 years.

Fred is a big-hearted individual who continues to share his experience and knowledge with anyone. He is highly regarded in the sector, and has a reputation as being knowledgeable, reliable, trustworthy and dependable in a crisis. He has built strong networks across sectors that have enabled him to provide essential support, direction and advice to young people and their families.

Fred is an understated man who doesn't seek praise, however the community, his peers and the young people he has worked with want to acknowledge his accomplishments – and thank him.