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Youth Voices.

A Report on the Alice Springs School Holiday Campaign 2017-18

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Contents

Introduction.....	page 2
Key Insights.....	page 3
Methods Description.....	page 4
Result	page 6
Discussion.....	page 13
Appendices.....	page 17

Introduction

This report records and analyses responses of those participating in the Alice Springs summer 2017-18 holiday activities provided by the Northern Territory Government. Experiences of young people and their family members are detailed. The Interventions enabled by Youth Innovations Grants funding are a particular focus. We followed the implementation of the campaign over ten days, conducting interviews with young people and their family members. We offer insight on how such interventions into the youth services delivery arena do their work, and offer suggestions for the future.

In the Alice Springs School Holiday Campaign 2017-8, the main groups of stakeholders were first, the young people of Alice Springs and its surrounding settlements and their families, second the NT Government and its agencies organizing the campaign, third the many and varied services provision organisations. This study is concerned with the first two stakeholders. We set out to hear from the young people (and their family members) to learn how they valued the campaign. The questions that the Government and its agencies wanted answers to, informed the way we designed and carried out the work of listening and learning from the youngsters.

Key Insights

- The young people in Alice Springs participating in the holiday activities indicated that they valued the school holiday program highly, and that they felt that their needs were recognized in the varied activities offered.
- We found evidence of the presence of two groups or 'populations' of Alice Springs young people. As expected there is a population of young people of mixed ethnic and class backgrounds whose lives are led as urban dwellers in Alice Springs township. There are indications also of a group of Indigenous young people whose lives are led in between 'out-stations and the in-station (Alice Springs town)' as one young respondent put it. These young people do not see themselves as 'visitors'. They feel they belong as Alice people, though they recognize that their form of belonging differs from that of the urban dwellers. They value the recognition that they find in some youth centres, of their form of belonging in Alice. They yearn for wider recognition as Alice Springs young people.
- In terms of activities they sought and thrived within, the needs of these two groups differed to some extent. In each case there was evidence that the experiences of participating in the activities of the school holiday campaign had positive effects in the forming of their identities as young members of the Alice Springs community.
- The family members of youngsters who participated in the holiday activities that we had conversations with, noted that the activities were good for parents; good for established Alice Springs organisations (eg the library, and youth centre); good for the young people to engage with wider community; and good for encouraging establishment of new, small, innovative community arts organisations.
- The various venues were differentiated in the experiences they offered young people. To varying degrees all the venues were attended by those of one or the other 'population', and in some cases members of both of the groups mixed without any problems.
- There was some evidence of services providers co-ordinating and collaborating in activities

organisation. Success here was uneven. Some provider personnel suggested initiating centrally located larger scale activities involving music and/or food where active efforts are made to recruit families from all demographics of Alice Springs and surrounds, as participants. There is some suggestion of the possible emergence of a sports and arts youth economy emerging in Alice Springs, which the Summer Campaign of 2017-18 has significantly enabled.

- Among the users of the services (young people and family members and carers), and amongst the services provider personnel, there was little evidence of recognition of the importance and significance of the planning and on-the-ground effort at integration, co-ordination, and collaboration in services delivery that characterized the Alice Springs Summer Campaign 2017-18. Finding ways to promote wider recognition of the value of such innovative interventions by government in future, is important.

Methods Description

a) Designing a study of responses to the program by young people and their families

- Data sources: Interview young people, with at least one engagement with participants in each activity type; focus on funded innovations and activities provided under contract. Interviews with family members about their perceptions and experiences of the overall 'feel' of the school holiday campaign. In addition, textual materials were collected from the various sites visited
- Questions to elicit specific information: The questions were simple, informal and conversational; even banal; posed in a language appropriate to the person and occasion. The aims behind these question are to find out
 - What activities were most fun for those at a particular venue?
 - What do individual children see themselves and others as gaining through their participation in the activities?
 - In general, how do the youngsters' family members feel about the program?
 - Are there other activities that children would love to have available?
 - Do the young participants feel safe in the venues?
 - What are the main ways that government can 'get messages' to young people in Alice Springs?
- Focus for identifying more general information: the field worker is a skilled and experienced social scientist, with a well developed sensibility of what is a generative and healthy social situation. These capacities will be used to the full in privately making recordings of 'professional impressions' at the time of their happening. This generalized information is enriched and enhanced in field notes, both hand written and latter entered into electronic text files. Here assessments of the general strengths and limitations of the campaign are made
- Focus for imagining the future: to some extent this is specific information that might be elicited with a simple direct question. More important is the interpretation of how the interventions in governance that the Alice Springs Holiday Campaign express work *as* interventions attempting to improve and better conditions on the ground that young people experience. here the question is what are the opportunities to develop areas across a years. What is a useful framework for a long-term approach to government engagement with young people of Alice Springs?

b) Field work

In beginning the field worker was introduced to personnel of most of the organisations and service providers involved, by DCM personnel. This facilitated access to activities venues. Some venue visits were made with the public servant responsible for organizing the holiday campaign, but most venue visits were made unaccompanied. a comprehensive plan for where to go, what to cover (different venues, different organisations, different activities—emphasizing activities funded through innovation grants.)

Normally at least one hour was spent in a venue visit in some cases up to 2 hours. Getting some sense about how things progressed the field work observed what was going on, took notes, including a record of 'feelings and immediate thoughts' about the venue. If no recordings were made, then right after visits the main points of information about the informants, including staff

and instructors, children, and family members were noted. There was a particular concentration on collecting Youth Voices. Fieldwork activities were undertaken every day (except two Sundays), and at different time (mornings, afternoons, lunch time and evenings). Totally fifteen days were spent on the ground (including 2 Saturdays).

In total visits were made to eleven venues in the town, covering twenty-two activities, involving fifteen or more organisations and service providers. Covering the short distances between venues a total of 313 km were travelled for this project, in total thirty-two hours on-site with the activities, and almost ten hours for driving around. More than seventeen hours preparing for field work and in managing the data and files collected (data treatment and field notes entry to computer). Out of twelve Innovation Grants projects, ten programs were visited. (Two exceptions were Red Cross's Home Runner's Program, and Tanytenre's Boxing Program.) Unfortunately, those activities funded by the innovation grant program at locations outside of the town were not visited.

A venue visit usually began with the fieldworker introducing himself to the on-site coordinators, and or staff of the organisations or service providers. Having explained the evaluation project, all offered to help the field worker to interact with the young participants. After 'hanging about' for a while get a sense of what was going on, those children most likely to agree to talk with me were identified. Care was taken to avoid interrupting those who were clearly absorbed in their activities.

Approaching children and parents or carers (where possible) the field worker introduced himself and explained briefly what he wanted. Information about their thoughts of the activities and the venues was sought. Requests were then made to talk to with a phone recording the conversation. If they agreed, then a recording was begun, if they declined, talk would be continued. Many informants declined to record comments, but were happy to talk, to chat informally with the field worker. These conversations were later noted down in as much detail as possible.

Through simple everyday questions, information was elicited, and conversations usually lasted for two minutes, the shortest one could be 30-40 second, but longest could be four minutes. Recordings were saved individually (one file for one person). In some cases, children preferred to record together either as a group, or with each in series, one by one. Some video was recorded, and some still images after the interviewing.

c) Form of the data

The forms the data takes in this study were various: audio recording of conversations between a field worker and young people who participated in activities staged at eleven centres around Alice Springs, and with parents and carers of young people attending; still images of the activities in progress; video recordings of activities in progress; audio recordings of field worker commentary and reflections; written fieldnotes of observations and happenings during visits.

d) Making an archive of the data

Very soon after collection and collation the electronic files (video, audio, image and text) were sent on to other team members—the technical assistant, and the team leader. This raw data was archived in the form it was received according to the day of collection. Copies of the files audio and video files were 'cleaned-up' to enhance intelligibility of speech.

In the 'technical cleaning up' the sound files were manipulated to dull and if possible remove background noise. The volumes at which the various speakers were heard were equalised (people are variously softly spoken or project their voice); extremes of low and high pitch were decreased. This work makes files more or less equally audible and intelligible. It renders the data more uniform

than it would otherwise be. This uniformity in presentation of spoken content is important in achieving a valid data set in this form of conversational ethnography. Using these clean files an archive was then established where venue was the main organizing category, an index of data items for each venue was established. This will enable 'the picture' we have of each venue to be attended serially.

e) 'Reading' the data

In 'reading' to get a picture' from the organized data, particular 'messages' expressed by were found in intensive scrutiny of the materials. The audio recordings with the words of the young participants (or family members) spoken in their own voice were a main organising tool, which information in fieldnotes, images and videos enriched and developed.

f) Designing products to speak to the two main stakeholder groups

The two major stakeholders that we are engaged with in this evaluation exercise are those who participate in the activities—the young people of Alice Springs and their families and carers, and those who work in government and its agencies in planning, and implementing the program. We feel that each deserves 'a report'. A report for the young people and their families who participated will help to better appreciate and understand the services delivery work of government. This report takes the form of a short compilation videos assembled from the sound, image and video files (being careful to stay inside strict ethics guidelines). The report for government personnel takes the form of this conventional written text.

g) The researchers

Who carried out this study? GroundUp researchers are from the Northern Institute in Charles Darwin University. We name our research approach 'GroundUp' to express our commitment to working collaboratively on the ground, taking seriously the knowledge and governance of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Our analyses involve participating, albeit sometimes minimally, in the collective life of particular places.

We work in urban and remote Aboriginal communities with government, nongovernment, and business organisations to develop research and service delivery approaches suitable to diverse participants. Often this will include processes for careful reassessment of conventional values and categories. The values and categories of those whose collective life is at stake are considered of the highest priority. These might be young participants in an urban school holiday program, traditional elders in a remote outstation, or 'long-grassers' the population of those who 'sleep rough' in Darwin. (See <http://groundup.cdu.edu.au/>)

Results

a) Self understandings of two differing groups or 'populations' of youth participants, and their responses to activities

Youth services delivery organizations recognize that their core work is supporting adolescents in the confusing experiences of identity formation. Answering our conversational enquiries about how they were feeling about the activities provided as part of the Alice Springs Holiday Campaign, many young people revealed that their participation in the activities was fueling this highly significant adolescent process of working out 'who they are' and 'how they fit in'.

My favourite thing is... I always like to do rap everyday... (GAP) opens every day around 1 o'clock.... and my favourite thing is I like playing rugby... touch rugby and I like playing with my friends on the computer... some of them are always laugh at my jokes so... that's all good (12-01-2018 (1), male around 12 yrs)

This finding that Alice Springs young people are 'finding' themselves, making their identities, through participating in particular activities that they experience as 'fun' and which they find friendship in and through, is consistent throughout the data. It is seen across many activities, and most clearly evident in statements by young males. Young women it seems largely prefer activities in very small groups, or in one-on-one activities like learning song-writing

My name is... we're trying to learn to write songs... I never did song writing before... I'm listening...I enjoy, yes I enjoy it...[but I] just go for Childrens' Ground (15-01-2018 (2))

Yet while this identity formation work is common, it seems that there are two rather distinct groups, in formation. These groups might even be seen as different 'populations', their differing identities are emerging as they make differing 'commitments' (a core process in identity formation). One group might be called 'urban dwellers'. Here are two young adolescents speaking about participating in activities provided by Alice Springs Youth Accommodation and Support Services (ASYASS) They identify themselves as Alice Springs 'urban dwellers'.

It's really fun here... It's my time to come here and relax, 'cos at home... it's fine at home, but I have annoying sisters, and this is my time to come here and relax... This is one of the funnest things in my life so far.... I come here pretty much everyday. I like pretty much everything they do here. It's funner than anything I do at home. I just join in whatever they are doing 'cos it's fun...The only place I go is here... but sometimes we [all go together] to the place where they have a big hall and can play indoor soccer" (22-01-2018 (2) ASYASS male around 12 yrs)

Responding to a question from the field worker his friend explains,

I'm just about to join in the exact same game that [my friend here] is playing.... This is my third time here... I was dropped off here [and I'll] be picked up... I do go to the youth centre [where] I do boxing...I like boxing and I like gaming... and I like football (22-01-2018 (1) ASYASS male around 12 yrs)

Similarly, at GAP youth Centre

I like coming to GAP because that have 'splash parties'.... I like playing basket ball out the back and computer games.... I walked here this morning (12-01-2018 (1), male around 8 yrs)

Older youths that the field worker spoke with at Alice Springs Youth and Community Centre (ASYCC) clearly were developing identities through different commitments, those that were salient being part of a different population than the 'urban dwellers'. Tellingly one of these youths spoke of leading his life as both an "out-station" person and an "in-station" person. Recognizing, that this terminology might be confusing to the interviewer, he helpfully added "in town". As we see below he went on to explain why he loves his time being 'in-station', 'at home' in Alice Springs despite, we understand, also having other 'homes'. In his various homes we learn, he finds himself in his love of sports.

I do love sports, I love it. I dunno what I'd do without sports. I do sports everyday. I come here and I play... I play out-station and in-station [I mean] in town. I play football, rugby, hockey. I did martial arts, I did boxing. I did soccer. My favourite is hockey and basket ball. (13-01-2018(01). Youth around 18 yrs

We hear next from his friend, who has it seems, also made his identity through his out-station/in-station commitments.

It's all right here in Alice Springs because people make [things] good for young people... ASYCC [is good] for my people...they get bossed around by policeman [in Alice]... [But when] they open a youth program up we can come here out of the streets, because even the juveniles they want something to do. But being in Alice, it's good fun when I come here like [other?] young people I can have a good life... [This kind of activity] keeps you away from trouble... Some people [like me] come here [to the centre] to do the fun stuff instead of [doug] the bad stuff... I come here... to check out if it's happy... I'm only sometimes Alice Springs... I hope [this place] stays like this. Yeah... I hope it does, I hope it does (13-01-2018(02). Youth around 18 yrs

Some might see these young men as 'visitors to Alice Springs' as 'kids visiting from other communities' staying with relatives in town camps or in the many accommodation facilities. But this is *not* how these young men see themselves. They do not see themselves as *visiting* Alice Springs. They clearly feel they *belong*—it's their town. They are part of the In-station/out-station group. They thrive on the connections and separations of in-station and out-station life. There is evidence of this distinction between the 'out-station/in-station' group and the 'urban dweller' group throughout the data.

The activities particularly valued by this group are those of group participation. Such group participation is found in several venues that already cater for this population, informal evening basketball playing, disco dancing, and so on. Many in this group would appreciate some form of mass involvement. The suggestion that came up several times in conversations with these youngsters was for an organized soccer competition across the holiday period.

b) The venues and activities as seen through the responses of young participants, their family members and carers.

Venues and activities

Data was collected during visits to eleven different venues: the Gap Youth and Community Centre (GYCC), Alice Springs Youth and Community Centre (ASYCC), Children's Ground, YMCA, Red Hot Arts Centre, YORET, Tangentyere Brown Street, Alice Springs Youth Accommodation and Support Services (ASYASS), MIFANT, Alice Springs Library and Alice Springs town pool. Here we report the

characteristics of the venues as seen by the interviewer and from the responses of the young participants, finally we include comments from parents and carers.

- Gap Youth and Community Centre (GYCC)

GYCC offer a diverse range of activities of which both afternoon and night time activities were followed through several visits. Participation rates in the venue were dependent on the type of activity that was offered. For instance, playing drums were well received by larger groups, while song writing and composing tunes attracted only a few kids. Despite low participation in this activity, given that this was often a one-on one activity, it attracted more young women, and the levels of engagement seemed to be deeper than for playing drums.

The centre offered opportunities to play basketball, pool table and computer games, watch TV and take part in Geek in Residence activity (where an instructor would assist interested kids in using computers). The diversity in the activities seemed to attract kids, with 20-25 boys waiting in queue to play pool table and other kids involved in other activities such as video games.

My favourite thing is playing computers... and pool table, and basketball I really like to do that stuff, and I really like playing with my friends... and I like playing [inaudible] and [I'd like?] to be in my brother's team... I like playing rugby. Sometimes I come with my brothers, but today I came [inaudible]...(12-01-2018(1) male around 11yrs)

This centre attracted urban dwellers and out-station/in-station youngsters seemingly in about equal numbers, but there was some evidence of tensions.

'I don't like GAP because [there are] the street walkers they wreck it...they come they get mad' (17-01-2018(11), male around 12 yrs)

Bus drop offs were available for the night time activities till 11pm.

- Alice Springs Youth and Community Centre (ASYCC)

This venue has larger spaces. Compared to other youth centres it is more open having fewer instructor led activities, allowing kids to feel a sense of freedom, and space to become themselves in their own way. The ASYCC offered night time recreation activities such as basket ball which were very popular; around 70 kids were there usually with the majority playing basket ball.

I like the youth centre the way it is....I did some basket ball...some pool.....played little bit of game.....listening to music....Lots of my friends come here. (13-01-2018(01) male youth around 13yrs).

When the field worker was just about to leave around 9.30pm 13 Jan, he noticed police were gathered outside, quietly talking amongst themselves. Perhaps there was a security issue he thought, and this presence was reassuring rather than alarming. (13-01-2018 (04) fieldworker commentary)

- ASYASS Resource Centre (ASYASS)

ASYASS Resource Centre advertised as film making and drop in activities. Film making activity was difficult because of insufficient resources it had not started. There was limited capacity (20-30) in the venue and less diversity in activities on offer. But the centre was very highly valued by the

young people using it.

Yes... [this is my first time here] watching a video game... no [haven't been to other places] came here today about 2 pm... [I'll stay here] this afternoon. I like to sit down and watch a movies and hang around... I came with my cousin and sister... she's over there watching and there's [my cousin?]. My cousin told me this place and bring me she just come here [a lot]... they're good people here.... I like playing games on the computer. But today [I'm still] waiting there's only three computers and I'm still waiting, today I'm waiting (22-01-2017 (3) Girl around 11 years)

- Brown street venue, Tangentyere Council Youth Centre

A diverse range of activities are provided at the venue. Participation rates varied. Kids specifically mentioned that they felt good, comfortable and safe there and could make friends. On the evening that the fieldworker visited there were around twenty kids, mostly girls. The previous nights (when there were not competing activities in other centres, there would be around 50 young people. Security on this venue is high and taken very seriously. This could account for the high attendance of young women here and their openness in being willing to record their impressions of this centre and its activities.

The best thing I like about Brown street is that they have a pool table and [inaudible]... and I just enjoy it... basically if this place is open I come here (20-01-2018 (2) male youth around 14 yrs)

I feel it's mine here and you can pay snooker table and I like disco and bowling [?] and we can see each other here... and um... um... I feel happy and excited and that's it (20-01-2018(3) girl around 13yrs)

I come here with my friends... not all the time I just go to disco some of the time. I go to the other youth centre too... They have good wi fi and computers and they have a basketball court that there's [an organized] snooker round ... and that's it (20-01-2018(3) girl around 14yrs)

I like it that you can do as you like here... there's basketball and computers and just what ever's on.... and I like to spend time with friends.. I go [also] the the GAP centre and the Youth centre (20-01-2018(4) girl around 14yrs)

- Childrens' Ground

This organization has strong links with those who like to lead their lives both in outstations and in Alice ('the in-station'). The venue in Alice Springs provided opportunities for music and performance activities mixed with food preparation and family picnicking. Seemingly core in the activities of this venue were a band 'Black Rock Band' of young men from Jabiru—where Childrens' Ground had strong links in the past. This band served as inspirational for young participants pulling them into music making, and perhaps can be understood as providing 'a sound track' for the venue. (The band also seems to feature in activities of Red Hot Arts.)

Tonight I like it, because I can just go around and play and listen...listen to music and get involved with it... [and] I like swimming (15-01-2018 (1) Girl around 12 yrs)

[I like this experience with] the video camera... that was fun, [even] the first time it was fun

trying to record pictures... trying to interview somebody.. [but] people might not want to be interviewed (15-01-2018 (1) Girl around 11 yrs)

Hello my name is... we're trying to learn to write songs. Yes [I like this kind of activity]... but I never did songwriting before... my first time... I'm enjoying it, yes I'm enjoying it (15-01-2018 (s) Girl around 15 yrs)

A later event in which children would rehearse with the band was unfortunately cancelled because of a road accident.

- Red Hot Arts Centre

The venue serves as a meeting place for young people, in the centre of town. Many young people both inside and outside the venue. Those outside seemingly were not inclined to attend the activities inside. A useful hub where young people come together to exchange information. Parents drop off and collect children in cars. The centre seems to have a quite different function to the centres dedicated as *youth* centres. On the evening the fieldworker visited there was a big crowd and *Black Rock Band* was playing. Most of the participants had been brought in by Childrens' Ground. It was lively with children scootering around inside and outside.

From talking to young women who declined to record comments, the fieldworker learned that older young people come here to meet friends. The centre, open Mon, Tue, Thu and Fri, and for special events on weekends, is more or less like a hub for young children who come and go, stay and play. Groups of young women will come to this place, feeling it as quite safe and comfortable. They stay for a while, watch TV and so on.

- MIFANT Music Workshop studio

The attendances here were generally small as the activities involved intensive work in music—song writing and performance. This is not for large numbers of children but targets kids who have interest and even passion for music This offers possibilities for young people to engage profoundly with role model adults in learning life skills in emotional expression, developing good mental health habits through self-expression in music activities.

The recording of a participant here takes the form of recording a rap

Opportunity [clap] seizing it... [encouraging words from Daniel, instructor]..

Life is hope,
With anger around me I can't barely cope,
Such a tragedy,
Life is pieces
of puzzle,

Life is hope,
With anger around me I can't barely cope,
Such a tragedy,
We're breaking into pieces,

Jesus bless my soul,
We're breaking into pieces,
Crying at night, crying in the night,
I just wanna... yeah yeah...

Aah Aah life,

The next life,
It's such a tragedy,
How can we get along?
It's really taken me... humanity,
Yeah, look at this... ruined my Saturday.

Commenting on the experiences he has had in the venue the youth explains to the fieldworker,

I came here the past few days...I've been working on my new song... [My song] is about life, yeah... it's about people [in the town]... It's not really about racism... it's about bullying.. [other people] judging... and stuff [I want to come to this place] because I'm great friends with Daniel [the MIFANT instructor] and me and him get along well with each other and aah... we do good music and he's a good singer and I just like to work on my vocals and stuff and yeah, and I attend sports... basketball, football and soccer... and I got no other places to go... I basically stick to one place until I finish my job at that place... and then I'll go to another place.. [I go to places] where I feel comfortable (9-01-2018 (3), male youth about 14 years).

- Library

The library activities did not attract members of Indigenous communities in Alice Springs and surrounding settlements in significant numbers, but is highly valued by members of other Alice Springs groups. Around 17 kids and accompanying parents were in attendance at craft making and Geek in Residence when the fieldworker visited. The children who attended were highly interested and engaged in the activities

'I like the library programs because there is always fun stuff to do and the activities are fun too because it's great it's like... it's hard to explain... there's Mario car activities, and stacking things we did today.] Usually when I was young I would go to the library because somebody there would be reading a book, but [now] my favourite [activity] is treasure robots it was really fun doing the obstacle course with it (17-01-2018 (9), Girl around 9yrs)

[Today] we made a paper tower and then we had to make [a shape] out of paper and we sticky taped it and made it hold 16 books, and then we made and we had to use all the cups and it had to be 13 high cups tall...I did all the activities [here] except the movies one... I come to the library often... I didn't attend activities in other centres... [but in future] more cooking ones, and the obstacle courses. .. [my parents] dropped me here (17-01-2018 (7), boy around 10yrs)

[[I don't come] to the library very often, but I do like it here... today I made an [inaudible] tower, umm.. made a very tall cup tower... a few days ago here I did this obstacle course... no I never attended activities in other places that I remember (17-01-2018 (7), girl around 10yrs)

- YORET (Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement) Building

When the fieldworker visited the YORET building venue an even organized by ASYASS was in progress. he was told the participants were mostly members of the group that moved in an out of the town on a semi regular basis... the youth director of ASYASS informed him that there were no

'urban dwellers' present that day but some were expected to arrive later. Later when they did arrive and a game of indoor soccer between the two groups was organized. Soccer was clearly the favoured game in this event... cooking did not attract participants.

- YMCA

Innovation funding was provided for a series of differing highly organized classes including rock climbing, spin, gym sessions and boxing. The fieldworker, visiting when a spin class was scheduled, found that this venue was very poorly patronized by young people involved with the School Holiday Program. The staff recognized that they had a problem and suggested that better advertising would solve the problem. One family with two teenagers arrived during the visit allowing a class to happen. The signs are however that these sorts of adult oriented highly programmed exercise activities are not part of the activity set that most young people in Alice Springs include in their sports activities.

Adults Comment

A father interviewed at the library venue had this to say

This kind of activity] is excellent for the parents to have programs for their children during the holidays because they find it difficult to have enough activities at home...so this can break up the day very nicely for an hour.....just to come and mix with kids of their own age.. and other outside their family... [and give their family a break The library!... It's terrific to encourage young people to be aware of their town library and the facilities it has This is only a small regional town but we have ab amazing library (17-01-2018 (8)).

An older family member participating in the Children's Ground MIFANT music workshop event, watching her young family members engage with the members of the *Black Rock Band*

I'm really really happy with this... we come up from home down there

A younger woman carrying a small child joins in the conversation

Yeah, it's lovely [for the little ones] (15-01-2018(3))

In the YORET building the fieldworker interviewed a staff member involved in the Utopia based innovation grant project

even when they live in town...sometimes a kid could be sitting in their house for 48 hours, not outside in the sun, not doing any activities, not getting proper feed. If they don't you know whats gonna happen? Crime...[participation in a holiday program] will minimize crime...[And] take pressure of their parents

I have worked in Utopia for the last 4 years ... [over the holiday] had no more than 4 or 5 kids around, they are the only ones left in the community...everybody else came to town.....they stay with grandparents, uncles,...This year we decided to [use the buses] go around and collect kids and each day [And] we get around 18-20 kids, that's all we can fit in. we have only 2 vehicles. That one there holds 9 kids. That one there holds 11. Without the transportation it's not gonna happen....all the kids know me for the past 5 years and also the parents....

'We get all three hours of activity and then we free them.....then gone for half a day burning energy you know..... tired when they get home' (17-01-2018 (4)).

Discussion

a) Background

The eight-week, \$250,000 Summer in Alice Action Plan 2017-2018 had NT Police, Territory Families, Local Government and Housing, and many organizations from the NGO and private sectors working together to promote safer public spaces by reducing youth antisocial and criminal activity. The program was designed to offer young people access to and involvement in safe, structured and constructive activities.

Two innovations in governance were involved. First, a strategy of a series of innovation grants to services providers to expand activities that services provision contractors could offer (eg library co-operating with GAP youth centre to offer expanded possibilities for computer based activities), and in some cases offered opportunities for new providers to enter the market in Alice Springs youth services. Second, the tactic of daily coordination meetings between relevant government agencies actioning the unprecedented levels of collaboration and cooperation between relevant government agencies and others, involving commitments to a shared approach to attending to local problematic issues.

c) Differing Alice Springs youth populations

A significant finding of our 'ground-up', study of the Alice Springs Holiday Campaign 2017-2018 in progress, concerned understandings of who, as young people, understand themselves as belonging in Alice Springs and how. Listening carefully to some articulate older male youths (around 18 yrs) as they tell earnestly and enthusiastically what they like about the activities in Alice Springs in the holiday period, they describe themselves this way. "[I am] only sometimes Alice Springs ... you can have a good life here". His friend who also clearly understands himself as a 'sometimes Alice' person, tells us that he loves sports. Movingly, he adds, "I love sports, I don't know what I'd do without sports." And, as if to convince his listeners of the seriousness of his commitment, "I do sports every day. I come here and I play... I play out-station and in-station [I mean] in town".

Adopting this youth's terminology to point to 'an out-station/in-station' population of young people in the process of defining themselves as contemporary Indigenous young people who move and who are 'sometimes Alice' people, we contrast them to a group of urban Alice Springs dwellers for whom the Alice Springs youth centres equally offer means to enact the commitments through which their identities are being forged, but for who Alice is 'it'. No doubt many in this population too are pulling themselves together as 'me', a contemporary Indigenous youth, negotiating similar tensions in their becoming, and they are doing in staying put.

So, we have 'the movers' and 'the stay-puts'. The latter are very mixed in terms of ethnicity, race and, socio-economic status. It is not only contemporary Indigeneity that is being negotiated amongst young Alice Springs town dwellers. Alice Springs is a multicultural hub and actively welcomes families and migrants from many cultures. The difficulties and the exhilarations of becoming contemporary young Australians is what all the youngsters participating in the School holiday program share. It is likely that members of both 'the movers' and 'the stay-puts' are, for example, actively negotiating their gender status, but they are doing so in differing cultural, linguistic, and in settings espousing differing values. The open accepting values expressed in the operations of Alice Springs youth centre settings, ensured in large part by standards of good governance, turns out to be a common good that is equally valued by all.

It is significant that we have noted the presence of an out-station/in-station youth population in central Australia; what we have named here as ‘the movers’. This development in the culture of contemporary Indigeneity in central Australia mimics the development of diasporic youth populations in a global context. Enabled by the explosive growth in communication technologies and by improvements in transport provision, this new cultural phenomenon has emerged simultaneously in many places.

For example, US diasporic youth of the Indian sub-continent is effecting a simultaneous and seemingly contradictory intensive engagement with both their Indian and US ‘homes’—fluid identities are in the process of becoming a norm. In east Africa too, commentators are witnessing the beginnings of intense diasporic dual engagements of those who are equally ‘at home’ in Uganda where they were perhaps born as refugees, and ‘at home’ in South Sudan where they have established themselves as part of the ‘returnee’ movement. When it comes to contemporary Indigeneity however, perhaps most relevant to Alice Springs is the example of Sámi contemporary indigeneity where an international population (Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Russia) of young people live lives that are could easily be named as out-station/in-station lives. Here movement is seasonal in association with the rhythms of the reindeer herding economy.

The future lives that the members of such populations establish for themselves in pursuing opportunities afforded by profound shifts in climate, economy, and communications technology, will no doubt have significant impacts in many places. The seeming emergence of such population is a wonderful resource for the future of Alice Springs. Providing services to enrich and expand the capacities of this population should not be seen as ‘a cost centre’ for government, rather the opposite—as a unique opportunity for investment.

d) A Range of venues and activities

School holidays are traditionally times when young people ‘come of age’. School programs offer opportunities to become skilled and disciplined, but it is often school holidays that are most significant in young peoples’ identity formation. In new and familiar experiences alike new possibilities open up. Irrespective of whether young people are ‘risk takers’ or ‘safe-grounders’, school holidays offer possibilities. Presenting a range of venue types is crucial in a school holiday program; a wide ‘a menu’ of organization and institutional settings staffed with young adult role model personnel of varied personality, cultural and skills backgrounds is important. And this is the strength of embedding an ‘innovation grants’ program in the Alice Springs school holiday campaign in 2017-18. A wide range of ‘feels’ in venue was achieved by this means and others. Many of the activities are common across venues, and that is to be expected and encouraged. Sport, music, food, and companionship is the common fare here.

Through dedicated fieldwork, activities of many types were witnessed. Participants offered comments on programs providing possibilities for doings that were active and noisy as much as those that were quiet and still. Activities that were organized by adults were valued as much as those that were free-form; team based as much as individual; creative and performative as much as passive and receptive. Participants were variously happy with large groups, small groups, and with a one-on-one mode. Activities that were technology mediated tended to be preferred, with electronic technology being favoured.

e) A framework for future investment

To effect the Alice Springs School Holiday Campaign 2017-18 an innovative whole of government form of implementation was adopted. This involved commitment of significant resources to co-

ordination in promoting possibilities and opportunities for collaboration between the many organisations partnering to effect the program as a whole. In part this innovation emerged as response to a widely recognized difficult socio-cultural situation in Alice Springs around law and order problems during the summer school holidays. Assessing the efficacy and effectiveness of this innovation in governance is not the function of this report (that is to be undertaken in the Part B evaluation project).

Using resources invested for the purpose, the campaign effected a shift in tactics of law and order governance for a limited period. This along with investments in youth services through innovation grants to expand opportunities and possibilities for Alice Springs young people had a highly beneficial effect for those who were the target of the campaign. Those delivering these government services saw capacity considerably and made full use of that enhanced capacity. As a final point of discussion in this report we ask how hearing from the young people participating in the Alice Springs School Holiday Campaign 2017-18 helps in devising a framework through which future investment might be considered.

We suggest that the Alice Springs School Holiday Campaign 2017-18 with its innovations at both tactical and strategic levels of intervention, saw the beginnings of a localized Alice Springs youth sports and arts economy. Albeit in a small way the campaign has fuelled growth in the youth sports and arts services providers sector. This, set alongside the recognition of the emergence of a mobile contemporary Indigenous youth population, constitutes a generative framework for future investment.

Appendix

Ben's ground work schedule

9-25 January 2018

Date	Onsite Time	Onsite hours	Travel time	data & notes entry	Venue	Activity and notes	No of recordings	No of photos	No of videos	Total no of files
9 Jan. Tue	2:00-3:30pm	1.5	0.5	2	DCM-Alice Plaza	Meeting with Liz, Leon (Helen teleconference) Event calendar, innovatin grant applications, Leon will introduce me to stakeholders in coming days got related documents for reading. Confirm our focus should be on children and families				0
10 Jan. Wed	10:00-11:00am	1	0.5		DCM-Alice Plaza	Attending Cross-agency meeting Introduced to related agencies, explained what I am going to do with Liz and Leon. Cross agency collaboration. Know key persons.				0
	2:00-4:00pm	2	0.5		MIFANT; GYCC	Cath up with Rachel (Daniel is not in) and Michelle Visited to related activitiy venues to catch up with key persons, know that evening is good time to visit to talk with kids with Leon. Drop in centre				0
11 Jan. Thu	9:00-10:00am	1	0.5		Police headquarters	Morning Shulton Got a shulton brief Get to know the operational response mechanism behind the Holiday Campaign, with Leon				0
	11:00-12:00pm	1	0.5		ASYCC	Catch up with RA (Drumzone) Know they are playing the newly made drum tomorrow with Leon. Kids enjoyed drum making				0
	3:00-5:00pm	2	0.5		Dale's office	Catch up with Family Territory, CAYLUS, Library and CYCC understanding the collaboration with Leon. Library, CAYLUS are good playes in the program				0
12 Jan. Fri	2:15-3:30pm	1.25	0.5	0.5	MIFANT	Drumzone and Music Workshop two groups partnered with each other, Leon was with me.	1	19	3	23
	8:00-10:00pm	2		0.5	GYCC	Night time trop in; Music with Damien; Creative cooking Talked with 3 kids; one parent/staff; one staff; photos, videos, notes Talked with 5 kids (3 recorded); photos, videos and recordings, notes				0
13 Jan. Sat	8:00-9:00pm	1	0.5	0.5	ASYCC	Night activities Talked with 7 kids (X recorded), photos, videos and recordings, notes Leon was with me for a short while. Many older youngsters here. Good talk	4	2	1	7

14 Jan. Sun	Break			2						
15 Jan. Mon	6:00-8:00pm	2	0.5	1	Children's Ground	Music engagement: an invited band from Jabiru Talked with 7 kids (4 recorded) and 4 parents (2 recorded) and staff. Photos, videos, recordings and notes Leon was with me for a short while. Band from Jabiru. Engage Indigenous heros/elites.	3	11	3	17
16 Jan. Tue	11:00-12:00am	1	0.5	0.5	YMCA	RMP/Spin Talked with all 2 kids but no recording, staff, phot, video and notes Not good attendance		2	2	4
	2:00-4:00pm	2		1	AS Library	Geeks in Residence; Craft/Find Wally Talked with 2 kids and two parents, no recordings, but phot and videos, notes Lost my phone and got back dramatically				0
17 Jan. Wed	10:00-11:15am	1.25	0.5	0.5	YORET Building	Sport & BBQ; Engage with Utopia YP Talked with 2 kids, staff. And Andy (recorded) from the Utopia. Photos, videos, recording and notes. At least four organizations engaged in this activity	15	15	4	34
	11:20-12:00pm	0.7		0.5	Tan. Brown St.	STEAM into Alice; Mural Painting and Healthy Cooking Talked with 3 kids (1 recorded) and staff in cooking. Photos, videos, recordings and notes. Leon was with me for a short while				0
	12:05-1:00pm	1		0.5	AS Library	Engineering Challenge Talked with five kids (3 recorded) and two parents (1 recorded), staff, photos, recording and notes Highly booked 17 kids. Not innovation grant project. Different groups (noo-Indigenous)				0
18 Jan. Thu	8:00-9:00pm	1	0.5	0.5	Meeting Place	A hub; Skate, Paint and Projections Talked with 6 kids but no recordings. Talked with staff and volunteer (recorded), photos, videos, recordings and notes	3	3	1	7
19 Jan. Fri	2:00-3:30pm	1.5	0.5	0.5	MIFANT	Music workshop Talked with 2 kids and two staff (recorded one kid), photos, videos, recordings, notes revisit, rapping kid	4	5	3	12
20 Jan. Sat	8:00-9:30pm	1.5	0.5	1	Tan. Brown St.	Disco and BBQ talked with 8 kids, (4 recorded), with staff too. Photos, videos, recordings and notes revisit, attendance is lower than expected	9	4		13
21 Jan. Sun	Break			2						

22 Jan. Mon	3:00- 4:00pm	1	0.5	0.5	AYSASS	Film making and Drop in Day talked with 5 kids (3 recorded), staff (notes); photo, and recordings, notes revisit, not innovation grant	4	1		5
23 Jan. Tue	2:30- 4:00pm	1.5	0.5	0.5	AS Library	Geeks in Residence; Weaving into summer talked with a Geek (CAYLUS) and one kid (did not want to talk to the recorder) Welcome by kids, providing access to computer and internet		2		2
24 Jan. Wed	10:30- 12:30p m	2	0.5	1	Tan. Brown St.	STEAM into Alice; Mural Painting and Healthy Cooking talked briefly with 2 kids; 2 instructors and 2 Tan. staff, two carers brought children in different activities with the other day when I was here		7		7
	1:30- 3:00pm	1.5	0.3	1	GYCC	Drumzone; and Arts & Crafts talked with 4 kids, one recorded. Instructors of RA, photos. Very engaged but RA seems bit frustrated as fewer kids attended than expected	1	17		18
25 Jan. Thu	7:30- 8:00pm	0.5	0.5	0.25	Children's Ground	Brief talk with program coordinator. The second night was the best night. Cancelled because of sorry business of participants				
	8:10- 8:25pm	0.25	0.3	0.25	Town Pool	GYCC's Splash Party took some photos outside of pool as too late to get in. Not innovation project, but warmly welcome. Not just swimming water play, but also footy		3		3
Total	58.05	31.45	9.6	17			44	91	17	152