



media release



BoysTown

9 July 2010

## Breaking the unemployment cycle for Indigenous youth

**This NAIDOC Week (4-11 July) BoysTown research reveals their supported employment programs are helping Indigenous people break the unemployment cycle.**

BoysTown Chief Executive Officer Tracy Adams said the barriers that keep young Indigenous people from employment like poverty and social disadvantage can be effectively reduced through social enterprises.

“Our social enterprises provide disadvantaged, young people with a transitional period of paid work, combined with supervision, coaching and mentoring to help them make a successful transition to mainstream employment,” she said.

“Most importantly, young people participating in our enterprises are also supported by counselling and personal development programs that focus on key issues such as anger, drugs and alcohol, relationships, and literacy and numeracy.

“The combination of practical work skills and counselling is designed to reduce social disadvantage and is making a real difference in many young people’s lives.”

BoysTown and Griffith University are collaborating on an Australian Research Council Linkage Project entitled ‘Reconnecting Disaffected Youth Through Successful Transition to Work’ to measure how big a difference.

“Forty-nine per cent of Indigenous clients had anger management problems when they came to BoysTown - this decreased to 35 per cent midway through their time, and then further decreased to 21 per cent on exit,” Ms Adams said.

“Prior to starting in our programs 30 per cent of the Indigenous young people had spent time in juvenile or adult detention. After spending time with us, just six per cent returned to the justice system.

“Perhaps the most encouraging outcome is that 81 per cent of Indigenous young people left BoysTown with defined aspirations and goals. When they first joined us it was 51 per cent.”

Ms Adams said these findings demonstrate there are ways to break the unemployment cycle experienced by some Indigenous Australians.

“It is possible for all Australians to aspire to a happy and prosperous future,” she said. “What’s important is to look at the causes of unemployment and create solutions that mean sustainable change is made possible.”

BoysTown helps disadvantaged children and young people aged to 25 years connect with the community and build the skills and confidence to make a fresh start in life. Services include counselling, employment, education and training, youth work, social development and life skills. Visit [boystown.com.au](http://boystown.com.au) for more information.

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