



BoysTown

Fresh start.  
New hope.

## BoysTown Social Enterprises in Western Sydney

BoysTown operates social enterprises in Blacktown and Campbelltown where socially excluded young people experience a real-life work environment to gain vocational skills and improve their employment opportunities. The barriers faced by socially excluded young people are multi-faceted. BoysTown utilises an integrated intervention model, which consists of the following components:

- Paid employment
- On-the-job experiential learning of vocational, literacy and numeracy skills
- Accredited training to obtain recognised qualifications, and
- Case management and group workshops to address personal barriers to employment.

In Western Sydney, BoysTown currently employs up to 60 young people at any one time. Our social enterprises operate in social housing areas and include four horticultural enterprise crews, six green streets maintenance crews, one graffiti removal crew, and one asset maintenance crew. Young people are employed in these projects for between three to six months. The majority of these social enterprises are delivered in collaboration with the NSW State Government.

BoysTown is committed to ensuring that all services are evidence-based and effectively address client needs. A current Australian Research Council project involving BoysTown and Griffith University\* has revealed that of the young people in BoysTown's Western Sydney social enterprises:

- 84% have never had a fulltime job
- 49% come from a home where the main caregiver has never worked
- 42% left school prior to completing Year 10
- 47% live in a single-parent household, and
- 14% had been in juvenile or adult detention prior to BoysTown.

### Social and Employment Outcomes

The young people in BoysTown's Western Sydney social enterprises have shown improvements across a range of personal developments areas such as anti-social and offending behaviours, anger management, substance abuse and future aspirations (please see figure below).

Social Outcomes	Entry	Exit
Not offending	44%	83%
Controlling substance abuse	46%	87%
Effective anger management strategies	41%	87%
Functional literacy for work	51%	79%
Functional numeracy for work	39%	61%
Positive decision-making	16%	63%
Building self esteem	27%	84%
Actively working towards goals	28%	85%

In addition to these social outcomes, participants in BoysTown's social enterprises achieve a high level of employment outcomes:

- 70% obtained employment immediately after exiting the social enterprise
- 66% remained in employment after 13 weeks, and
- 58% remained in employment after six months.

### NSW Government Response

We recommend that the NSW Government maintains and extends BoysTown's current contracts and provides additional opportunities for social enterprises to deliver required goods and services. This will promote employment for disadvantaged young people and reduce anti-social behaviour.

\* The full report on the three-year research project will be completed in 2011 and will be made available to Ministers.

