

Glebe Pathways Project

**Evaluation of program design and outcomes
October 2009 – April 2011**

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Sydney in collaboration with the members of the Glebe Pathways Forum**

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¹ In April 2011, the NSW Department of Education and Training was incorporated within the newly created NSW Department of Education and Communities. Since this evaluation pertains to the period before this change, the former name is used throughout this document.

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- Sydney Secondary College
- NSW Department of Education and Training (DET)
- Faculty of Education & Social Work, The University of Sydney
- Save the Children
- Big Picture Education Australia
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- Glebe School Community Centre
- Glebe Community Development Project
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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of evaluation

This evaluation of the Glebe Pathways Project program design and outcomes was conducted in the middle of 2011. The information reported covers the period up to the end of Term 1, 2011, which represents the midway point in the three-year funding period. The evaluation was conducted by the Glebe Pathways Project Forum composed of members of the broad-based collaboration that initiated and operates the Project. The structure of the evaluation draws upon a modified version of the *Learning Choices Self-Assessment Tool* [<http://www.learningchoices.org.au/assessmenttool/>] developed by the Dusseldorp Skills Forum [<http://www.dsf.org.au/>].

1.2 Key findings

Since its creation in Term 4 2009, the Glebe Pathways Project has demonstrated that young people who disengage from schooling have the capacity to re-engage in learning. Using individualised programs that are responsive to students' needs, the Pathways Project has supported 18 young people to re-engage with a learning pathway. This is equivalent to 95% of total enrolments. As well as those who are continue to be enrolled in the Project:

- Four completed their School Certificate in 2010. Three achieved Life Skills Outcomes.
- Two transferred to other NSW DET schools
- Five pursued TAFE options
- One was successful in gaining work

Prior to enrolment in the Project, all students attended school less than 35% of the time and some had not attended school for extended periods of time. During Term 1 in 2011:

- 78% improved their attendance rates to over 50%
- 50% improved their attendance rates to over 65%
- 28% improved their attendance rates to over 70%

Prior to enrolment in the Project, more than 60% of students had received more than one short suspension, which usually relates to either continued disobedience or aggressive behaviour.

More than 35% had received more than one long suspension which usually relates to physical violence; use or possession of a prohibited weapon, firearm or knife, possession; supply or use of a suspected illegal substance; or serious criminal behaviour related to the school. Since enrolling in the Pathways Project, only 10% of students have been suspended.

The golden moment for me was when a previously completely disengaged 14 year old boy actually phoned his mother from the classroom to tell her he was at school 'doing his work.' That was the glimmer of light for him that he could succeed.

*Jan Flanagan
School Learning Support Officer*

The Glebe Pathways Project demonstrates the capacity of a broad-based collaboration to address the needs of marginalised young people. While the rhetoric of partnership incorporates cooperation and collaboration, and indeed these principles inform the operationalisation of the Project, the establishment and day-to-day running of the learning program has relied upon a small number of individuals taking responsibility for making decisions and carrying them out. Key players were

required to accommodate the tasks associated with running the learning program into their existing job descriptions. The College Principal of Sydney Secondary College and the Coordinator of Glebe Youth Service have provided crucial support by demonstrating a strong commitment to the program. However, the voluntary nature of the partnership means that participation is discretionary, and not guaranteed in the event of change-over in personnel. The long-term sustainability of the program requires ongoing targeted funding for young people not adequately served by existing provision, and adequate funding to support the employment of teachers and leaders with specific responsibility for administering and managing the Project.

The young people who enrol in the program experience many personal hardships, and most are disaffected from schooling. The complexities of the students' lives intensifies the demands on adults and organisations associated with the program but, for the most part, the students welcome the 'second-chance' opportunity provided by Glebe Pathways.

Assembling a new learning program involves the creation of new practices and relationships. Formal learning processes, both mainstream and alternative forms, do not evolve naturally; they require constant planning, attention and maintenance. These processes include the curriculum, teaching practices, leadership practices, organisational structures, social and welfare support systems, human resources, infrastructure, and communication processes.

In the case of Glebe, the assembly of a new learning program has been associated with the assembly of new relationships among the partners. Each partner has accepted responsibility for an aspect of the program:

- Sydney Secondary College and the Glebe Youth Service – day-to-day running of the program
- The University of Sydney – professional development of teachers
- The City of Sydney – communication among the partners
- Save the Children – community outreach by funding a worker dedicated to this role.

Community volunteers have been involved in a range of responsibilities including guiding governance, mentoring teachers and students and running the breakfast program.

The location of the Pathways Project within the Glebe Youth Service embedded it within an existing context that was familiar to the young people involved, and where they already engaged in informal learning with youth workers, mentors and community volunteers. In establishing a learning program within this context, the Pathways Collaborators adopted Picture Learning (Littky & Grabelle, 2004) because it incorporates many elements of informal learning. Most importantly, it starts with each young person's interests and draws upon their personal histories by mapping relationships and imagining future possibilities. Learning is situated within the past, present and future life experiences of each young person. This type of personalised learning demands different pedagogical and leadership practices. While it is sometimes possible to adopt curriculum designs that have been shown to work elsewhere, most settings require modifications to be made to designs to suit local conditions. Glebe is no exception, and the curriculum is being continually revised and adapted in this context.

When opportunities arise to create new curriculum offerings, designers tend to assume that different groups of young people have different capacities and potentials for success. Generally, when programs are designed for marginalised young people, their traits are generally conceptualised in deficit terms. The programs produced for them are likely to piece together a set of learning experiences aimed at managing the effects of these deficits, such as disruptive behaviour, that arise when adults and students work together in standard classrooms (Freebody, 2007).

The design brief at Glebe was not based upon a set of negative assumptions about what marginalised young people are capable of learning and achieving. A key element of the curriculum adopted at Glebe is ongoing professional learning for everyone involved in the learning program so that they might work together to provide clear and consistent messages about what is important and valued in the classroom space. Two important questions that adults involved in the program must continually address through their practice is (1) How to engage young people in sustained conversations about their learning; (2) How to give collective voice to a continuous and coherent narrative about each student's learning – their progress, current work and future direction.

Although this evaluation of the early stages of implementation of the Glebe Pathways Project includes the period of start-up when personnel were being inducted into an unfamiliar curriculum and procedures were being established through negotiation among multiple partners, the data presented here provides evidence of a turn-around experience for marginalised young people. The long term social and economic benefits for these young people and their communities of re-engaging in a learning pathway are immeasurable, and strongly justify ongoing funding of the Pathways Program. This program is filling a gap in educational provision for young people whose needs are not served by mainstream curriculum offerings.

2 Background to the Glebe Pathways Project

2.1 History of a learning program at the Glebe Youth Service

Since 2004, young people supported by the Glebe Youth Service who were not attending school or training and were not employed, have been encouraged to establish routines of study by attending a learning program during the day. This program has operated primarily in the GYS loft with access to the main building, including the kitchen. Initially, students enrolled in the Distance Education High School and attended the three days per week. They were assisted by volunteer tutors to complete packages of distance learning materials.

From 2004-8, the Year 10 Program as it was known, was managed by a Steering Committee composed of GYS Youth Workers, TAFE Outreach Coordinator, TAFE Adult Basic Education Head Teacher, DET Home School Liaison Officer, Aboriginal Student Liaison Officer, Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, OTEN Head Teachers, program teachers, Mentors and Volunteers.

All of the students have had extended periods of absence from school due to a combination of personal and family factors, experiences of alienation at school and their learning needs not being met.

The Year 10 program, received small amounts of funding from the Norman Catts Trust Committee. In her 2004 report to this committee, the coordinator of the program, Dr Dorothy Bottrell, observed:

Distance education is not an appropriate model of education for students in these circumstances, especially as several found the work even more difficult due to low levels of literacy and numeracy. However, the young people were adamant that school or TAFE were not viable options and the familiarity of the youth centre and staff made it the best option for them.

The Year 10 program continued until 2008 (see Hayes & Bottrell, 2009 for more information about this program).

I bumped into an old student of ours on Glebe Point Road the other day. I remember her as a fairly wild girl, good hearted but definitely at risk. I chatted to her for a bit and quickly realised she had developed a lot and was much more confident in herself. She has married, and she wants to do another TAFE course to increase her capacity. She asked to be remembered to the GYS staff and sent her love. Occasions like this are a great joy to people involved with the education program we run. I am very confident that there will many more such occasions now that the Pathways Project is in full swing.

Roelof Smilde, Community Volunteer & GYS Board Member

2.2 Establishment of the Glebe Pathway Project partnership

The Glebe Pathways Project started operating at Glebe Youth Service (GYS) in October 2009. It is a community-based collaboration between multiple community-based partners, including:

- Glebe Youth Service
- The NSW Department of Education and Training
- Sydney Secondary College
- Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney
- Big Picture Education Australia
- Save the Children
- City of Sydney

This collaboration attempts to address a question affecting many local communities, namely: Who is responsible for coordinating a strategy aimed at supporting young people and their families who are not attending school?

Crime levels are the lowest they have ever been.

The Project aims to reconnect local predominantly Indigenous marginalised young people with a successful learning pathway that may lead back to formal schooling, a traineeship or apprenticeship, employment or university. The program operates five days per week from 10am - 1pm for 14 young people aged 13-16. The program recognises the need to establish a structured and stable approach in which learners receive consistent and shared messages from adults about learning and working together.

Inspector Dave Harrison
Leichhardt Police
Community Safety Precinct
Committee Meeting 10 March, 2011

The Project was initiated at a time when there were regular reports from the Police and community members (and subsequent lobbying to Government) in relation to the spate of juvenile crime in Glebe. Police reported that the alleged offending profile at the time was young people who were not attending school. The main offences being committed were robbery and steal from motor vehicle.

Since the Pathways Project commenced rates for robbery and steal from motor vehicle have dropped by 60% and 70% respectively (NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics, 2010).

Personnel funded by DET include a full-time teacher, a part-time (0.5) teacher, and a full-time school learning support officer. Save the Children funds a full-time community outreach worker. In-kind support is provided by Glebe Youth Services (Coordinator and Educational Case Worker), University of Sydney (Associate Professor, Faculty of Education and Social Work), City of Sydney (Senior Project Co-ordinator - Safe City), Sydney Secondary College (College Principal, Aboriginal School Liaison Officer, Counsellor, Home School Liaison Officer and Chaplain), and a number of volunteers.

One of the key goals of the program is to provide individualised and integrated support to each young person that enables them to develop the habits, skills and knowledge for more sure-footed pathways to further learning, training and employment. Working on an interest project is the centre of the learning program.

2.3 Implementation of Big Picture Curriculum

Big Picture Education Australia [<http://www.bigpicture.org.au/>] aims to stimulate and support changes in Australian education by generating and sustaining innovative schools that work in tandem with their local communities. The Big Picture philosophy is grounded in educating one student at a time. This rigorous and highly personalised approach to education combines academic work with real world learning. It inverts the traditional education model by placing students, their passions and their interests, at the centre of the learning process. The Big Picture Education Australia curriculum design principles are comprehensive and resonate with other highly regarded curriculum designs, such as those developed by Priority Schools Program [<http://www.lowsesschools.nsw.edu.au/>], the Coalition of Essential Schools [<http://www.essentialschools.org/>] and the Stanford School Redesign Network [<http://www.srnleads.org/>].

3 Evaluation of the program design

3.1 Overview of program design

The Big Picture Education Australia distinguishers adopted by the Glebe Pathways Project are:

- Academic rigour
- Learning in the community
- Collaboration for learning
- Personalised: One student at a time
- Authentic assessment
- Learning in advisory
- Trust, respect and care
- Everyone's a leader
- Families are enrolled too...
- Diverse and enduring partnerships
- Creating futures
- Teachers and leaders are learners

At Pathways I go to school with my friends. The teachers are better because they make you feel like you are part of the school; they do one-to-one teaching instead of being lost in a whole classroom of kids.

Year 10 Student

A Big Picture curriculum utilises an intensive form of student-centred learning in which learning activities are shaped by students' interest-based projects. Industry and service-based learning is achieved through internships. Students participate in a wide range of excursions and a yearly school camp.

In December 2010, Glebe Pathways organised its first school camp to Glenworth Valley. This was a fantastic experience for students and staff. The natural environment and activity-filled three days provided a great atmosphere for everyone to deepen their relationships and have fun.

I was extremely impressed by the way the students participated in the challenging activities, such as rock climbing, mountain bike riding and quad biking. By coping so well with the unfamiliar environment and the tent accommodation they showed real maturity and a sense of responsibility.

The camp has made a lasting impression on the students and this year they have been speaking about it from the first day of school. They are, in fact, organising the camp themselves this year, researching possible locations and activities. They are phoning and e-mailing various camps to clarify details and dealing with budgeting constraints. Because different students want different things out of a camp the final stage will involve various student groups pitching their plan to the whole class to secure final go-ahead.

This project is a great example of the power of Big Picture real-world learning. Students are gaining skills across a whole range of learning areas by researching and planning something they are passionate about. The research will not just be written down on a piece of paper but will shape a stimulating 3-day camp experience of their own creation. Providing students with the opportunity to actualise their research and planning in this way is an extremely powerful learning experience for all involved.

Dr Gareth Jenkins, Outreach Support Worker, STC

3.2 Clarity of purpose

3.2.1 The Glebe Pathways Project has a clear and public statement of purpose, mission and means

To provide young people with access to high-quality educational activities that will assist them to re-engage with formal learning in a mainstream secondary school setting (7-10) or pursue other forms of training or employment.

3.2.2 The Glebe Pathways Project is clear about the population of young people it seeks to serve

The primary focus is young people in Years 8 and 9 who live in Glebe or are closely associated with the Glebe area and are not engaged in an education or training program. It also caters for young people in Year 10 who have disengaged and wish to complete the school certificate or equivalent courses. Young people in Year 7 may be considered in extraordinary circumstances however primary school students will not be accepted.

3.2.3 The Glebe Pathways Project design is informed by a sound base of evidence about the needs and interests of the young people it seeks to serve.

Applicants are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Young people with a recent history of serious violence are unlikely to be accepted into the program. Priority is given to those with a connection to the Glebe area/community. The majority of students (currently around 90%) are Indigenous but students from all cultural backgrounds may apply.

3.3 Connections

3.3.1 Connection with schools and other education/training programs

The majority of students in the program are transitioned from Sydney Secondary College Balmain or Leichhardt campuses. These are the local high schools for students in the Glebe area. There is also a strong historical link with the Sydney Institute of TAFE Ultimo, and in particular their Outreach centre. Students also have opportunity for training and work placement with a number of organisations including MG MY Gateway [<http://www.mygateway.org.au/>].

3.3.2 We share useful resources and programs with the local education and training community

The Glebe Pathways Project is primarily resourced and supported by through NSW Department of Education and Training, Sydney Secondary College Balmain Campus, and the Glebe Youth Service. It is also represented within the recently formed Alternative Education Provider's Network, which facilitates the sharing of information and resource with similar organisations.



I attended Glebe Pathways in 2010 for one year; during that time my goal was to get my year 10. I achieved my year 10 and the teachers helped me to continue a TAFE course of my choice...they were a great help

Carol Rabuatoka

Carol is a mentor to students. She volunteers her time two days a week.

3.3.3 We are working with the local education and training community on targeted strategies to meet the education and vocational training needs of all young people

In 2008, the withdrawal of funding support for the original Year 10 Program at the GYS was brought to the attention of members of the Glebe Community Development Program [http://www-faculty.edfac.usyd.edu.au/projects/glebe_cdp/], sponsored by the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Sydney. This group played a key role in facilitating the collaboration that led to the creation of the Project. It continues to monitor and support the program.

3.3.4 Links with other support services

Glebe Pathways has a Memoranda of Understanding with the Glebe Youth Service and Save the Children. The objective of this Memoranda of Understanding is to ensure that all parties involved are clear about the goals and responsibilities of the joint collaboration.

Key principals underlying this joint collaboration include:

- Providing young people who attend Glebe Pathways access to educational activities and an opportunity to re-engage with a mainstream secondary school setting (7-10).
- To ensure that all parties involved in the joint collaboration are aware of their rights and responsibilities for the duration of the project.



I have noticed the young people to be much more engaged during personal interactions

Jacqui Delmege Youth worker

3.3.5 There are productive meetings with support services

A weekly meeting of key personnel considers the welfare of each student and organises support services and referrals. Personnel involved in this Programs Individuals and Partnerships (PIPs) meeting include teaching and support staff, youth workers, the Sydney Secondary College Principal, the Home School Liaison Officer, Chaplain and the Aboriginal Student Liaison Officer.

Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO): the HSLO meets regularly with Community Services, Health, Housing, Justice, and various non-government agencies, when they are involved with a student who is referred to our program, or when we think the student may benefit from specific agency intervention. We try to involve these agencies wherever possible so that a variety of supports are in place. We can also include them in our Attendance Improvement Plans and Undertakings, which are admissible in court. This involvement ensures that there is accountability and that the student gets consistent support from all agencies involved.

Outreach Support Officer (OSO): the OSO meets regularly with health, mental health, justice, police, employment and training services as part of their student case-management responsibilities. Often the Support Officer is accompanying the young person when they are required to meet with police (in the event of an official 'caution'), attend Children's court for hearings or sentencing or meet with workers from Juvenile Justice. In this way a worker who is familiar with the attendance and in class behaviour of the student can directly support the young person in their dealings with the juvenile justice system. The Support Officer refers students to health and mental health services and provides assistance in transporting students to such appointments. The Support Officer links students with employers and training suppliers as well as providing written and verbal references to aid students' capacity to achieve employment. In accompanying the student to the above mentioned meetings the Outreach Support Officer aids the ability of the student to fulfil their obligations and ensures that the young person is presented in the best and most accurate light in such circumstances.

Glebe Pathways Forum: The Glebe Pathways Forum meets monthly and comprises a range of key stakeholders who work both directly and indirectly on the program including staff from DET, Save The Children, the School Chaplaincy program, University of Sydney, Glebe Youth Services and City of Sydney. Staff from other agencies attend as required and the group is responsible for documenting, monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the program.

3.4 Connection with Community

3.4.1 *Students are involved in local projects that aim at adding value to their community life, these include:*

Community film night: Pathways students were featured in a short film about the project that was screened at the Glebe Community Film Night. This film showed Pathways young people in a productive education setting enabling both the project and the young people involved to be presented to their own community in a positive light.

Koori Art Expressions: Pathways students worked with Aunty Kath Farrowell over an 8 week period to create an artwork around the theme of 'Unsung Heroes'. The finished artwork was selected for exhibition as part of Koori Art Expressions and the Australian Natural History Museum. The work has since been hung at DET Head Office, Sydney. Students attended the opening day.

Three of the Pathway students attended the premiere and Q&A of "Here I Am" at the Verona cinema in Paddington together with the college principal, a teacher and a parent. The girls sat through the entire film and asked the producer, director and actor a question each on the microphone in front of a room filled with adults.

The girls were confident as they had read the synopsis on the film and had written reflections, they had also been in contact with the crew via face book, a relationship had been formed using a platform that was accessible and familiar to them.

As their teacher I was very proud of them as they built up the courage and confidence to have their voice heard on the speaker by women they were inspired by and aspire to be like.

Caterina Di Girolamo, Teacher

Yarban (Invasion Day): Students were present at Yarban and took the opportunity to speak with members of the Sydney Swans and had conversations with Wayne Blair and Romaine Moreton (director/writers) about future careers in the film industry. In this way students demonstrated the ability to maintain community connections outside of school that they had made in the Pathways school program.

Early Childhood Reading: Pathways and Glebe Public School are discussing ways in which they can work more closely together. In term two times will be organised for Pathways students to go and read to the early childhood playgroups that run at the school on Tuesday and Wednesday morning. This adds capacity and diversity to such playgroups and provides Pathways students with a challenging activity that has the potential to further connect them with their local community.

Glebe Public School Garden: Pathways students will soon have the ability to participate in the Glebe Public school garden. A new season of planting will soon begin and Pathways students will be invited to come and mentor kindergarten students as they prepare garden beds and plant seedlings.

NAIDOC WEEK 2011: Students will attend the NAIDOC assembly at the Balmain and Leichardt Campuses. They are contributing artworks based on the theme of 'Change.'

3.4.2 Employers, training institutions and community organisations actively support the program, some examples include:

Employers

The Glebe Chamber of Commerce is an active supporter of the program.

Shadow days at Broadway shopping centre: Negotiations are continuing with Broadway Shopping Centre to offer Pathways students the ability to do shadow days at particular stores. Nicole Harries (Youth & Community Co-ordinator) has been supplied with an outline of preparations and supervisions that would guide each student through the Shadow Day process.

Sydney Motorcycle Wreckers: This business in Alexandria has advised students on the purchase and repair of damaged motorcycles. The manager of this business has agreed to allow students to visit the premises to observe motorcycle maintenance.

R C Hobbies: This shop on Parramatta Road, Leichhardt provides ongoing mentorship to students who were building a RC model car.

Save The Children: The NSW Partnerships manager for STC is actively working on business partnerships that could offer Pathways students business workplace experience through site visits and mentoring.

Training institutions: Sydney Business Education Partnerships is working with the Glebe Pathways Project on two sporting mentoring programs:

Sydney Swans: In 2010 (25th August) the Sydney Swans visited Glebe Pathways with three of their Aboriginal players: The players spoke of childhoods and their pathway to the elite sporting level. It was a thrill for the students to meet the players and to hear their stories. Negotiations are continuing with the Sydney Swans to create a more structured and ongoing mentoring program. A draft program has been created by Gareth Jenkins and Robert Jamison and this has been presented to Dennis Carroll, Player Welfare & Development Manager.

South Sydney Rugby League Mentoring Program: To prepare Indigenous school students to transition from school to fulltime employment by improving their self-esteem, employability skills, leadership qualities and knowledge of career or further education pathways. Upon completion of this program Indigenous young people will be placed in a job or gain entry into a pathway for further education.

Pre-apprenticeship Courses: Sydney Business Education Partnerships also support the Pathways Project by co-ordinating information about TAFE pre-apprenticeship courses. These are particularly suited to the age and academic attainment of many year 9 and 10 students.

The Yaama Dhiyaan Training Centre [<http://www.redfernwaterloo.com.au/yaama/training.html>]: Links with The Yaama Dhiyaan Training Centre in Redfern have been made with by number of students enrolling in their course after year 10 completion. Yaama Dhiyaan specialises in training unemployed Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who want a career in the hospitality industry.

TAFE: Strong links with TAFE have been facilitated by Careers Advisors: TAFE Outreach, Disability Services, and Adult Basic Education. In 2010 Pathways visited the Ultimo campus for an orientation session with Outreach staff and prospective students. For example, Lynn Koepl (Head Teacher/Consultant Intellectual Disabilities, Randwick College) has worked closely with the Project to ensure students receive co-ordinated information about the opportunities and processes of TAFE. The needs of Pathway's students have helped shape her most recent funding application which, if successful will provide a more individual mentoring approach to TAFE attendance.

Community organisations

Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP): provides one scholarship for a Pathways student to attend a school holiday acting workshop free of charge. This is an opportunity that will continue to be open for our students.

Griffin Theatre: Griffin Theatre provided Pathways with complimentary tickets for all students to attend the play 'Silent Disco' in term two 2011.

Maritime Museum: Students participated in TAFE outreach program for 6 weeks where they learnt carpentry skills. Pathways students will again have the opportunity to attend a 10 week training program with the Maritime Museum (details to come). There is also the possibility for Pathways students doing individual projects in the Sydney Heritage Fleet ship yard as well as learning to sail the tall ship the James Craig.

National Centre for Indigenous Excellence (NCIE): Students participated in a 4 month fitness training program at NCIE and continue to attend on a weekly basis.

South Sydney Youth Services (Weave Art Centre): One student has been attending the Weave Art Centre two days a week to develop his passion for art production. He will exhibit his work in the 2011 at the Mad Pride exhibition held at Weave's CarriageWorks exhibition space.

Brain and Mind Institute (University of Sydney): Pathways students participate in a program of physical and psychological assessment coupled with sessions of cardio-boxing at Camperdown Fitness Centre. The program aims to ascertain through base-line and follow-up measures if increases in fitness levels will improve student's psychological outlook.

Circus skills: A ten week in-house program to learn circus skills with an Indigenous performer and a one-day workshop at Aerialize.

TAFE Outreach Petersham: Students each built a toolbox from wood and worked, as a team, on the restoration of a small boat.

National Parks and Wildlife: Students have attended two excursions to the Royal National Park. Both involved guided bushwalks to different geographical environments. i.e. bushland and beach. Fauna and flora were identified and students extended their vocabulary around these areas.

Message Sticks Festival 2011: Students researched each film before attending screenings and met with Indigenous directors, producers and actors. They interviewed one local actor at length.

3.4.3 Program has close links with local governments

The program has strong links to the City of Sydney Council. The City of Sydney chairs and provides secretariat support to monthly meetings of the key stakeholders on the Glebe Pathways Forum and provides broader administrative support to the program. The City of Sydney, in addition funds a project worker to develop multi-media projects with the students on the program. The City also provides funding for students to access health and fitness programs at the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence at nearby Redfern since many of the students are Aboriginal. The City similarly plays an active role in promoting and advocating for the program to the wider community through its role on the Core Alternative Education Provider's Group which aims to resource the fifteen Alternative Education Providers in the Inner West / Inner City / Inner East through the development of good practice and in establishing a formal alliance of AEPs. The City moreover funds recreation programs and a case worker position at Glebe Youth Services, where the program is located, with these services also available to students at the Pathways Program.

On the last Friday in May since only 2007, Indigenous Veterans have been recognised for serving in the Australian Military since the Boer War. Students from Glebe Pathways were invited to attend this year's service at The Pool of Reflection in Hyde Park. Elder David Williams who MC'd the morning, Governor Marie Bashir and NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell were in attendance; as were many other notable Elders.

Our students discovered some relatives they knew who had served in the First and Second World Wars and learned of the experiences of male and female service personnel. At the conclusion of the service, they met with Elders and cultural entertainers to share aspirations and participate in cultural activities.

We were so proud of our students' for attending and the maturity and respect exhibited by them. It was a pleasure to accompany our students to such an important event.

Janelle Scott, Teacher

The Pathway's Forum meets approximately every six weeks. It provides a mechanism by which partners, personnel and community members collaborate and communicate. The Forum is chaired by John Maynard, the City of Sydney's Senior Project Co-ordinator - Safe City.

3.5 Who has a say about the program

3.5.1 The program has an active student body/community

On a daily basis, students are actively involved in planning and carrying out learning activities. Students also plan excursions, including suggesting sites, planning routes and estimating costs.

Parents are in regular contact through home visits, by telephone and when meetings occur to discuss any concerns and more importantly, to showcase student work through Exhibitions. These are an adaptation of a Big Picture idea that provides opportunities for students to exhibit their work for

parents and/or significant others as a way of sharing their knowledge and taking stock of development. It also provides an opportunity for families to participate in the learning program.

3.5.2 Co-ordinator/teacher meets on a regular basis with the student body

The core organising mechanism of a Big Picture Education curriculum is the Advisory Group. This group is facilitated by the Advisory teacher who assists students to develop an Individual Learning Plan. These plans document the learning activities undertaken by each student; foremost among these are interest projects. Visual diaries and planners record plans, progress and comments from teachers and students. It is generally accepted that conventional methods of consulting young people are not particularly effective with our target client group. Informal settings, such as one of the many unstructured or semi-structured group activities offered by GYS, provide a forum for a young person or groups of young people to talk about how things are going for them. This, combined with strategic questioning from a Youth or Social Worker, will often yield valuable information regarding student morale and their satisfaction with the program. It is clear to GYS staff that the level of student self-esteem and satisfaction with Pathways program is increasing.

In the early stages comments from young people regarding their thoughts and feeling around the program were frequently derisive and sometimes openly hostile. This type of response is now almost non-existent. Many young people speak with pride and excitement about Pathways. Most indicate a high level of personal satisfaction and all signs indicate that morale is presently very high. This is verified by the comments made in the student diaries by the various personnel who support students in the classroom. These comments provide valuable, immediate feed-back.

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Keiran Kevans, Coordinator, Glebe Youth Service

Evidence of improved student morale and satisfaction is reflected in more consistent attendance patterns, and fewer suspensions and 'incident reports.'

Processes are being developed to conduct exit interviews so that student feedback may be more extensively used to improve the program. Informal contact has been maintained with a small number of students.

3.6 Students' interests and welfare taken into account

In addition to the coordination of support services through a weekly meeting, the outreach worker is available to support student attendance by collecting them from home, accompanying them to training and employment interviews, to court and to other services such as medical appointments. Referrals

are made to the Youthblock nurse or psychologist who attends GYS from 12-5pm on Wednesday afternoons. A DET approved counsellor accesses case histories for all entering students and provides support, assessment and reports as required. The Project also accesses the services of a female Indigenous psychologist who visits when necessary to support Indigenous female students. The advantage of this connection is that she is available in the school holidays and out of school hours. Teachers and support staff are actively searching for an Indigenous male to fulfil a similar role. 'Gamarada', a local male Indigenous group, has been approached to provide this support. The college Chaplain is also a trusted adult that young males turn too for advice and support.

3.6.1 Interviews are conducted prior to commencement of program to find out their goals and interests

All students and their parents/caregivers meet with staff prior to enrolment to discuss their suitability for the program and their interests. An effort is made to locate relevant information about each student prior to the interview and to undertake a risk assessment where needed.

3.6.2 There is an agreed learning plan for each student with agreed goals and timeframe

An individual transition/learning plan is developed for each young person. It is a goal of the Project to involve parents or carers or mentors in the formation and development of this plan.

The curriculum emphasises literacy, numeracy and personal development and includes options such as:

- Learning support programs
- Personalised Projects
- School Certificate
- Transition to work programs

3.6.3 There are procedures in place to maintain confidentiality/privacy in regard to students

NSW DET procedures in relation to privacy are adhered to. Records retained on-site are kept in a locked room or stored securely in the Youth Service office. Student files are stored at the Balmain campus. School counsellor files are held by the District Guidance Officer for DET. Protocols are being developed for the sharing of information with ancillary services such as Youthblock Health and Resource Service.

I'm very happy with pathways. My son has been to lots of schools but none treated him with the respect that he gets at Glebe. I've seen a big change in him since he started – mood changes. He used to come home from school angry and fight with his sister. He's calm now, he's settled – happier.

Parent of student who had not been attending school

Care is taken not to identify individual students during meetings of the Pathways Forum or when members of the community are in attendance.

3.6.4 There is an agreed learning plan for each student with agreed goals and timeframe

Each student has an individualised learning plan, which is completed by the learner and advisor. This is an opportunity for students to explore their interests and take ownership of the learning goals.

Most of the works processes are completed in a visual arts process diary (VAPD) and a digital component where students keep all their photos and video diaries.

Once a semester there is an exhibition held where the students are encouraged to invite significant people in their lives along to view a presentation of their work and to share what they have learnt.

3.6.5 Regular Individual Learning Plan meetings are held

Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are held at the beginning of each school term. They are attended by a student, a teacher and a significant adult that the student chooses to invite. The initial meeting is designed for students to map out their learning goals in relation to an interest project. The ILP is an evolving document that is re-visited and constantly in creation adapting to the students learning needs and goals.



I feel safe talking to the staff. The fact that they stopped and spoke to me in the street on the weekend was a big deal. All the staff are approachable and are a big support to me as well as my son.

Parent



3.6.6 There is a shared understanding among staff and students of the expectations of behaviour, which is in a written form and signed off by all parties

The Memoranda of Understanding between the Glebe Youth Service, Save the Children and Glebe Pathways (administered by Sydney Secondary College) provides for the following shared understanding in relation to student supervision and behaviour management:

Glebe Pathways and Glebe Youth Service will adhere to a centre based staffing of a minimum of one full-time classroom teacher, one part-time classroom teacher and a fulltime School Learning Support officer and one part time Save the Children fund staff member will attend. A minimum of two staff members will be present at the centre at any time when the Glebe Pathways is in operation. Staff will be located across the centre to monitor the different areas of the facility when general class times are running. The Glebe Pathways will play the lead role in the coordination of the program and both organisations will work together to on the development of this program creating structured activities, minimizing the space for young people to use thereby making the area easier to monitor, and to encourage skill development and educational activities for the participants.

Each organization is responsible for the supervision of participants.

Staff from both organisations must agree to the Critical Incident Reporting procedures

Glebe Pathways, Save the Children and Glebe Youth Service will develop and communicate any issues that may require further action at regular weekly staff meetings with Glebe Youth Service. (PIPS) With important matters such as issues with participants or their parents and guardians, wherever possible the staff member responsible will consult with the Manager – Glebe Youth Service Pathways and the College Principal, Sydney Secondary College.

For any matters that may require an urgent decision such as serious injury, child protection incident etc., or for any ongoing operational matters, staff present will direct the issue to the Manager – Glebe Youth Services who will resolve the issue in accordance with existing policies and procedures in negotiation with College Principal. The issues will be reported back on as soon as possible. If there are no existing policies and procedures in place at this time, the decision will be made in consultation with Staff involved and the Managers from both organisations. If this is not possible and the decision is made by only one organisation, the other will be notified at the earliest possible time, so that a consensus can be reached and future decisions can be made.

3.6.7 Staff processes and procedures are in place to assist in student attendance

Individual management plans are developed for students identified as attending poorly. This process involves Pathways staff, the HSLO, parents and the student. The resulting strategies include staff phoning the student's house daily and the Outreach worker visiting homes to collect students if they have missed two consecutive days.

3.7 Parent involvement

There is an active community of parents and friends involved in the Glebe Pathways Project

Parents are actively involved in the Project. They are invited to attend learning plan meetings and exhibitions. In addition, parents are regularly consulted by phone and visited in their homes. Many of the parents have visited the Pathways classroom and more still have attended GYS's drop-in sessions where they have contact with the Outreach worker.



It's getting the kids to school and learning something: I've really noticed a change in them.

Parent of three children who have attended the program



3.8 Teacher Involvement

Teaching staff meet regularly to discuss issues around the program and contribute to program design and delivery

The key mechanism for teacher professional development and program design and delivery is a weekly meeting of the curriculum design team facilitated by A/Professor Deb Hayes (University of Sydney), Doreen Wilson (College Principal), Ann King (former principal, Ashfield Boys High School) and Margaret Wheeler (former principal Pittwater High School).

Teaching and support staff regularly utilise processes for debriefing and for communicating with each other about individual student learning plans.

Teaching and support staff have attended professional learning opportunities provided by Sydney Secondary College and Big Picture Education Australia.

3.9 Glebe Pathways Project Forum

The Forum is the main mechanism by which the partners communicate and collaborate with each other. Members have an appropriate mix of community and business skills. Members include:

- Aboriginal Curriculum Coordinator, NSW DET
- Academic, Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney
- Chaplain, Sydney Secondary College
- Community representatives
- Coordinator, Glebe Youth Services
- Educational Case Worker Glebe Youth Services
- Home School Liaison Officer, NSW DET
- College Principal, Sydney Secondary College or delegate
- Senior Project Co-ordinator - Safe City, City of Sydney
- Teachers and the school learning support officer
- Outreach Worker, Save the Children

The Forum actively contributes to the sustainability and directions of the program. For example, Forum members collaborated on the preparation of this evaluation of the Project.

The various representatives on the forum have a range of tertiary undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications in education, science, psychology, visual arts, and social work as well as small business experience.

3.10 Student Recruitment

3.10.1 *The management of the program has a sound knowledge of the sources for referrals*

Referrals are accepted from the Aboriginal Student Liaison Officer, Home School Liaison Officers, School Counsellor and the Education Case Worker, Glebe Youth Services.

3.10.2 *There is an agreed referral process which is carried out*

Prospective students are referred by Sydney Secondary College Campus Principals or individuals may contact Pathways Project personnel directly to discuss their enrolment. Student details are recorded and provided to the Home School Liaison Officer who conducts a preliminary assessment of the application. Where necessary, referrals are reviewed by Sydney Region Student Services personnel to ensure appropriate placement and meet DET policy requirements. The Sydney Secondary College Principal, School Counsellor and Pathways teaching staff conduct an intake meeting with the student and their parent/guardian to make a final assessment of the match between the young person's needs and the Project.

It was a delight to see students return to their former mainstream schools during the recent NAIDOC celebrations to exhibit their film and talk about Glebe Pathways. They were proud and it showed. Staff who had last seen them as suspended, angry and disillusioned all commented on the bright, positive and enthusiastic young people now before them.

Doreen Wilson
College Principal

3.10.3 *The profile of students in the program is consistent with the program's mission and purpose*

The Program has a capacity of 14 young people. Enrolment is at capacity. All students enrolled live or have a strong connection with the Glebe area. All are long term non-attendees in mainstream settings or are re-entering to complete their school certificate.

3.11 Post Program

3.11.1 *Each student is regularly tracked to identify their post program destinations and general wellbeing*

The Outreach Support Officer continues to case-manage students after they complete Year 10 with the program (except in instances where students are already 17). This case-management allows for the continued support necessary to maintain student's well being and to maintain or open new pathways into further education and training. It also allows student destinations to be tracked.

Where students are unwilling to engage with the OSO or have turned 17 they have case-management by Glebe Youth Service youth workers made available to them.

3.11.2 *All data on the post-program destinations of students are reviewed and used to improve the program design*

The challenges faced by Pathways students in successfully transitioning to further education in 2010 were noted and used to improve the program. This has resulted in changes to the program in 2011, these include: gaining increased access to the careers advisor from the Balmain campus of Sydney Secondary College, who will make regular visits to the program, an increased emphasis on Pathways students visiting TAFE as early as Term 1 2011 and an increased emphasis on participation in TAFE pre-apprenticeship courses.

3.12 Support post program

3.12.1 *An agreed exit plan is in place for each student relating to further education, training or employment*

A young person exits the Pathways Program if:

- they have successfully transitioned to an appropriate learning or training environment
- they do not fulfil their obligations set out in their agreed transition plan
- they do not attend class or their internship place regularly

3.12.2 *Assistance and advice is provided to students requiring additional post-program support*

As previously stated, the Outreach worker is available to provide post-program support, particularly until young people turn 17 year of age, after which time this support will be provided by the GYS case management staff.

4 Bibliography

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5 Outcomes

PATHWAYS PROJECT MEASURABLES															
	Date Enrolled	Schools Attended	Status	National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (1→10). Band 5 is the minimum standard for Year 7 and Band 6 is the minimum standard for Year 9.						School Certificate Achievement	Attendance			Suspensions	
				7			9				Before GP	At GP		Before Pathways	During
				Reading	Writing	Numeracy	Reading	Writing	Numeracy			% whole 2010	Term 1 2011 %		
1.	100302	6	9							Completing full SC	School attendance less than 35%	52.8	57.1	4 short, 1 long	Nil
2.	100906	6	9							Completing full SC		87.7	61.9	None	Nil
3.	110301	4	10				8	8	8	Completing full SC			71.4	None	Nil
4.	101118	4+	10				5	8	7	Completing full SC		98.5	57.1	None	Nil
5.	091112	7	10	6	5	5				Completing full SC		53.3	40.5	None	Nil
6.	101122	3	9	Withdrawn						Completing full SC		57.4	47.6	2 short	Nil
7.	100910	3+	9							Completing full SC		93.8	88.1	2 short, 2 long	Nil
8.	091021	5	10	>4	4	5	-	-	6	Completing SC life Skills		67.7-	69	4 short	Nil
9.	101018	7	10	4	6	5				Completing full SC		90.8	33.3	None	Nil
10.	100917	4+	10	6	6	8	8	6	7	Completing full SC		45.1	71.4	2 Short, 2 long	Nil
11.	101112	10+	9	5	6	Absent				Completing Life skills SC		52	59.5	4 short, 2 long	Nil
12.	090303	4	→ TAFE				Absent			Completed Life Skills SC			65	2 short	Nil
13.	091105	4	→ TAFE				Absent			Completed Life Skills SC			65	4 short	Nil
14.	091026	3+	→ TAFE							Completed Life Skills SC			70	4 short , 2 long	2 short, 1 long
15.	091105	7+	→ TAFE							Completed SC				None	Nil
16.	091028	5+	→ TAFE	SNAP exams						Achieved Grade C in all subjects				4 short, 2 long	Nil
				P	P	E									
17.	091029	9+	9 → Edgeware SSP	4	>4	4				Completing full SC				4 short	1 short, 1 long
18.	100730	17	→ work 2011							Achieved Grade C/D				None	Nil
19.	091029	10	→ James Cook 2011				Absent		6	Completing Life Skills SC				2 short, 2 long	Nil

