



Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review

Associate Professor Lucas Walsh and Dr Rosalyn Black



ARACY

Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth
Collaboration • Evidence • Prevention

A What Works for Kids Evidence Review



Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth
Collaboration • Evidence • Prevention



Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review.

Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth
© ARACY 2015

The Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) owns copyright of all material in this report. You may reproduce this material in unaltered form only (acknowledging the source) for your personal, non-commercial use or use within your organisation. Commercial use of material in this report is prohibited. Except as permitted above you must not copy, adapt, publish, distribute or commercialise any material contained in this publication without ARACY's permission.

ISBN: 978-1-76028-313-1

Disclaimer

This report has been prepared for the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme (NYARS) and is intended to provide background research and other information as a basis for discussion. The views expressed in the report are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Australian Government, State and Territory Governments or the Education Council.

NYARS was established in 1985 as a cooperative funding arrangement between federal, state and territory governments to facilitate nationally based research into current social, political and economic factors affecting young people. NYARS operates under the auspices of the Education Council (formerly Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood).

Suggested citation

Walsh, L., & Black, R. (2015). *Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review*. Report prepared for the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth. Canberra: ARACY.

Contact us

Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth
PO Box 5070
BRADDON ACT 2612
t (02) 6248 2400 f (02) 6248 8764
enquiries@aracy.org.au w aracy.org.au
 @ARACYAustralia

ABN 68 100 902 921

Acknowledgements

This *What works for kids evidence review* was authored by Associate Professor Lucas Walsh and Dr Rosalyn Black from the Faculty of Education at Monash University. The authors wish to acknowledge the significant and high quality work done by the research assistant on this project, Melissa Wolfe. Thanks also to Emma Rujevic for her editorial feedback.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Table of Contents	3
Executive summary	5
Purpose of this review	5
Structure of this review	6
Recommendations.....	6
Introduction	8
Defining volunteering	9
<i>Related concepts: social engagement, social participation</i>	9
<i>Is volunteering always voluntary?</i>	9
<i>Cultural diversity and understandings of volunteering</i>	10
<i>Emerging forms and understandings</i>	10
Defining children and young people.....	11
Prevalence of youth volunteering in Australia	11
<i>Youth volunteering rates</i>	14
<i>Schooling and education</i>	15
<i>Gender</i>	16
<i>Geographical location</i>	16
<i>Cultural background</i>	17
Economic and social impacts of youth volunteering	18
Motivations and benefits of volunteering amongst young people	18
Estimated current direct economic contribution of youth volunteering.....	19
Estimated impact of youth volunteering on employability, youth participation rates and skill acquisition	20
Social impact of youth volunteering.....	21
Evidence review – barriers, facilitators and effective practice	23
Barriers to volunteering amongst young people.....	23
Facilitators of volunteering by young people.....	26
<i>Role of schools</i>	26
<i>Leveraging and facilitating social connections</i>	27
Mandating young people’s volunteering.....	28
Key features of policy settings.....	30
1. <i>Federal government policy</i>	31
2. <i>State and territory government policy</i>	31
3. <i>Schools</i>	32
4. <i>Local governments</i>	33
5. <i>Community sector</i>	33
6. <i>Individuals and individual institutions</i>	35
Enabling youth-led activity	36
Features of best practice models	37
<i>Organisations need to be ‘ready’ for young people</i>	39
<i>Communicating with young people</i>	40

<i>Streamlined recruitment processes</i>	40
<i>Mentoring and training</i>	40
<i>Incentives can work</i>	41
<i>Approaches need to be relevant and appropriate to the context and inclusive</i>	41
<i>Create meaningful volunteer roles for young people</i>	42
<i>Make the volunteering activity appealing</i>	42
<i>Measuring success in volunteering</i>	43
References	45

Executive summary

The National Youth Affairs Research Scheme commissioned the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) and researchers Associate Professor Lucas Walsh and Rosalyn Black to conduct research on youth volunteering in Australia. This report is a survey of the evidence on the extent and impact of young people's volunteering and social participation in Australia. It also provides an analysis of effective interventions and strategies for strengthening volunteering among young people aged 12 to 25.

The literature shows that young people in Australia do engage in volunteering, both in formal and informal contexts. The drivers of young people's volunteering activity are varied, and are influenced by 'top-down' signals from policies and programmes, as well as 'bottom-up' approaches motivated by community needs and the desire of many young people to participate, contribute to their communities and gain valuable skills and experiences. Benefits of volunteering for young people are both personal and social, and include strengthening social relationships, developing skills, enhancing career prospects, contributing to community and 'making a difference'.

Young people's motivations and dispositions to volunteer appear to be linked to a range of factors, including socioeconomic circumstances, education, gender, location, and cultural identification.

Echoing previous research, this review notes the importance of better understanding the lived experience and motivations of young people to volunteer. The contributions made by young volunteers are of great potential value, but organisations need to understand the individual functional motives and needs of volunteers in order to ensure volunteering is a positive experience for both parties. This includes engaging with contemporary technologies of social media, systems of recognition and, importantly, allowing for and supporting youth-led projects. Young volunteers are not a homogenous group; they should be able to achieve personal goals through their participation in voluntary activities.

The authors argue that current measures of youth volunteering do not capture the rich and varied ways that young people volunteer, such as through social enterprises and other forms of social participation. Importantly, many young people do not identify with the term 'volunteer' but research suggests that they will engage in volunteering if asked. Once they become involved in volunteer activity, they have a more positive perspective of volunteering. There are also questions around which young people are able to not just access volunteering opportunities but sustain participation in volunteering.

With regards to 'top-down' approaches driven by policy and at institutional or organisational levels such as schools, there is a debate over the benefits and impact of mandated service (such as service learning), but this does appear to be an effective strategy for introducing young people to volunteering.

Purpose of this review

This review was commissioned to survey the evidence on the extent and impact of young people's volunteering and social participation in Australia. It also provides an analysis of effective

interventions and policy options for strengthening volunteering among young people aged 12 to 25.

The purpose and audience of this paper is to provide evidence and potential policy options to inform federal, state and territory government efforts to increase youth volunteering. It seeks to identify (where available) evidence of the economic and social contribution of young people as a result of their participation in volunteering. It investigates the barriers to and enablers for young people to participate in volunteering. It seeks to highlight particular aspects of volunteering that could be made attractive to young people who are considering volunteering, as well as aspects of volunteering that could be enhanced so as to improve the volunteering experience for young people. Finally, it explores how governments could better facilitate and encourage young people to volunteer, including through promotion of volunteering opportunities.

Structure of this review

This evidence review has four main sections.

- Firstly, it provides the context for young people's volunteering and social participation in Australia. It outlines various ways that youth volunteering is defined and explores the prevalence of youth volunteering in Australia and the types of organisations working in the area.
- The second section examines the economic and social impacts of youth volunteering. It highlights a lack of hard data and modelling, such as social return on investment in youth volunteering, and a paucity of strong supporting evidence in relation to young people's volunteering overall.
- The third section explores barriers and facilitators of effective practice.
- The final section outlines the key features of 'best practice' program structures and policy settings. It provides some examples of policy approaches or specific programs and models that align with 'best practice' models, including some international examples.

Recommendations

This literature review identifies four areas of good practice available to governments to promote young people's volunteering:

- Support the development of an evidence base

Evidence based policy requires a commitment to measuring impact, but where the 'market' for funding is limited, resourcing research and evaluation should be a priority of governments at all levels.

- Establish an 'authorising environment' in schools

This would enable schools to develop and embed greater opportunities for young people's service learning, recognising that civics and citizenship education has traditionally had a limited impact on young people's social participation and disposition to volunteer in future unless it is accompanied by practical opportunities to participate through the school (Verba et al., 1995).

[Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

- Support multi-stakeholder engagement in providing volunteering opportunities

Finding ways of recognising and promoting good practice at a national level could encourage greater numbers of young people to volunteer. These may include the greater engagement of stakeholders including the corporate sector. Policy could identify and target ways of promoting shared value through volunteering by young people. A challenge here would be to develop sustainable approaches that seek to work both within and beyond business cycles.

- Provide recognition and incentives

Acknowledging and publicly recognising young people's volunteering has been found to encourage participation (Gage & Thapa, 2012). Governments have the capacity, together with community consultation, of developing and recognising best practice.

Introduction

Volunteering activities throughout Australia make valuable contributions to volunteers and to society, both socially and economically. For young people, as for adults, volunteering enables connections to others unlike themselves and those who share similar values and thus enhances identification with community diversity and public concerns. Volunteering has also been found to be advantageous for young people who may be considered to be socioeconomically disadvantaged as they demonstrate positive social development with a political awareness, believe that they can make a difference and have a more positive outlook on their ability to succeed in further study (Spring et al., 2007).

While there is growing interest in youth volunteering by non-profit organisations, businesses, policy makers and governments in general, “there is a widespread impression that not only are voluntary activities undervalued, but they are under researched” (Bittman, 2006, p. 3). This is reflected in this evidence review, which shows a continuing pattern of insufficient evidence regarding the trends and patterns of volunteering in general and amongst young people in particular. Although there is a body of literature concerned with this subject, there has not been significant empirical research to investigate the effects of youth volunteering for both the volunteers themselves and the broader society. With this in mind, this evidence review highlights inconsistent findings linked to three broad areas:

- Various interpretations of the definition of volunteer activity (formal and informal) by both data collection agencies and people providing the data.
- A lack of coherent research into who is engaged in youth volunteering in Australia, in what ways, and where.
- A lack of coherent research into young people’s motivation and satisfaction in regards to volunteering.

This lack of clarity in regards to the definitions of young people’s volunteering activity and the lack of research into both the nature of this activity and its impact make policy responses problematic. As one report has noted, “there is a lack of rigorous, publicly available and / or easily accessible research on the impacts of youth voluntary service programmes, especially on projects outside of North America and Europe” (Hill et al., 2009, p. 23).

In the following discussion, it is important to note that volunteering is more than just instrumental in purpose. This applies to young people, organisations and governments seeking to promote opportunities for volunteering and social participation. Volunteering has a wider set of benefits for individuals and communities that have economic, social, cultural and political dimensions. Often there are tensions between these instrumental and wider purposes. While it is not within the remit of this review to extensively analyse these tensions, they are touched upon throughout the discussion.

It is also important to note that terms such as ‘young people’ and ‘volunteering’, ‘participation’ and ‘voice’ are not value free; they are contested terms. Despite this, the authors emphasise the need to prioritise young people’s interests over organisational and other interests. It is the authors’ belief that these latter interests are served best when the primacy of young people’s interests is maintained.

Defining volunteering

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) defines volunteering as “the provision of unpaid help willingly undertaken in the form of time, service or skills, to an organisation or group” (ABS, 2007). This definition is commonly accepted by peak volunteering bodies and reappears frequently within the volunteering literature. Other, related definitions describe volunteering as “a citizen’s intentional, organised efforts to address matters of public concern” (Hill & den Dulk, 2013, p. 180).

The ABS considers a volunteer to be someone who undertakes unpaid work voluntarily. It excludes unpaid work in a family business, community service orders, or activities undertaken to qualify for government benefits, as part of a student placement, or emergency work during an industrial dispute. It excludes what the ABS calls ‘direct volunteering’; that is, direct help which people offer that is not mediated through a formal organisation (ABS, 2012, p. 2). It also excludes what is commonly called ‘informal’ volunteering: that is, what Volunteering Australia has described as volunteering which occurs outside non-profit organisations and without a volunteer position description (2006, p.3).

For the purposes of this review, we have adopted the ABS (2007) definition: this is commonly cited within the Australian literature and provides a good, standard definition that lends itself well to the benchmarking and analysis of volunteering across different contexts. At the same time, we acknowledge that defining volunteering is difficult.

Related concepts: social engagement, social participation

There is potential for definitional ambiguity between volunteering and related terms such as ‘social engagement’ or ‘social participation’, which suggest engagement in voluntary, unpaid and often collective activities designed to promote social goods or purposes. This potential is also seen between understandings of youth volunteering and activities such as service learning, which represents an important vehicle for young people’s social participation within educational contexts. Service learning is commonly understood as “a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organised service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility” (Bingle et al., 2006, p.12).

Given the strong overlap between these notions, this review uses the language of volunteering to describe and analyse voluntary and unpaid activities undertaken by young people in relation to some form of social service or need. Having said this, reaching a clear definition of young people’s volunteering remains problematic for a number of reasons.

Is volunteering always voluntary?

While it is a key foundation principle of volunteering that it is a freely chosen activity that takes place without compulsion, there are numerous situations and contexts in which young people’s choice to volunteer is not entirely free (Brown, Lipsig-Mumme, & Zajdow, 2003). This is particularly the case in schooling contexts, where volunteering may be part of the compulsory curriculum, such as in service learning programs, or where students are given academic credit for volunteering. Such contexts blur or conflate the voluntary nature of such activity with other, more instrumental goals. Such blurring is also likely to occur in mutual obligation programs such as Work for the Dole (Bessant, 2000) and where schemes are implemented that allow young

people to reduce their Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) debt through community volunteering, a proposal that has been circulating for some years in Australia (Left Right Think-Tank, 2011). It is also the case in other contexts where young people may not be compelled to volunteer but may be expected to do so.

Studies have also highlighted the fluidity that characterises some young people's own understandings and definitions of volunteering. Many young people dislike and do not identify with the term 'volunteer' (Geale et al., 2010, p. 16). In her study of young people in Australian Capital Territory schools, Harris suggests that a crucial element in young people's understandings of volunteering is 'intent': "if the intent was to do something for the greater good, rather than because one was compelled to through policy or for money, then it was viewed as volunteering" (2013, p. 4). This issue would benefit from greater research and investigation.

Cultural diversity and understandings of volunteering

The understandings, motivations and perceptions of volunteering amongst culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Indigenous young people is a particularly under-researched area, reflecting a larger gap in the research into volunteering amongst CALD and Indigenous people overall. As Kerr et al. (2001) note, this volunteering often occurs outside the commonly acknowledged definitions and frameworks of volunteering. This means such participation may be insufficiently recognised, supported or valued. While some Indigenous youth volunteering and leadership programs such as the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program, Bound for Success and the Yalari Foundation are widely praised in the youth sector and the general media, there has been very little research or objective critique of these programs in terms of the extent of their impact or apparent success (Osborne & Guenther, 2013). In fact, it has been found that "the influence of culture and ethnicity on participation in voluntary and campaigning activities has rarely been explored in any detail" (Roker & Player, 2000, p. 164).

This finding is supported by *The Value of Volunteering Report* (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth, 2008), which acknowledges that 'volunteering' is not necessarily a word or concept used by CALD cultural contexts and that voluntary contributions within those cultural contexts often go unrecognised and unreported. This is an issue that has also been raised by Kerr et al. (2001) in relation to both CALD and Indigenous communities. As they note, the term 'volunteering' does not only have an 'ethnocentric' focus or bias, it may simply have little meaning for members of such communities (Kerr et al., 2001). This may be reflected in the fact that reported rates of volunteering amongst people born in Australia are higher than those born elsewhere. In 2006, the reported rate of volunteering amongst people born outside Australia was 29 per cent, compared to 36 per cent of Australian-born people (Australian Government, 2008).

Emerging forms and understandings

Traditional definitions of volunteering also provide few insights into the organisational contexts or locations in which young people volunteer. While these are often non-profit organisations, the growth in young people's online social action and e-volunteering presents an increasing challenge to the notion that youth volunteering is necessarily mediated by a formal organisation at all (Johnston et al., 2004). Traditional definitions of volunteering may also exclude or overlook emerging forms of social action and social participation amongst young people such as youth-led social enterprises and social entrepreneurship (Black, Taylor, & Walsh, 2011). Even where such

activities are specifically directed at fostering young people's volunteering, as in the case of the Student Volunteer Army created by a young New Zealander following the Christchurch earthquakes of 2010 and 2011, definitional issues continue to be a challenge (Lewis, 2013). The rapid growth of international youth volunteer tourism or 'gap year' programs further clouds the way in which youth volunteering is defined and understood, both by young people themselves and by the community (Lyons et al., 2012).

These new forms of youth volunteering and social participation also appear to be largely invisible to researchers and commentators, contributing further to the challenge of mapping and measuring the scope and impact of young people's volunteering activities. While this review draws on a wide range of literature, including grey literature from the youth and non-profit sectors, the overwhelming emphasis within the literature remains on what would be considered formal volunteering amongst young people. Unavoidably, therefore, much of our discussion focuses on this formal volunteering. Our analysis of the barriers and facilitators of volunteering for young people, for example, is primarily concerned with the barriers and facilitators of formal volunteering. This is not a wilful oversight, but a reflection of the available literature. As we discuss elsewhere in this review, it raises the need for greater research into young people's volunteering and social participation, especially where this takes the form of informal volunteering.

Defining children and young people

International definitions of what constitutes children and young people also vary. Some international definitions, such as that used by the United Nations, define young people as people aged 15 to 24 years, yet it is noted that in the context of transitions from 'childhood' to 'adulthood', distinctions between young people and adulthood are problematic and changing (Wyn, 2009). Notions and experiences of youth are more fluid than other age-groups (United Nations, 2014). Indeed, demographic changes, "the standardisation of the young lifestyle" and other definitional changes have reshaped what constitutes being 'young' in contemporary society (Bernardini, 2014, pp.42-43). While the terms of reference for this review necessitate our focus on the 12 to 25 age group, examples are also included from young people through to the age of 30 in order to provide a breadth of examples from which international comparisons can be made.

Prevalence of youth volunteering in Australia

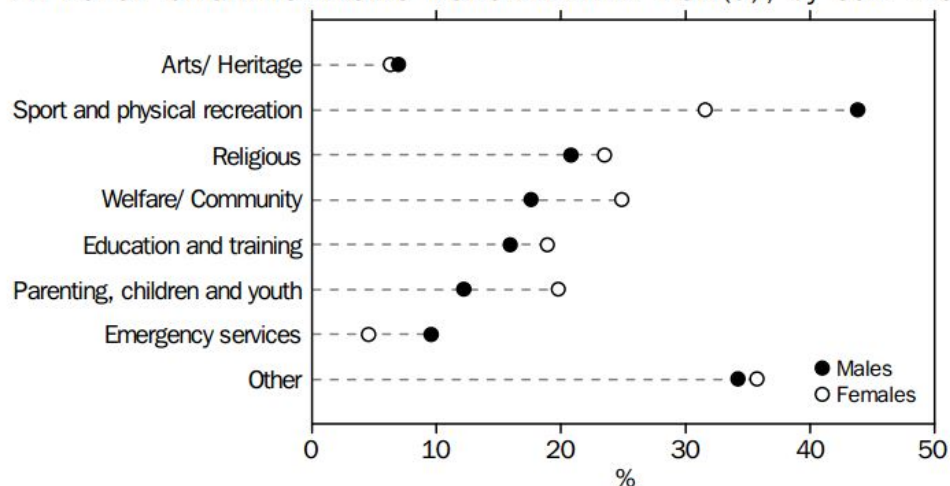
Before outlining the prevalence of youth volunteering in Australia, it is useful to consider the 'adult' population's involvement in volunteering. According to Volunteering Australia (2014) and the 2010 ABS report on voluntary work in Australia, 6.1 million people or 36 per cent of all adults in Australia are engaged in some type of voluntary work. This is up from 34 per cent in 2006 (Australian Government, 2011, p. 8) and indicates a growing number of volunteers in the adult community. It has also been reported that 16 per cent of Australians undertake informal voluntary work (Bittman, 2006, p. vi) and that informal volunteering in Australia accounts for more than half of all voluntary activity (ABS, 2009). As we indicate earlier in this review, this form of volunteering is not officially accounted for by the ABS. This means that 335,200 people who reported engaging in unpaid work due to employment or study conditions are excluded from the above statistics (ABS, 2010, p. 3).

Overall, Australian volunteering rates are on par with other OECD countries (Australian Government, 2011, p. 8), although one report suggests that Australians spend around half the amount of time volunteering than people in Canada, Finland, France and the United Kingdom

[Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

(Bittman, 2006, p. vi). According to the *Voluntary Work Australia* report (ABS, 2010), Australians overall most commonly volunteer within sport and recreation organisations (see Table 1).

TYPES OF ORGANISATIONS VOLUNTEERED FOR(a), by sex—2010



(a) Volunteers may have volunteered for more than one type of organisation.

Table 1: Types of organisations volunteered for (ABS, 2010, p. 5)

When it comes to quantifying and measuring young people’s rates of volunteering, however, there are a number of challenges. The first challenge relates to the issue we raise earlier in this review: the issue of how volunteering is understood by young people themselves. A United Kingdom study (Roker & Player, 2000) has found a significant proportion of young men involved in voluntary work do not consider themselves to be volunteers because they see their volunteering as serving personal purposes and interests. Similar trends appear with regards to Australia. For example, a House of Representatives Standing Committee Report entitled *The Value of Volunteering* has found that “many individuals [including youth] failed to recognise their own activities as constituting volunteering” (2008, p. 5).

A corollary of these young people’s perspectives is the perception and value of youth volunteering by adults. The literature on youth volunteering suggests that negative discourses about young people’s civic disengagement are concealing the scope of their actual voluntary contribution (Roker & Player, 2000). It has been argued that adults need to take a more positive view of young people’s social participation if they are to draw on their enthusiasm and energy (Watts & Flanagan, 2007, p. 782).

A second challenge relates to the distinction between formal and informal volunteering that we have also discussed earlier. Informal volunteering by young people is less likely to be recorded because it is not necessarily seen as volunteering, especially within CALD communities where young people’s contribution is viewed as a community or family obligation. It has also been suggested that many young volunteers are involved in ‘hidden’ voluntary activities that are not publicised or included in public measures or assessments of volunteering. The 2007/08 United Kingdom Citizenship Survey, for example, found that 16 to 24 year olds are more likely to volunteer informally than any other age group (41% compared to average of 35%) but also less likely than any other age group to volunteer formally (Hill et al., 2009, p. 3). In Australia, as we have already mentioned, this informal volunteering is not monitored or measured by the ABS. There is also a clear gap in the research into non-traditional volunteering roles, which may include many of the activities undertaken by young people (Hill et al., 2009, p. 4). These include

[Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

online social action and e-volunteering but they also include reciprocal arrangements such as timebanks, alternative monetary systems through which members contribute units of their time in exchange for a time credit that can be used or redeemed in various ways, as well as other local exchange and trading schemes and informal arrangements. Another fast growing phenomenon, both in Australia and internationally, is young people's engagement in volunteer tourism during their gap year, but again, very little data is yet available about this (Jones, 2011; Lyons et al., 2012).

A third and possibly greatest challenge in quantifying youth volunteering arises from the marked lack of empirical and research data overall. Data is very scarce on youth volunteering in Australia, particularly in the younger age group of 12 to 18 (Auld, 2004). With the exception of the United States, data is also scarce for young people in other regions around the world (Brown et al., 2003; Hill et al., 2009). Even in the United States, organisations are not required to report volunteer statistics and data tends to be derived from self-reporting (Ellis, 2007). This lack of data about how many young people are actually already engaging in volunteering limits the capacity of governments to promote greater youth participation. In Australia, the data that does exist on youth volunteering rates is generalised and its accuracy is often questionable.

In particular, there appears to be conflicting reported rates across the data on how many Australians, particularly young Australians, are already engaged in volunteer work. Overall, national measures of volunteering in Australia are extremely limited. In the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing, for example, there was only a single question on voluntary work, delimiting the scope for in-depth analysis of the data. It has also been found that because people in the lowest 20% of the income range are more likely to provide informal assistance to others and less likely to be involved in a formal voluntary organisation (Bittman, 2006, p. vii), this group of people are excluded from national measures of volunteering. This echoes the experience in other countries, including the United Kingdom, where surveys have found "that the very concept of volunteering is fluid and understood differently by different people in different places and in different times, and that there are divergent beliefs about incentives, motives and branding" (Hill et al., 2009, p. 26).

This lack of clarity is particularly pertinent with regards to young people from diverse backgrounds. A lack of quality research into what constitutes volunteering in CALD communities has resulted in statistics which are likely to be unreliable. There is also little evidence of the extent to which young people who may be considered socioeconomically disadvantaged are engaging in volunteering (Hill et al., 2009, p. 4). One of the results of this lack of data is that many policy proposals with regards to youth volunteering have been made without real knowledge or substantial research into the values, activities and attitudes of marginalised groups of young people (Bassett et al., 2011). This limitation is discussed further in the final section of this review.

Youth volunteering rates

Despite these challenges, there is data to suggest that young people in Australia are engaging in volunteering. One key report for the Australian Government (Muir et al., 2009) has found that although young people aged 12 to 24 mostly spend their productive time in either work or education, they also spend some time either volunteering or participating in civic activities. The

report suggests that one in three young people volunteer, although the instances of regular volunteering are low (Muir et al., 2009).

More recent findings suggest that volunteering continues to matter to young people in Australia. In Mission Australia's 2013 survey of 14,461 young Australians aged 15 to 19, volunteering was reported as one of the three top activities in which young people were engaged during 2013, 2012 and 2011, following engagement in sports as a participant and as a spectator (see Table 2 below). While the survey did not specify or categorise the nature of this volunteering, it did capture a large sample of young people who identified themselves as having engaged in volunteering activities. It also showed a marked escalation in rates of youth volunteering over recent years. In 2011, 33.5 per cent of surveyed young people identified themselves as participating in volunteer work. In 2012, the figure jumped to 60.5 per cent. While the 2013 figure shows a slight decline to 55.6 per cent, it still suggests a growth overall in youth volunteering in Australia.

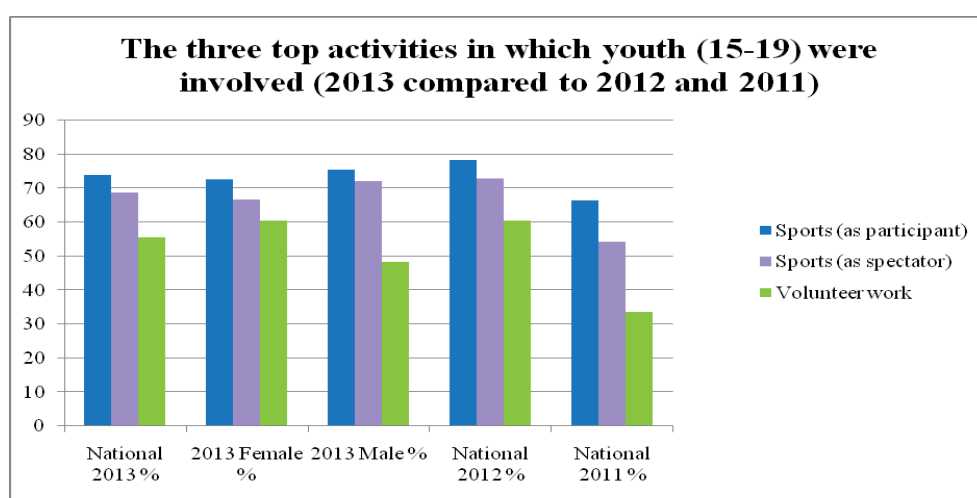


Table 2: The three top Australian youth activities 2013 (Mission Australia, 2013)

These findings contradict the ABS assessment that rates of volunteering tend to be lower in lower age groups (Auld, 2004). ABS data collection is not considered particularly accurate for reporting on youth volunteering as it only reports on young people between the ages of 18 to 24.

The Mission Australia findings indicate rates of youth volunteering are higher than may be perceived. While earlier evidence suggests that young people's rates of volunteering have been low, this seems to have changed. For example, figures show a substantial rise in United States teenage volunteers from 13.4 per cent in 1989 to 28.4 per cent in 2005 (Nenga, 2012). Data from Canada reported in 2000 indicate 33 per cent of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 were engaged in volunteering (Jones, 2000). In 2005, 38 per cent of students in United States high schools were participating in service learning programs through their schools (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010).

Schooling and education

The indications are that levels of schooling play a strong role in young people's volunteering. Large scale Australian studies suggest that young people who are enrolled in formal education are significantly more likely to volunteer than young people who are not (Brown et al., 2003; Muir et al., 2009). They also suggest that those young people who remain in school do more volunteering than those who leave school before completing Year 12, whether they go on to [Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

further study or not, and that those planning to complete Year 12 do more volunteering than those not planning to do so. This is borne out by wider studies including a recent comparative report (ABS, 2012) devised to investigate a disparity in results between two key studies on volunteering conducted in 2006 – the General Social Survey (GSS) and the Census of Population and Housing. This comparative report utilised descriptive and multivariate statistical techniques and found that adults with higher level of educational attainment were more likely to volunteer.

Gender

Other large scale studies suggest gender is another powerful predictive variable of volunteering in young people (Flanagan et al, 1998). In line with patterns for adult volunteers, young women are more likely to volunteer than young men (Marzana et al., 2012; Van Goethem et al., 2012). Girls have been found to spend more time volunteering than boys while at secondary school, but they also increase the amount of time they spend volunteering after they leave school (Brown et al., 2003). Girls also tend to volunteer for reasons that are linked to the intrinsic or altruistic nature of volunteering. Boys who are unhappy with their employment do more volunteering; boys are also more likely to volunteer if they are unhappy about their future prospects. For girls, volunteering appears to be independent of their work intentions and seems less likely to be an instrumental activity designed to gain employment. Gender has also been found to play a role in the kind of volunteering that young people take up, with young men more likely to volunteer in sports organisations and contexts and young women more likely to be involved with social services (Hill et al., 2009).

Geographical location

Another variable in young people’s volunteering in Australia relates to the geographical location in which they live. A recent NSW Youth Advisory Council (2014) inquiry noted young people in geographically isolated or rural communities have less access to volunteering opportunities and organisations than people in metropolitan areas. Despite this, young people from non-metropolitan communities appear to volunteer more (more frequently and for more hours) than young people from metropolitan communities (Brown et al, 2003; Muir et al., 2009), suggesting young people may be more likely to volunteer where the community is smaller, more immediate or more familiar. There are also different rates of volunteering amongst young people in different states and territories, as indicated by Mission Australia’s 2013 report (see Table 3 below). Reasons for the variance between different states and territories were not discussed in the report but are worthy of further investigation.¹

State	Youth Volunteering Rate %
New South Wales	57.5
Northern Territory	54.9
Queensland	63.8
South Australia	48.6
Tasmania	59.9

¹ The Australian Capital Territory has no results due to insufficient respondents, although in another study (Harris, 2013), 26.5% of Australian Capital Territory high school students reported that they were involved in a structured service learning program.

Victoria	53.2
Western Australia	52

Table 3: Youth (15-19 years old) Volunteer Rate State by State 2013 (Mission Australia, 2013)

Other findings in relation to young people's rates of volunteering by state are summarised in Table 4. Once again, this data would benefit from further exploration and clarification.

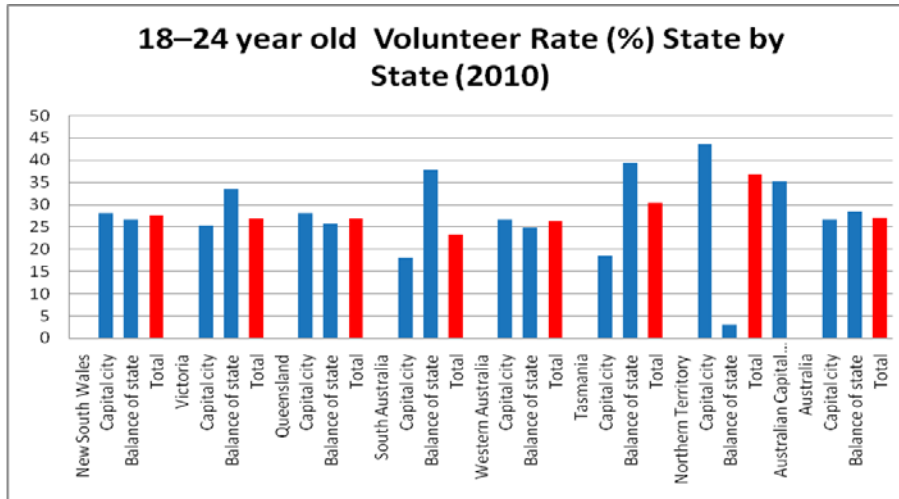


Table 4: 18-24 year old volunteer rate (%) State by State. Source ABS (2010)

Cultural background

Other variations in youth volunteering relate to cultural background. The Mission Australia 2013 study included 534 (3.8 per cent) of young respondents who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Indigenous. It also reported a lower participation in volunteering amongst these young people than amongst non-Indigenous young people. Table 5 provides specific details of these findings. Once again, however, this data is mostly lacking in contextualisation or explanation.

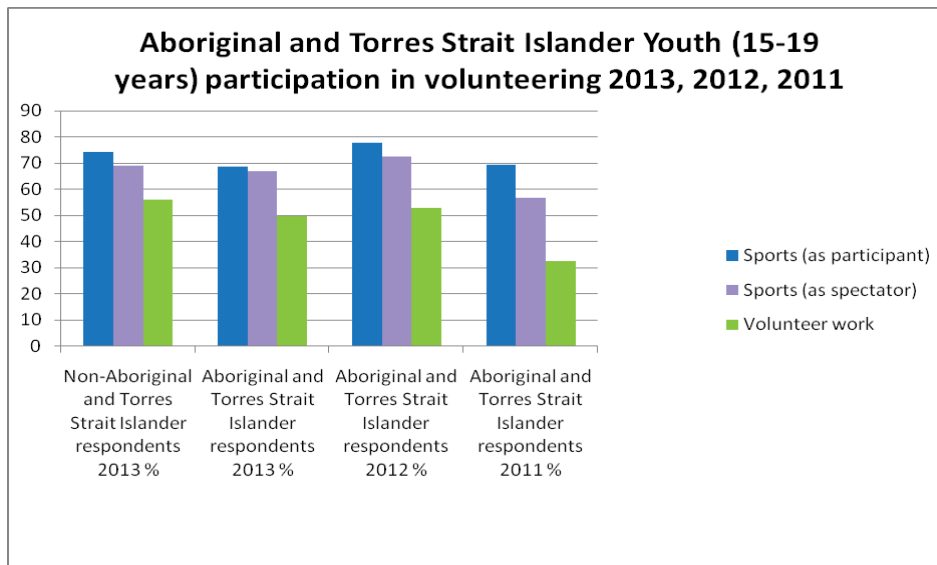


Table 5: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander three top activities engaged with 2013, 2012, 2011 (Mission Australia, p.41)

Economic and social impacts of youth volunteering

Motivations and benefits of volunteering amongst young people

The perceptions of volunteering by young people, and their motivations for volunteering, are as diverse as most other aspects of the youth volunteering landscape. Moffatt (2011b) has developed a useful volunteer typology of motivations which describes three potential sets of motivations or 'asks' young people seek from their volunteering:

- 'You's - Solely community based asks – i.e. those who want to use this particular role to contribute to their community, 'make a difference', or for social interaction;
- 'Me's - Solely personally based asks – i.e. those who want to use this particular role for personal reasons, such as to develop their skills, to enhance their career prospects, or to pursue a personal interest;
- 'Us's – Mixed asks – i.e. those who want to use this particular role partly for community reasons and partly for their own personal reasons (Moffatt, 2011b, p. 68).

There is ample evidence to suggest that the first and most altruistic set of motivations, the 'You's, are a powerful driver of volunteering for many young people. Multiple studies testify to the fact that young people are motivated to volunteer in order to contribute to society or their community (such as, Muir et al., 2009). Many see volunteering as linked to good citizenship (Hill et al., 2009) and the opportunity to 'make a difference' (Ferrier et al., 2004; Moffatt, 2011a). In a national United Kingdom study, the top reason given by 16 to 24 year olds for volunteering was to 'help people' (56 per cent) (Hill et al., 2009).

The appeals of volunteering for young people include the social benefits of being with friends, strengthening social relationships and working collaboratively with others (Moffatt, 2011a; Snyder & Omoto, 2008). Young people look for volunteering opportunities that are of interest and reflect their values and priorities, but they also look for volunteering opportunities that link them to other young people (Ferrier et al., 2004; Volunteering ACT, 2013). There is also evidence that volunteering delivers many of these social benefits and outcomes: in a number of studies, young people identify considerable benefits of their involvement in volunteer activities including acknowledgement, appreciation, and a sense of being socially engaged (Astin & Sax, 1998; Edwards, 2005; Ferrier et al., 2004; McBride et al., 2011).

There is also evidence to suggest that the second, more personal set of motivations identified by Moffatt are a factor in many young people's choice to volunteer. The desire to learn or exercise skills, including skills that may be useful in progressing or obtaining work and career opportunities, is a key motivation for many young people (Muir et al., 2009; Snyder & Omoto, 2008), something that we discuss in further detail later in this section. In the United Kingdom study cited above, the second most common reason given by 16 to 24 year olds for volunteering was 'to learn new skills' (47 per cent) (Hill et al., 2009).

The research also suggests, once again, that volunteering delivers many of these personal benefits and outcomes. Young volunteers have been shown to develop new skills and abilities (Roker & Player, 2000), including skills that support academic success (Astin & Sax, 1998) and

employability (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2008). Volunteering has also been found to foster greater career opportunities by giving young people access to potential employers and other organisations that can build their skill base for employability (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010).

Perhaps the most useful contribution to our understanding of why young people volunteer, however, is the third set of motivations in Moffat's typology. A number of studies bear out the suggestion that young people's motivations to volunteer are complex, interrelated and subject to change over time (Cornelis et al., 2013; Gage & Thapa, 2012; Harris, 2013; Spring et al., 2007; Warburton & Smith, 2003). Some of these studies note that while altruism - the desire to contribute to the community and make a difference - may be the motivation that leads young people to volunteer in the first instance, their continued volunteering tends to depend on more personal motivations. They suggest that young people may begin volunteering because they regard it as a way of benefitting others, but that they continue volunteering because they regard it as a way of accessing the more personal benefits identified above (Gage & Thapa, 2012; Harris, 2013; Spring et al., 2007).

This is contradicted by other findings which suggest that young people initially volunteer more for reasons of personal or professional gain than reasons of altruism, but that this frequently converts to a lifelong commitment to voluntary work (Nicol, 2012). Wynne (2011) makes a useful distinction that helps to clarify this debate. She suggests that young volunteers may begin by working in what she calls "standard-cause service roles", or roles that engage them in volunteering but that "do not challenge their belief systems". As they progress in confidence and experience, they may begin to take on what Wynne calls "social-cause service roles", roles that may connect them to deeper values and issues. As she notes: "standard-cause volunteering developed the personal and professional skills of young people. Social-cause volunteering strengthened their connection to community. Both are important in the volunteering journey" (p. 3).

As Snyder and Omoto (2008) suggest, recognition and acknowledgement of these varied motivations by voluntary organisations could create more meaningful and more positive volunteering experiences for young people. Acknowledging the more personal motivations that drive young people's volunteering would allow organisations to better match young people's motivations to specific tasks and positions, resulting in higher volunteer satisfaction and continuation. This is discussed in greater detail later in this paper.

Estimated current direct economic contribution of youth volunteering

As well as its benefits to the volunteer, it is suggested that volunteering makes a substantial economic contribution to society (Jones, 2011). Research shows that volunteers can ease the financial burden of both non-profit organisations and government agencies (Gage & Thapa, 2012). One Australian report (Bittman, 2006, p.v) examined the effect of volunteering on government service expenditure and found that, using conservative estimates, voluntary welfare services were worth more than double the value of services provided by all levels of government in Australia. The same report estimated that the total contribution by volunteers to non-profit institutions in 2006-2007 was \$14.6 billion. These estimates do not specify the economic impact of youth volunteering, which itself is a key gap in the literature, but they do highlight what researchers acknowledge as a perceived undervaluing of youth volunteering. Modelling the economic value of youth volunteering could be addressed by applying such methodologies as

social return on investment (SROI) but even these methodologies often require large scale and systematic activities to provide robust data.

According to one study by the University of Adelaide, volunteering is potentially worth more than \$200 billion a year to the Australian economy, outstripping revenue sources from mining, agriculture and the retail sector (O'Dwyer, 2012), but the ABS itself points out the problems with accurately assessing the true value of volunteering overall to the economy. It suggests that the wide variety of activities included within the scope of unpaid work may lead to differences in measurement, and argues for the need for agreement upon a harmonised definition and valuation methodology of such work (ABS, 2014b). We have already discussed the issue of young people's involvement in informal volunteering, and the difficulty of measuring the extent and the impact of this involvement. The ABS also notes that existing data on volunteer services is incomplete, with further information due for release in June 2015 (2014a, p. 6).

At the same time, the University of Adelaide study cited above warns against too great a focus on the economic value of volunteering. As O'Dwyer notes, "If a volunteer fire fighter saves the life of a child, what is that worth? If environmental degradation is slowed because of millions of trees planted by volunteer conservationists, what is that worth? And if an elderly person receives a hot meal five days a week, what is that worth?" (2012). This highlights a key tension in progressing measurements of youth and other volunteering: the social capital generated through volunteering (see our discussion later in this section) defies economic assessment, yet it is this economic assessment that is likely to provide the greatest rationale and motivation for further policy support for youth volunteering.

Estimated impact of youth volunteering on employability, youth participation rates and skill acquisition

According to the most recent annual report from the Foundation for Young Australians, *How Young People are Faring 2013* (Stanwick et al., 2013), despite increased participation in employment and education by young people overall in Australia, those in remote locations and Indigenous young people continue to experience far lower education and training engagement and achievements (p. 5). This report also stipulates that it is difficult for 15 to 24 year olds to get "a full-time job with 'good' status, skills and income" (p. 7) and there is a "misalignment" between young people's skills and the jobs they take up. This report and others indicate that young people still need technical and specialist skills but that there also is a growing need for interpersonal and communication skills, referred to as non-cognitive or 'soft' skills (Kahn et al., 2012). These skills include self-discipline and the ability to interact with adults, which have both been reported to increase with engagement in volunteering.

There is a body of research which indicates that volunteering increases young people's skills for employability, including the social capital, open-mindedness, international understanding and other soft skills that formal educational institutions cannot engender (Astin & Sax, 1998; Jones, 2011; Left Right Think-Tank, 2011; Roker & Player, 2000). It also suggests that volunteering boosts young people's employability (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2008; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). International research suggests is a link between volunteering and an increase in employability. In 2011, research conducted by LinkedIn found that 41 per cent of hiring managers consider volunteer work equally as valuable as paid work experience when evaluating candidates (LinkedIn, 2015). Australian responses to the LinkedIn survey revealed one out of every five

[Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

hiring managers in Australia have hired a candidate because of their volunteer work experience (Pro Bono Australia, 2014). This is echoed in research conducted by Corporation for National and Community Service in the US, which found that “active volunteers were 27% more likely to get a job than non-volunteers” (Spera, Ghertner, Nerino, & DiTommaso, 2013, p. 1). However, like so many other aspects of youth volunteering, there are also warnings within the literature that this area warrants further research (see for example, Hill et al., 2009).

Elsewhere in this review, we have noted that socioeconomically disadvantaged young people are underrepresented as volunteers. At the same time, while young people overall see volunteering as a useful pathway to gaining paid employment (Muir et al., 2009, p. 81), it has been suggested that young people from low socioeconomic circumstances have been found to be more motivated to volunteer in order to gain work experience than their peers (Spring et al., 2007, p. 2). An evaluation of the New South Wales Government’s Volunteering Strategy suggested that low socioeconomic and other marginalised groups may find particular value through voluntary work in the form of timebanking, for example (Smith et al., 2013). While timebanking is distinguished from conventional volunteering as it is reciprocal, it has also been identified as a successful strategy in making volunteering more accessible to young people and in broadening the base of young volunteers within the community. Timebanking initiatives involving young people are being trialled in numerous locations in Australia, including the Victorian suburb of Frankston. The proliferation of such initiatives points to the need for further research into the potential benefits of volunteering to engage and reengage young people in earning and/or learning.

Social impact of youth volunteering

In addition to the economic benefits of young people’s greater involvement in volunteering, it is claimed that young people’s volunteering has social benefits or impact. This social benefit is frequently described in relation to ideas of social belonging, responsibility and participation, civic and citizenship values and skills, and social capital.

As we note earlier, volunteering has been associated with greater social capital, an enhanced sense of civic responsibility, and enhanced identification with public concerns and public goals amongst young people (Astin & Sax, 1998; Flanagan et al., 1998; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2008; Jones, 2011; Roker & Player, 2000). It has been suggested that young people’s involvement in volunteering is vital in creating a sense of community (Eley, 2001), and in developing the moral and social foundations of adult citizenship (Avrahami & Dar, 1993). Young volunteers demonstrate greater membership of cultural associations and greater participation in politics than non-volunteers (Hill et al., 2009). Organisations that engage young people in volunteering are also considered as “key players in tackling social inclusion, creating social capital and growing community capacity” (Adams, 2009, p. 2). This finding emerges within the international as well as the Australian literature. Cemalcilar’s (2009) longitudinal study of 569 Turkish young people, for example, found that volunteering increased young people’s sense of social belonging and social responsibility.

A much larger study, undertaken across seven countries (Russia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Australia, Sweden and the United States), involved 5,579 young people between 12 and 18 years of age in an attempt to determine the relationship between volunteering, young people’s values and the public interest. Reinforcing other research cited above, it found that volunteering links young people to others who are unlike them, whom they may be unlikely otherwise to meet, and with whom they have an opportunity to engage the notion of ‘public

work' and conceive of themselves as civic actors (Flanagan et al., 1998). This is supported by a more recent Italian study of 392 young people aged 14 to 20 years, which found that volunteering enhances young people's civic engagement and sense of social responsibility (Crocetti et al., 2012, p. 527).

The same study suggests that young people's sense of civic efficacy and social responsibility both lead to and result from the experience of volunteering (Crocetti et al., 2012). This virtuous circle shows itself in a number of ways. Those young people who are already confident, already civically engaged and who already possess the skills required to volunteer are also the most likely to choose to volunteer (Hardy et al., 2010; Pancer et al., 2007). Such young people have a significantly higher sense of community belonging, social responsibility, and sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy than those who do not volunteer (Cemilcilar, 2009; Reed et al., 2005). They demonstrate higher membership of cultural associations, participation in politics and other organisations (Hill et al., 2009). They are also more likely to report positive beliefs about the importance of volunteering (Jahromi et al., 2012).

This raises the question of how these self-reinforcing behaviours can be promoted. As it is allegedly during adolescence that individuals learn societal and citizenship values, research emphasises the need for better understanding of the variables that promote young people's social participation during this formative period (Marzana et al., 2012; Youniss et al., 1997). A number of studies suggest fostering volunteering early in life can encourage a lifelong culture of volunteering (Brown et al., 2003; Left Right Think-Tank, 2011). One report into volunteering amongst young people aged between 16 and 24 identified five main factors as having a positive influence on their participation, of which previous volunteering experience was one (Ferrier et al., 2004). This is also borne out by the quantitative data: the 2010 ABS report, for example, found that 43% of adult volunteers in Australia had undertaken volunteer work as children, compared to only 27% of non-volunteers.

The importance and value of developing social participation and citizenship values in young people has also been recognised by successive Australian governments seeking to reduce government welfare and shift responsibility to independent and active participation by individuals through either paid or unpaid work. This is supported by studies such as that undertaken by Warburton and Smith (2003, p. 777), who suggest that "volunteer-type activities are essential for young people in the contemporary Australian policy context - both in terms of dealing with the social problems supposedly invoked by an over-supportive welfare state, and in terms of learning positive citizenship behaviours".

The irony of these findings is that young people themselves are often neglected in discussions of what is necessary to constitute a coherent and inclusive civil society. A better understanding of the nature of young people's identification with greater public interest is important to developing a strong society (Flanagan et al., 1998). Such research also has the potential to boost the social impact of youth volunteering.

Evidence review – barriers, facilitators and effective practice

Barriers to volunteering amongst young people

This section of the review explores the multiple barriers to young people's volunteering. These include structural barriers, attitudinal barriers and barriers that stem from the cultures and practices of those organisations that seek to engage young people as volunteers. We begin by considering the structural barriers.

One of the key most comprehensive studies of young people's volunteering in Australia to date is the study undertaken by Brown et al. (2003) as part of the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) research program. This study examined the rate of community volunteering among young Australians aged 16 to 21 and concluded that socioeconomic status and related variables have a strong effect on young people's volunteering activity. Like many of the other aspects of young people's volunteering, the nature and impact of some of these variables is also subject to debate, however.

One key debate relates to the engagement in volunteering of CALD young people. A number of studies have suggested that young people who do not speak English as their primary language are less likely to engage in volunteering than other young people (ABS, 2012; Brown et al., 2003; Muir et al., 2009). This finding raises numerous questions. It may reflect the difficulty for CALD young people to identify attractive or suitable volunteering opportunities, but it may also speak to issues such as: the failure of voluntary organisations to engage such young people, an issue that we discuss further in the following section of this paper; the kind of assumptions that are made about volunteering and CALD young people; and the nature of the research into volunteering amongst CALD young people.

As indicated above, proficiency in English is often cited as a barrier for young people from CALD communities becoming involved in non-CALD volunteering programs. What is often overlooked is the fact that CALD communities also provide valuable volunteering opportunities for young people. Key work by Kerr et al. (2001) challenges the assumption that CALD young people should want to volunteer in non-CALD contexts and organisations and suggests that mainstream or non-CALD volunteering opportunities should not be privileged over CALD volunteering opportunities. It also indicates that much unrecognised volunteering already occurs in CALD contexts and organisations. This theme is taken further by Nenga (2012), who suggests that the social impact of youth volunteering is heightened if young people are encouraged and enabled to form social connections with a variety of communities and to choose how they will enact their citizenship in relation to those communities. This is particularly important in relation to young people from CALD backgrounds.

A second key debate relates to the engagement in volunteering of young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Numerous international and Australian studies suggest that the experience of volunteering and the beliefs, attitudes and skills that enable it are unequally distributed amongst young people. There is a considerable body of research that suggests young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds are typically less likely to volunteer (Australian Government, 2011; Bassett et al., 2011; Marzana et al., 2012; Spring et al., 2007).

There is also related evidence to suggest that such young people are less likely to belong to the kind of civic and political organisations and institutions that promote volunteering or other forms

[Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

of social participation (Watts & Flanagan, 2007), less likely to have faith in those institutions (Anderton & Abbot, 2009), less likely to participate in their community in the present (Comber et al., 2006), and less likely to have an intention to participate in the future (Lopes et al., 2009) than young people who are located higher up the socioeconomic scale. Other studies suggest that young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds are also less likely to feel able to participate in the community (Bell et al., 2008), less likely to believe that their participation is taken seriously when it does occur (Blanchard et al., 2008), and less likely to have access to the opportunities, including the education opportunities, which promote social participation (Flanagan & Levine, 2010).

Still other studies shed further light on structural barriers to youth volunteering that may be associated with socioeconomic status and that relate to the very real costs of volunteering for young people (Auld, 2004; Gage & Thapa, 2012; Hill et al., 2009; Left Right Think-Tank, 2013; Roker & Player, 2000). These include lack of time, lack of money and lack of access to transport. They also include concerns about the loss of potential income while volunteering and the costs of travel and other investments related to the volunteering experience, although it may be argued that online volunteering opportunities go some way to mitigating this. The overrepresentation of more affluent volunteers in many contexts may itself be a barrier to volunteering for less affluent young people (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010), the lack of demographic diversity amongst young volunteers is seen as a factor in the exclusion or discouragement of other potential young volunteers (Holdsworth et al., 2007; McBride et al., 2011).

Other barriers relate to the way in which volunteering is perceived by, and promoted to, young people, an issue which we discuss elsewhere in this review. Despite data that shows young people's concern for issues of social and environmental justice, and despite the burgeoning of youth-led organisations and youth social entrepreneurship (Black et al., 2011), volunteering as a field tends to have negative associations amongst young people. It is seen as an area that is seen to be both boring and poorly organised (Geale et al., 2010). While many young people engage in activities that could be considered as volunteering, they do not necessarily see themselves as volunteers and are unlikely to describe their activities in such terms (Boessler & Ding, 2010; Geale et al., 2010). This highlights the need to revisit the image of volunteering in ways that appeal to young people and that speak to their concerns and preferred modes of social participation (Hankinson & Rochester, 2005). As Adams (2009) has suggested, there is a need for an 'image makeover' to heighten the appeal of volunteering for young people.

What are important here, once again, are the views and voices of young people themselves. Over the last decade, as we discuss elsewhere in this review, there have been many suggestions that some form of civic or community service should be built into school programs and that minimum levels of service should be completed before students can graduate. However, as Holdsworth notes,

Such talk of volunteering and community service has largely ignored the perspectives of young people, particularly about how they see their roles within their communities. When we talk about volunteering, service and community within education, we strangely omit consideration of the voices of young people or their roles as active participants in decision-making about that service" (2007, p. 7).

This lack of voice may be a barrier to young people's volunteering.

[Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

There are also barriers to young people's volunteering that relate to the nature and culture of the non-profit organisations and groups that commonly facilitate volunteering (Wilson & Holdsworth, 1991). Ageism, discrimination and disrespect have been cited as factors that prevent young people from joining such groups. Studies have also found that, despite their desire to volunteer, some young people fear that voluntary organisations would not welcome them (Geale et al., 2010), that they have little to offer such organisations, and that their efforts may be rejected or unappreciated (Hill et al, 2009). This fear is borne out by findings that some organisations regard young people as unreliable volunteers because they may not be able to commit to regular and ongoing volunteer placements (Harris, 2013).

Some research (e.g. Nenga, 2012; Pantea, 2013) suggests that young volunteers are understandably sensitive to any treatment, whether of themselves or others, which they perceive as unjust, unwelcoming or excluding. They are also sensitive to being assigned unattractive, unengaging or unsatisfying tasks by voluntary organisations (Hankinson & Rochester, 2005), or to the failure of organisations to consult with them about what matters and what best works for them (Moffatt, 2011b). Organisations that fail to recognise these things, and to invest in the development of the right volunteer management skills, may also fail to attract or sustain young people's engagement as volunteers. As Adams notes, "organisational culture can make or break the success of [young] volunteer involvement" (2009, p.2).

It has also been noted that overregulation of the voluntary sector may act as a deterrent to young people (Bittman, 2006, p. 55). Even school-based volunteering programs may present too many logistical barriers to young people's participation: the need to navigate the 'red tape' of public liability insurance, litigation, permissions, police checks and the other formalities that attend many volunteering programs acts as a deterrent for some young people (Moffatt, 2011a; Volunteering ACT, 2013).

Other studies have found that many young people simply lack meaningful or relevant opportunities or invitations to volunteer. Young people who are directly approached or invited are four times more likely to volunteer than those who have to create and navigate their own volunteering opportunities (Geale et al., 2010, p. 16). They may also lack information or awareness of what volunteering opportunities may be available to them (Adams, 2009; Kuo, 2014; Left Right Think-Tank, 2011; Volunteering ACT, 2013). This speaks to the need for voluntary organisations and peak bodies to better promote themselves to young people. The 2011 report, *Youth volunteering: Increasing engagement and participation*, by the Left Right Think-Tank, for example, provides insights into how the social impact of youth volunteering could be amplified by remodelling the nature of the non-profit organisations that commonly promote young people's volunteering. It highlights the potential of organisations as the Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) and Oaktree to be more attractive models for youth volunteering than traditional organisations as the Red Cross. It also highlights the need for further research into the ways in which the involvement of marginalised groups of young people can be increased (Left Right Think-Tank, 2011).

Such studies also point to the need for further research. There is a lack of understanding about how young people experience volunteering or the meaning of those experiences for young people (Nenga, 2012). Research is also needed into the reservations and concerns of potential young volunteers as well as into what recruitment strategies are needed to encourage those young people who are not otherwise likely to volunteer (Astin & Sax, 1998). One report (Hill et

al., 2009) also suggests that under-use of social networking tools such as Facebook by voluntary organisations may show a disconnect between generations. It recommends that organisations develop a digital communication plan and highlights the importance of a website as a first port of call for potential young volunteers (p. 64). A more current approach may incorporate development of mobile apps.

Facilitators of volunteering by young people

Our discussion of the factors that represent barriers to young people's volunteering naturally leads to the question of what factors might represent facilitators or enablers of young people's volunteering. A key message that emerges from the literature is that if governments and other sectors and organisations want to encourage young people to participate in volunteering, their focus should firstly be on addressing the barriers to volunteering and secondly on ensuring that young people's participation in volunteering is a positive experience.

Role of schools

One strong suggestion from the research is that schools and other educational organisations can play a key role in facilitating young people's positive experience of volunteering and fostering their predisposition to continue to volunteer. Internationally, young people have been found to be more likely to volunteer when their schooling emphasises and promotes the importance of social participation (Astin & Sax, 1998; Flanagan et al, 1998; Hart et al., 2007; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2008; Hill & den Dulk, 2013; Torres, 2003; Verba et al., 1995).

As noted earlier in this review, a number of studies have found that fostering volunteering early in life can encourage a lifelong culture of volunteering. This points to the potential role of schools. As Brown et al. (2003) note, "the habits of volunteering clearly begin at school" (p.14). Their study of volunteering amongst young Australians found that young people rarely took up voluntary work in their post-school years unless they had first experienced it during their school years. Muir et al. (2009), found that young Australians were in fact more likely to volunteer if they were currently at school, particularly at secondary school. These studies suggest volunteering is an activity that can become normalised in young people's lives and school-based programs (such as service learning) are important sites for fostering such normalisation.

Small-scale studies such as that undertaken by Black (2012) also suggest that the trend for young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds to be under-represented as volunteers can be countered by service learning programs. Black's study of two Australian schools in low socioeconomic communities that introduced service learning programs for middle years students highlights the sense of efficacy that such programs can foster. It also reinforces the findings of other studies that positive experiences of volunteering or service learning are amongst the most powerful facilitators of young people's belief that their volunteering matters and can make a difference. Black's study suggests that effective service learning programs in schools share a number of key characteristics.

Firstly, they are integrated into the curriculum and supported within the school timetable: other studies have found that volunteering programs, such as service learning programs, which demand a significant time commitment beyond the existing demands of the curriculum, are unlikely to attract sustained engagement, particularly as students enter the later years of schooling (Volunteering ACT, 2013). Secondly, they have a high profile within the school and are

supported by the staff in general. Thirdly, they recognise, reward and celebrate the efforts of students who participate in them (for example, the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award scheme, which we discuss later in this review, provides particularly good opportunities for such celebration and recognition). Fourthly, they are driven by young people: that is, they reflect the values and priorities of the young people whom they engage and enable those young people to define and shape the nature of the volunteering opportunities in which they become involved.

Any discussion about service learning does raise the issue of compulsion. As noted elsewhere in this review, there are unresolved debates surrounding mandated programs such as service learning. The evidence is, however, that effective service learning programs can also do much to enable the social participation of a diverse range of young people, not solely those who comply with what Black calls "the normative behaviours and attributes of the good student" (2012, p.151). A small but important literature has described the way in which service learning in schools can perpetuate cultures of meritocracy that recognise and promote the contribution of some young people while overlooking others. Silva (2001) has described the eagerness with which some young people involved in a United Kingdom program claim roles of superior knowledge or authority that displace the voices and capacities of other students. She has also described the fact that young people are often well aware of whose voices are heard and whose are silenced within their school. As Black (2012, p.166) has noted:

Schools have their own rules about which students are permitted to participate. These rules tend to privilege those students who already accede to the behavioural norms of the school. They also silence or overlook the "voices from the margins" (Wierenga, 2003, p. 25): those students who do not comply with the school imaginary of the good student and who "do not appear to keep their side of the bargain - those that seem incomprehensible, recalcitrant or even obnoxious" (Bragg, 2001, p. 70).

In so doing, they perpetuate the normative hierarchies that operate within the school.

In a parallel discussion, Fletcher refers to 'convenient' and 'inconvenient' young people's voices (2012), arguing that we must understand, recognise and listen to many aspects of those voices, including those which do not fit the standard narrative or conception of the young volunteer. This is an argument that has also been made by Flanagan et al. (1998), whose study of young people's civic engagement across seven countries found young people were more likely to develop democratic dispositions and a sense of social and civic commitment if they first experienced a sense of membership and acceptance within their school.

Leveraging and facilitating social connections

This links in turn to wider findings about the importance of positive relationships and connections in promoting and sustaining young people's volunteering activities. Strong connections with family, friends, religious organisations and schools are a predictor of volunteerism among young people (Duke et al., 2009). Promoting social connections amongst potential young volunteers can also encourage their engagement: enabling young volunteers to work in cooperative groups and promoting social contact between young volunteers can ameliorate the anxieties which may prevent them from beginning or sustaining their volunteering efforts (Haski-Levinthal et al., 2007).

A sense of membership, belonging and acceptance has also been found to be instrumental in the engagement of CALD and Indigenous young people as volunteers. One analysis of youth-led

[Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

voluntary organisations and initiatives in Australia suggests that initiatives which successfully engage young people, including CALD and Indigenous young people, share a number of characteristics: the creation of volunteering activities that are relevant and meaningful for young people as well as enjoyable and that foster young people's personal development and learning; an emphasis on enabling young people to identify issues of concern to them and to address these issues in flexible and creative ways that reflect their own values and priorities and that build on their strengths and abilities; and the creation of an emotionally safe environment characterised by supportive relationships and support from skilled community workers who can also act as role models for young volunteers (Black et al, 2011; Kimberley, 2010).

These characteristics have also been found to be instrumental in the recruitment and retention of young volunteers in general. In the previous section of this review, we identify organisational culture as one of the key barriers to young people's volunteering. The inverse can also be true. Volunteering Queensland's 2010 study of youth-led voluntary organisations found that organisational cultures driven by shared commitments, a focus on reciprocity and an emphasis on positive, bonding relationships encourage the continued engagement of young volunteers. This is echoed by other studies (see for example Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001), which find organisations that involve young people as active and integral participants can expand the extent and outcomes of their volunteering efforts. Such organisational cultures may also have another side, however. Voluntary organisations with strong cultures characterised by common commitments can also create their own hegemonies, attracting only those young people who can conform to those cultures and serving to distance, reject or alienate those who do not (Geale et al., 2010).

One case study involving three Tasmanian non-profit organisations (Moffatt, 2011b) sheds further light on how young people can be successfully engaged and retained as volunteers. This study reinforces the need for organisations to provide meaningful volunteering roles and tasks for young people and for effective leadership and support, including formal and peer mentoring. Where formal training is required, it is recommended that it be brief, fun and practically based. The study also identified a "need for an effective model of community coaching" (Moffatt, 2011b, p. 8) that allows adults and young people to work together in a way that works for all participants. One striking finding in this study was that once young people began volunteering, factors that had previously represented obstacles dissipated and were overcome (Moffatt, 2011b, p. 28). This is also supported by the unsurprising finding that young people who volunteer have a more positive regard for volunteering than those who don't (Hill et al., 2009, p. 5.).

Mandating young people's volunteering

As indicated earlier, a number of studies have suggested that one of the most effective ways of overcoming some of the barriers to young people's volunteering and of facilitating young people's greater and more sustained volunteering is to mandate young people's service to the community (for example, Crocetti et al, 2012; Ferrier et al., 2004). Mandated service already takes place in many schools and universities through service learning, which has been found to positively develop young people's leadership ability and bonds with the community (Harris, 2013; Hill et al., 2009; Martin, 2006; Scales & Roehlkepartain, 2005) and to promote their educational outcomes and pathways to higher education, particularly for young people who belong to groups that are usually under-represented within higher education (Scales & Roehlkepartain, 2005). In 2009, one United Kingdom study estimated that 42,000 students were involved in service learning or similar

programs (Hill et al., 2009). The Left Right Think-Tank has recommended that service learning be embedded in all undergraduate degrees in Australian universities (2011).

One of the strongest arguments in favour of mandated service is that it promotes ongoing youth volunteering in other contexts (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2008; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). Even where young people are initially unenthusiastic about service learning, they tend to have a change of attitude once they are engaged in it (Scales & Roehlkepartain, 2005). Harris's study of service learning in Australian Capital Territory schools, for example, found that regardless of their initial motivations for embarking on service learning activities, young people's feelings of altruism and community connectedness became their primary reasons for continuing these activities. This is also echoed in international studies. In the United States, for example, a study of 3,178 young Americans aged between 12 and 18 found a marked link between young people's school-based service learning and their sense of community (Spring et al., 2007).

Mandating young people's service has also been suggested as a means of overcoming the barriers to volunteering for young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds. There is a strong suggestion from the literature that volunteering has the potential to improve numerous aspects of the lives of such young people (Bittman, 2006; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010), but the self-reinforcing nature of volunteering by young people may mean that this potential is not being realised. As Cemilcilar notes, "when participation is voluntary, only those who are already well-equipped self-select to volunteer, whereas, those who are most in need of this experience refrain from engaging in community service on their own account" (2009, p. 443).

One key question is whether mandated service of this kind can genuinely be understood to be volunteering. Studies warn that mandated service may be counterproductive to ongoing youth volunteering as it relies on external or extrinsic pressures rather than fostering intrinsic motivations (Clary et al., 1998). The importance of giving young people choice and a sense of agency in relation to their volunteering has been highlighted by a number of studies (for example, Holdsworth 2007, 2011; Holdsworth et al., 2005; Warburton and Smith, 2003). A third group of studies suggests that the line between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation may be less well defined for many young volunteers. Pantea's 2013 study of young volunteers in Romania suggests that successful youth volunteering programs reframe volunteering as an activity that is conducted for multiple purposes.

At the same time, there are real questions about whether mandating young people's service may not lead to them feeling exploited, alienated or resentful. There are certainly some findings that mandated service learning can have negative effects (Bittman, 2006; Cemilcilar, 2009). These findings are reinforced by studies into the effect of mutual obligation policies and programs on young people. Savelsberg and Martin-Giles (2008), for example, suggest that such policies and programs are particularly disempowering for socioeconomically disadvantaged young people, especially where they are penalised or punished for 'breaches' or non-compliance with the terms of the mutual obligation program.

Another, related aspect of the debate about the value and social impact of mandated service is the degree to which it offers young people choice and autonomy in relation to how they enact their citizenship and social participation. The importance of young people's decision-making within their volunteering experience emerges as a strong issue within much of the literature (for example, Wilson & Holdsworth, 1991). This echoes the recommendations and

arguments of a large body of literature in relation to young people's social and civic participation overall. These include Ellsworth's study, which highlights the potential for programs of social participation in schools to overlook the right of young people to silence and other forms of resistance (1989). They also include Black's study (2012), which points out that mandated service makes it likely that some young people will produce superficial or compliant behaviours that reveal little about the degree to which they value the experience of social participation and service or the degree to which they are developing the attitudes and feelings of connectedness it is purported to engender.

Compelling young people to volunteer may also have a deterring effect on their future social participation (Walsh & Black, 2011). Large-scale studies suggest that young people do not believe that compulsory programs qualify as volunteering and that they often feel exploited and stigmatised by them (Muir et al., 2009, p. 16). This is also borne out by smaller scale studies such as the report arising from the Junior School Council Congress, which involved approximately 150 primary school students. This report includes observations by a Grade 6 student that volunteering should be neither 'compulsory' nor 'expected' (Kuo, 2014). An alternative view is summarised in an opinion piece published in the United Kingdom, in which the following was argued:

There are two problems in retaining the voluntary principle. First, more marginalized young people are often, for many different and valid reasons, less inclined to take part. Second, the most privileged young people might well see no point. If this prevailed, the point - that all young people made some kind of civic offering, incrementally over time, according to their skills and preferences - would be defeated...Yes, there would be some refuseniks, certainly while a culture of 'service' was bedding in until it came to be simply part of 'what you did' (Williamson, 2004).

Key features of policy settings

Our discussion of the barriers, facilitators and debates in relation to young people's volunteering leads us to the question of the role that policy should play. As the national peak body, Volunteering Australia, suggests, "Public policy has a critical role to play in creating and supporting volunteering initiatives. Volunteering can also be adversely affected by public policy that is indifferent to the concerns of volunteers and volunteer involving organisations" (Volunteering Australia, 2014). To set the context for this section of our discussion, it is useful to broadly categorise policy responses into direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies provide goals, resources and strategies to a given sector, organisation or initiative that promotes youth volunteering. Indirect strategies may include providing support to those organisations and initiatives within which youth volunteering is a component or ancillary part of a wider approach or suite of activities.

Policy is formulated at five broad levels:

1. Through the Federal Government
2. Through state and territory governments
3. At the level of schools

4. At the level of local governments
5. At the level of sectors such as the community sector
6. At the level of individuals and individual institutions.

Broadly speaking, the bulk of activity tends to take place at levels two to five, although there have been some notable policy measures at the Federal level, as outlined below. Overall, the policy landscape is fragmented, inconsistent and lacks long-term coherence. To the latter point, initiatives are often ephemeral in nature and tend to lack rigorous evaluation, as researchers have noted. Consequently, it is difficult to discuss the impact of these initiatives due to a lack of robust evidence. Some key issues across these jurisdictions are outlined below.

1. Federal government policy

To mark the 10th anniversary of the United Nations International Year of Volunteers, the Australian Government developed a National Volunteering Strategy (Australian Government, 2011). This strategy articulated a government commitment to promoting greater engagement with young people in volunteering and the benefits of volunteering for “our nation, for our local communities and for individuals” (Australian Government, 2011, p. 11). This followed a substantial effort to develop federal policy around youth development (including volunteering) several years earlier.

However, the federal policy landscape has changed significantly during the last 12 months as a result of the redistribution of funding away from organisations and initiatives that directly and indirectly promote youth volunteering.

2. State and territory government policy

In a 2007 paper, Holdsworth notes that “youth development programs operated in schools in at least four Australian states since the mid-1990s and these already include, to varying degrees, elements of community service work” (p. 7). In recent years, declining levels of government funding have challenged the activity that is taking place. At the level of state and territory, networks that enable young people to identify volunteering opportunities have also experienced either a decline in funding or are funded on short-term bases, which may constrain their capacity to develop long-term approaches to youth volunteering.

Case study: Advance

An example of government support for volunteering programs is Advance. This school-based program, offered annually in Victorian Government secondary schools, seeks to engage and provide “opportunities for young people between the ages of 14 and 18 to actively participate in their community through volunteering, while learning valuable transferable skills” (Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2012). The program offers service learning through organisations and programs such as conservation programs; the Army, Air Force or Navy cadets; Surf Life Saving; Red Cross; Girl Guides and Scouts; community radio; and St John’s Ambulance and the State Emergency Services (Youth Central, 2014a).

A 2007 evaluation by Victoria University found:

The program goal to enable young people’s participation and volunteering in community life has been achieved and evidenced by:

- Significant growth in the number of young people, community agencies and schools in the program from 2004-07;

- Improvements in some young people's engagement in school and educational pathways through the experiential learning Advance provides;
- Young peoples skill development through learning activities that are challenging, fun and age appropriate;
- Positive, respectful relationships formed between young people, supportive adults and the broader community whilst working together to contribute to their communities;
- Increase in community recognition and celebration of the positive benefits of the program;
- Increase in community organisations capacity to support young people's engagement and participation; and
- Development of supportive, flexible and responsive local partnerships.

In addition, a number of unexpected outcomes for young people were observed. These included:

- increased confidence;
- ability to overcoming barriers associated with a disability;
- informal mentoring opportunities;
- improved understanding of diversity;
- development of leadership skills; and
- improved confidence to undertake new challenges (Victoria University, 2007).

3. Schools

Schools are a major site in which young people are exposed to opportunities to volunteer or engage in service learning. One of the most visible programs available through schools is the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award (2014). Such programs represent "an opportunity for schools to make learning more authentic by introducing structured volunteering programs that attach to the curriculum, as well as using it as a means to satisfy and meet local and national educational goals" (Harris, 2013, p.24). At the same time, there is a risk that these programs suffer from being an 'add-on' at the edge of the curriculum (Volunteering ACT, 2013; Walsh & Black, 2011). We have already noted that service learning programs are most effective if they are integrated into the curriculum and supported within the school timetable. In practice, many programs are 'opt-in', ad hoc and driven by individual teachers, school leaders or community members. Staffing changes, crowded curricula and restraints in school capacity can also limit the ability of schools to provide opportunities for students to participate beyond the school gates (Black, 2008).

Programs such as Advance provide a contrast to this. Advance is a widely supported, school-based program with a significant service learning component that is embedded within the curriculum. Programs such as the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) also provide opportunities for practical work-related experience for young people in Years 11 and 12 (VCAA, 2013).

Another notable example of where opportunities for volunteering are built explicitly into the curriculum is the International Baccalaureate (IB), which is offered in 154 IB World Schools in Australia. The Middle Years Programme (MYP), designed for IB students aged 11 to 16, provides opportunities for volunteering through 'Service as Action (community service)'. Teachers are

[Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

encouraged to foster Action (learning by doing and experiencing) and Service as part of a broader ethos according to which “IB learners strive to be caring members of the community who demonstrate a commitment to service—making a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment” (IB, 2014b). MYP teachers guide these opportunities, which are expressed through practical activities such as the MYP community project, which can include volunteering.

In addition, a core requirement of the Diploma Programme curriculum is Creativity, Action, Service (CAS). This Programme applies to all students aged 16 to 19 undertaking the IB. The CAS requirement seeks to foster learning connections in life beyond schooling and the academic requirements of the IB. It seeks to develop students who are: “aware of themselves as members of communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment” (IB, 2014a). The Service component “requires students to understand their capacity to make a meaningful contribution to their community and society. Through Service, students develop and apply personal and social skills in real-life situations involving decision-making, problem solving, initiative, responsibility, and accountability for their actions.” Volunteering activities can also be pursued as part of this curriculum.

A CAS supervisor, located in each school, is “responsible for assisting students in implementing and developing their personal CAS programmes ... Students are expected to be involved in CAS activities each week during the two years of the Diploma programme” (IB, 2014a). Overall programmes of schools are monitored by the appropriate IB regional office, which for Australian schools is the IB Global Centre in Singapore.

The IB approach to engaging students in activities such as volunteering is particularly notable because it is built into a highly rigorous and internationally recognised curriculum, thus signalling that it is possible to embed opportunities for volunteerism systematically. A recommendation here is to investigate this curriculum framework and its wider applicability to schooling in Australia. It suggests a possibility for developing embedded opportunities for volunteering beyond the perceived constraints of a ‘crowded curriculum’ already prevalent in schooling in Australia. It should be noted, however, that there is a paucity of evidence and research in relation to the efficacy of this curriculum in relation to the types of volunteering arising from the IB, as well as the broader efficacy of the IB in developing a lifelong disposition to volunteer.

4. Local governments

Local communities can open up valuable assets and facilities and play an active role in determining and building young people’s volunteering capacity. Local councils can also play a key role in facilitating these activities. In Tasmania, for example, it has been argued that there is a clear need to: develop more effective volunteer sector links; to enable organisations to develop coaching and other important skills; and to help open up facilities and assets within their local areas (Moffatt, 2011b).

5. Community sector

Other actors in the volunteering space include non-profit organisations and businesses that provide opportunities for staff members to engage in volunteering activities (for example, as part of corporate social responsibility activities) as well as opportunities for young people to participate in unpaid work experience such as internships. However, following on from the definition of engagement as “the meaningful participation and sustained involvement of a young

person in an activity, with a focus outside him or herself”, internships are excluded from the definition used in this review (Centres for Excellence for Children's Wellbeing, undated, p.1).

Non-profit organisations are particularly active in promoting opportunities for youth volunteering both within and beyond the school gates. State level organisations such as the Youth Affairs Councils (YACs) play significant roles alongside traditional youth sector organisations such as the Scouts, Girl Guides, YWCA, YMCA and Red Cross. Beyond providing volunteering opportunities, organisations such as the YACs have also been active in researching and resourcing approaches to youth volunteering (Wynne, 2011, 2013; YACVic 2012).

There are also organisations that seek to make a national impact in relation to young people's volunteering and social participation. The Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) is an example of this.² Its initiatives include Young People Without Borders (FYA, 2014a), which creates pathways and opportunities for young Australians to experience and become immersed in the Asian region as volunteers, and Change It Up, a platform designed to promote young people's social participation in their local communities (FYA, 2014b).

Non-profit organisations have also played a significant role in developing definitions and standards of volunteering. Volunteering South Australia and Volunteering Northern Territory have developed, for example, strategies and training packs for managing volunteers (Volunteering SA-NT, 2014). There have also been some national attempts to develop standards of volunteering. Ausyouth, for example, has played a specific role of addressing young people's service learning based within schools. Responding to, and involving, national community and service organisations, Ausyouth developed a series of issues papers, policy documents and protocols in this area (see Patterson, 2001).

Around the same time, Volunteering Australia has sought to develop and promote shared definitions and standards in the development of: “a general policy that commits the organisation to establishing an effective system for managing volunteers; management system policies that state the organisation's intentions with respect to key elements of the volunteer management system;” and “operational procedures that describe how the policies of the organisation will be accomplished” (Volunteering Australia, 2001, p. 16). These standards do not explicitly address young people, however, or the specific issues and challenges associated with youth volunteering. This gap becomes salient when considering the possible risks associated with exploitation and risks to health and safety that may not be well understood by young people (although the work of Ausyouth addressed some of these issues).

For example, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training (HOR) has identified some potential risks that are relevant to this review (HOR, 2009). There are particular risks faced by teenagers who are working while studying. For example, while undertaking work can be beneficial, working too many hours can undermine young people's educational outcomes and general wellbeing (HOR, 2009, p.17). In addition, the Inquiry noted potential problems involving risk-taking in the workplace. Young people may be unaware of their rights and responsibilities, and face risks of potential exploitation or occupational health and safety risks. The same risks apply to levels and understanding of rights and responsibilities while volunteering.

² Disclaimer: The authors of this review were previously researchers at the Foundation for Young Australians.
[Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

Policy measures seeking to promote volunteering in schools share some key wider risks with youth volunteering initiatives in general. In a recent review of the International Baccalaureate's Creativity, Action, Service curriculum, for example, it was noted that "safety issues abound", such as "scurrilous opportunities for volunteering that are concealed money-making ventures" (IB, 2011, p.8). However, where guidelines such as those provided by Volunteering Victoria (2011) outline the right to "a safe and healthy workplace", "be covered by insurance" and "say 'no' if you are being exploited", these are at risk of being compromised where young people either lack sufficient knowledge about what constitutes the first two or do not feel empowered to raise the third in an "adult" environment. Websites such as JobWatch (2014) and Youth Central (2014b), a Victorian Government website for young people aged 12-25, provide more detailed advice. The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria with support from the State Government has also developed the YERP website (yerp.yacvic.org.au), which includes information about young people's roles as volunteers. This type of information is scattered across the web, and young volunteers who do not know the specific organisation or keyword to look for may not be aware that this information exists.

A final point to be made here relates to the role of governments in supporting non-government organisations that seek to promote volunteering. Oppenheimer (2008) notes that "Apart from two states, South Australia and Western Australia, governments have been excruciatingly slow in recognising the important role of volunteering and the third sector". In the final section of this review, it is recommended that governments play a more significant role in brokering and supporting the important work of this sector.

6. Individuals and individual institutions

The National Volunteering Strategy (Australian Government, 2011) suggests that volunteering work for young people, as distinct from older volunteers, is often linked to identity-formation and a desire for new experiences. The Strategy has been criticised by the Left Right Think-Tank for failing to mention youth-led organisations (Bassett et al., 2011, p.3). The United Kingdom's Russell Commission, which outlined a national youth-led framework for engagement and action to increase the quality, diversity and quality of youth volunteering, also argued for youth-led approaches wherever possible (Hill et al., 2009, p. 1).

This affirms recommendations from other research that "young people regard programs more positively and report improved outcomes for themselves, where they also experience greater youth participation" (Holdsworth et al., 2007, p. 13). In Australia, youth-led social enterprises have had some success in galvanising young people's social participation. These enterprises typically rely on volunteers to drive their cause or purpose. The AYCC is a good example.

Case study: The Australian Youth Climate Coalition

AYCC is a youth-led, youth-oriented enterprise that uses information and communication technologies in combination with conventional campaigning mechanisms and education to enable human and resource mobilisation to engage young people in learning about and taking action in response to climate change. A key purpose of this enterprise is to create a social movement around responding to climate change with the aim, in turn, of bringing about lasting political change (Walsh, in press).

In 2009, the AYCC initiated Power Shift, a national youth climate summit that brought together 1500 of the AYCC's most active members at the University of Western Sydney for three days of training and workshops in campaigning and grassroots organisation. The event culminated in a flash mob event on the steps of the Sydney Opera House. Two months later, the AYCC organised Youth Decide, which mobilised over 37,000 young people aged 12 to 29 to vote for the future world they want to inherit. Young people voted either online or at one of over 300 local voting events held around the country. The campaign included a concert in Melbourne's Federation Square attended by approximately 4,500 young people. The AYCC has used its online presence as a platform to provide information about particular policy agendas, projects and campaigns, such as the development of a Green curriculum to educate young Australians about environmental sustainability, and to convene large groups of people to take action 'face-to-face'. (It is important to note, however, that while AYCC has been successful in raising awareness and youth participation, it could be argued that its broader mandate to shift thinking and action around climate change has not been rigorously evaluated).

Youth-led initiatives have become more widespread in the United Kingdom during the last several years. 'Changemakers', for example, operates a partnership in schools and youth organisations in the United Kingdom. It enables young people aged 11 to 25 to design, manage, help resource, and review projects for themselves and their own communities. Other examples of youth-led social participation are the United Kingdom Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund, both of which provide youth-managed funding opportunities (Hill et al., 2009, p. 13).

Enabling youth-led activity

A number of models have been developed to enable this kind of youth-led activity. The Youth Innovation Fund (YIF) model, for example, promotes innovation, impact and efficiency and provides young people with an opportunity to design and implement volunteer projects that contribute to increased employability, community engagement and life skills. It is a flagship program developed by the World Bank Youth to Youth Community (Y2Y). This model consists of five simple steps to make an idea a reality:



Figure 1: YIF model of idea to reality (p.3)

This program further recommends project leaders receive training to ensure positive outcomes, and that communication and management structures be centralised to improve the institutional memory (due to transitional nature of voluntary positions) and improve flexibility in funding between fiscal years (Cox, 2010).

Features of best practice models

There is a solid body of frameworks for good practice in young people's volunteering (such as, Patterson, 2001; Gilding et al., 2002). However, as outlined previously, there are also numerous examples of volunteering structures that are varied and typically lacking in the evidence necessary to inform what constitutes 'best practice'. Drawing from a limited evidence base (which relies almost exclusively on case-studies), four dimensions of good practice are discussed below: the youth-readiness of organisations working with young volunteers; the need for approaches to be relevant to context and socially inclusive; the need for approaches to create meaningful opportunities for young people; and the need to develop better measurements of success.

A recent Australian report recommended that voluntary organisations need to be flexible in their expectations of young people by recognising that they have other time commitments and ensuring that the young people they engage are positively recognised for their contributions (Gregor et al., 2014). The report urges voluntary organisations to identify the interests and motivations of their young volunteers and to work to engage them with their projects. It also encourages organisations to utilise youth networks to reach out to young people, in particular through online platforms and higher and further education institutions. Youth ambassador programs are also an effective way to encourage more young people to volunteer. The authors propose that "meaningful engagement is about aligning the needs of your volunteers with the needs of your organisation" (Gregor et al., 2014, p. 20). They call for organisations to monitor young volunteers' satisfaction and promote their belonging by giving them a title (other than volunteer), a sense of ownership, and an ability to interact with the organisation in both formal (such as board or committee membership) and informal ways (such as social networks).

An illustrative example is *Active Citizens in Schools (ACiS)*, a United Kingdom pilot scheme that engaged 11 to 15 year olds in sustained volunteering activities through their schools. This youth-led approach had more than 5,000 young participants. It employed five key support mechanisms:

[Youth volunteering in Australia: An evidence review](#)

action planning; employing a paid youth worker; extensive training; regular communication; and a flexible framework (Hill et al., 2009, p. 19). Schools involved in the pilot scheme reported enhanced student behaviour, higher positive profiling and improved ethics in schools, while over 80% of students reported a positive experience.

Case study: St John Ambulance Australia

The majority of the volunteer base of St John Ambulance Australia (55%) is under the age of 25. St John Ambulance Australia has developed the following principles for engaging young people in volunteer: valuing young people in their diversity; young people's contributions are meaningful and make a difference; young people can develop and build on skills and competencies; young volunteers' views and ideas, as contributions, are valued and should be recognised; volunteering should be interesting and fun and allow the opportunity for young people to form relationships with others; organisations need to accommodate the training of young volunteers for required skills; and organisations need to engage with relevant contemporary forms of communication (Boessler & Ding, 2010). St John Ambulance Australia also acknowledges that it needs to provide particular short term and flexible volunteering opportunities if it is going to attract more young people to volunteer.

A report by Volunteering Tasmania, entitled *GYV: Generation Y Volunteer* (Adams, 2009), outlines effective ways in which young people can be encouraged to volunteer. The report found that young volunteers were motivated by sharing skills, by the social aspect of volunteering, by altruism, and by the fact they were asked to volunteer in the first instance. They were also engaged in activities that aligned with leadership roles, decision making and communication skills. By contrast, those young people who disengaged from volunteering tended to be in what were considered menial tasks with limited opportunities for the development of professional skills. The report suggests that "the greatest success for organisations involving young volunteers seems to stem from their early interactions through schools" (Adams, 2009, p. 30). It also argues that volunteering, through creating community links, may prevent young people from prematurely leaving education. A major finding of this report is that young people are enthusiastic about volunteering but do not have access to information about a broad range of volunteering opportunities.

These examples have clear overlapping themes that provide insight into the features of best practice in youth volunteering. In their review of good practice in volunteering nationally and internationally, Gilding, Sanders and Patterson (2002) apply relevant principles of good practice to young people. They identify three broad areas for consideration: the task of attracting, engaging and sustaining volunteer contribution.

The following discussion also draws from other research of the experiences of organisations, peak bodies and young people in Tasmania (Crowley et al., 2008; Webb & Bird, 2010; Moffatt, 2011a). The collective findings and recommendations of this research echo international experience (see for example, Hill & Russell, 2009; Pye et al., 2009; V Informed, 2007, 2008) and

provide a good basis upon which to discuss the features of best practice. These features or models can be divided into four overlapping and interrelated areas:

1. Being 'ready' for young people
2. Being relevant to context
3. Enabling meaningful participation
4. Measuring success.

The following discussion explores these four features, drawing from specific programs and models that align with 'best practice'. It outlines the role of government and organisations in promoting young people's volunteering. It also explores the broad policy levers available to government, such as incentives, recognition systems, building capacity, strategic communication and social marketing.

Organisations need to be 'ready' for young people

It has been argued that "fewer young people now volunteer because traditional voluntary organisations have an image problem and need to reposition themselves" (Auld, 2004, p. 11). This in part requires organisations to rethink how they engage the recruitment and retention of young volunteers. Haski-Leventhal has developed a third-party model that seeks to understand the ways that political leadership, corporations and educational institutions attempt to enhance volunteering (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). 'Volunteerability', or what makes a person more or less able / willing to volunteer, and 'recruitability', or the ability of organisations to recruit volunteers, are both key aspects of this theoretical framework. Understanding volunteerability and recruitability are key concepts in developing good practice in youth volunteering. The practical implementation of these is unpacked below.

Developing organisational culture that is fit for purpose is arguably a foundation of good practice. Given the need for flexibility identified by many young people requires particular leadership approaches, ensuring that the right organisational culture is in place is worth considering (Moffatt, 2011a). For example, organisations need, where possible, to be prepared to adapt the length or regularity of their volunteer roles to address transient time commitments.

Management style is also important. An Australian study on young volunteers in sport found the ways young volunteers are managed by organisations (for example, via training, communication, and skills acquisition) influence young people's decision to be involved in volunteering (Auld, 2004).

Other aspects of organisational culture are also significant. Willems and Walk (2013) outline key challenges to youth volunteering. Firstly, organisations need to understand the ways contemporary younger volunteers trade-off the concrete advantages and disadvantages of their involvement in volunteering. They also need to be able to meet these fluxing expectations, as they impacts strongly on young people's continued volunteering. Secondly, organisations should allow individual young volunteers to engage in tasks that satisfy their individual functional motives. This requires a targeted approach to identify the specific needs of young volunteers. In a recent qualitative study (Geale et al., 2010), Volunteering Queensland examined key factors that inspire and engage young people in volunteering practices. One of the key findings was that organisational culture is critical in promoting shared passion between young volunteers, that

young volunteers want to exercise creative tasks in autonomous ways within boundaries and with support from organisations, and that the strong relational aspects of bonding / friendships through volunteering needed to be recognised.

Communicating with young people

This same study also found regular dialogue and conversations with young volunteers is critical. Effective models of youth volunteering communicate with young people through their preferred styles and media of communication (Moffatt, 2011b). Research suggests that organisations seeking to develop young people's volunteering would benefit by focusing on the use of digital technologies to target young volunteer audiences (Moffatt, 2011a).

This strategy is particularly salient for certain types of organisations. The House of Representative Standing Committee Report (2008), *The Value of Volunteering*, noted that "volunteer using organisations" (VUOs) are less likely to attract young people to join them as opposed to the sports and recreation sector. A danger here lies in terminology. The phrase 'volunteer using organisations' implies a reduction of young people's volunteering to an instrumentality. It suggests a utilitarian approach to volunteering that may not capture the wider social benefits of young people's participation, and which may discourage and disempower potential young participants in the process.

Arguably, the AYCC has been successful in communicating with young people because it is led by young people. As we describe above, the AYCC uses social media and non-media events, such as public gatherings, to build young people's support and involvement. This echoes other studies, which find that a mixture of approaches is essential for organisations to recruit young volunteers. These approaches should draw on "existing peer networks, schools, colleges, universities, youth centres" and online hubs (Moffatt, 2011a). A web presence is particularly important as a first port of call for marketing information. Personal approaches through peer networks, schools and families are also effective for local, community-focused voluntary organisations.

Young people should also be the 'face' of any youth volunteer recruitment campaigns. Using young people as ambassadors who can talk about what they get from their roles helps other potential young people to put themselves in 'volunteers' shoes'. Having a personal point of contact within the organisation has also been recognised as key for maintaining young people's interest once they make contact.

Streamlined recruitment processes

An important practical dimension of recruitability is to keep the process simple and brief. Moffatt (2011a) found that onerous recruitment processes should be avoided so as not to deter potential young volunteers. As we discuss earlier, research is also needed into what recruitment strategies can best engage those young people who are not otherwise likely to volunteer (Astin & Sax, 1998).

Mentoring and training

Peer mentoring is valued by young volunteers. Peer ambassadors and mentors can reassure potential young volunteers by offering support and accessing their influencers (including schools and other educational institutions, families, and peers) (Moffatt, 2011b). Training is a necessary part of mentoring, and can be both formal and informal, although any formal training should be

“brief, fun and as practical as possible” (Moffatt, 2011a, p. 4). Moffatt (2011a, p. 4) suggests that good practice includes an “effective model of community coaching, that enables adults to work with and develop young people on terms that work for both of them.”

Incentives can work

The House of Representative Standing Committee Report cited above (2008) suggests that VUOs could do more to engage with and promote volunteering among younger people through educational institutions. The reduction of education fees has been proposed to encourage volunteering. While this approach has also been criticised for providing inappropriate financial incentives for volunteering, the evidence suggests that such incentives can work. An evaluation of the Young Volunteer Challenge, for example, found that financial incentives facilitated the participation of a greater diversity of young volunteers, including a greater diversity of socioeconomic, ethnicity, gender, disability and qualification characteristics (Hill et al., 2009, p. 11).

Other incentives include awards. Millennium Volunteers, a United Kingdom initiative directed at young people aged 16 to 24, used an award scheme funded by the Department of Education and Skills. This scheme recognised young participants with an award after the completion of 200 hours of volunteering in either a self-directed project or via a voluntary organisation. It was successful in attracting young people from a diversity of ethnic backgrounds who had not volunteered before (Hill et al., 2009, p. 18). In Australia, the Duke of Edinburgh International Award provides formal recognition of and accreditation for volunteering within schools as well as with the community. It has had a close relationship with school-based programs such as Advance in Victoria.

The Young Volunteer Challenge (YVC) was another United Kingdom-based pilot project that sought to remove financial barriers from potential volunteers from socioeconomically disadvantaged situations. From 2003 to 2005, it offered 18 to 19 year olds an Educational Maintenance Allowance for nine-month volunteer placements over a 30-hour volunteering week. The scheme had a positive response from participants who mostly remained in the program for at least six months and claimed to have improved soft skills such as communication and teamwork. However, there were difficulties recruiting participants due to the limited eligibility criteria. YVC also experienced some resistance promoting the scheme within schools and career advisory services (Hill et al., 2009, p. 20). These last two factors are important barriers to recruitability.

Approaches need to be relevant and appropriate to the context and inclusive

Approaches to young people’s volunteering need to be applicable to particular locations. For example, one review found “there seem to be some Tasmanian-specific challenges within the size and scale of the state, particularly in maintaining confidentiality and sensitivity when volunteering within smaller communities, and maintaining volunteers’ momentum between the infrequent state event-based opportunities and between the relatively short volunteering ‘seasons’ for sports and outdoor volunteering activities compared to other Australian states” (Moffatt, 2011a, p. 3).

Certain groups, such as those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage, may require a more nuanced and inclusive approach. Haski-Leventhal characterises the experience of volunteering for socioeconomically disadvantaged groups as two-fold: firstly, they are often recipients, or intended recipients, of the volunteer service; and secondly, they may themselves also be

volunteers. She uses Maslow's hierarchy of needs to point out that while volunteers work to fulfil esteem and self-actualisation needs (higher needs), the recipients may have physiological and safety needs (basic lower needs). To maintain an inclusive approach, she recommends that particular attention be given to include socioeconomically disadvantaged people in providing services. Drawing from the success of organisations such as Surf Lifesaving Australia, she also recommends that organisations enact a pro-active policy to recruit young volunteers from their own service base (Haski-Leventhal, 2009).

An alternative approach seeks to develop awareness of, and critical responses to, socioeconomic disadvantage through volunteering and social participation. These activities could be seen as a means of developing the knowledge and capacities of young people to take direct action in relation to socioeconomic disadvantage or other issues. Participation in movements such as the AYCC described elsewhere in this review, which rely heavily on volunteering, typically feature a 'political' dimension in which young people seek to influence change. Issues of power, its definition, how it is viewed by young people, and young people's motivations for social participation all become salient here (Walsh, in press).

Create meaningful volunteer roles for young people

As with other types of participation by young people, volunteering needs to be meaningful and positive to the volunteer. Volunteers need to feel that their contribution is acknowledged and valued. The Schools Volunteering Project, run with Year 8 and 9 students at Wynyard High School Tasmania in 2012, sought to inspire young people to engage in a lifelong volunteering trajectory. It recognised young people as leaders and aimed to develop their confidence, skills and networks through volunteering. Importantly, this program was intent on providing meaningful volunteer roles for their young volunteers and acknowledged their prior skills, and successfully matched students' interests and skills to organisations and improved school engagement. (In one case an 'at risk' student not only became more positively engaged in the community, but also claimed that it was the best schooling experience he'd ever had) (Volunteering Queensland, 2013).

One final point relates to organisational culture. There is sometimes a disconnect between what young people are looking for in a volunteering experience and the belief of voluntary organisations that they can accommodate this (Adams, 2009; Crowley et al., 2008; Moffatt, 2011a, p. 3). Organisations need to be clear that they are fit for purpose when it comes to recruiting young people, and that they communicate this clearly to potential and existing recruits as outlined above. They also need to be aware of the kinds of standards and codes of conduct mentioned above. Most importantly, giving primacy to the needs of young people is key here. Consequently, organisations need to be clear about why young people are interested in volunteering and the ends which their volunteering serves.

Make the volunteering activity appealing

Building on our previous discussion of young people's motivations, we come back to the fact that young volunteers participate to gain and develop a range of personal and vocational skills, as well as make a contribution to society. Hands-on experiences of learning are also highly valued by young people (Moffatt, 2011b). Voluntary organisations can offer these experiences but need to be able to identify and articulate them to the youth volunteer market (Moffatt, 2011a).

Measuring success in volunteering

Measures of the success of a youth volunteer program can be broadly divided into two groups: measures for individual young people and measures for groups of young people. Measures for individual young people may include the acquisition of: a sense of meaning or purpose; a sense of bonding or belonging; and a sense of decision-making or control (Phillips, 1990). In their longitudinal study of young people participating in state-run community service programs in schools in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia, Holdsworth et al (2005) found that the “most highly valued outcomes were those of increased personal confidence and inter-personal skills (such as teamwork), as well as a range of specific and practical skills” (p. 72). They rightly suggest “The success of youth development programs is based not just on ‘what the young people do’ but on ‘what they gain’” (Holdsworth et al., 2005, p. 72).

It is important that measures of success reflect the needs and interests of participants, as well as the organisation or initiative. In addition, the “application of the knowledge, skills and attitudes developed within these programs can influence on-going learning, and have a broader impact on participants’ lives and on their relationship with other young people. Young people have taken on leadership roles in school and community organisations following their involvement in youth development programs, and this was attributed to the acquisition of new skills and opportunities to apply them in different situations” (Holdsworth et al., 2005, p. 72).

Measures of the success of a youth volunteer program for groups of young people may include a wider range of factors:

1. Numbers of volunteers
2. Diversity of volunteers
3. The degree to which volunteers engage in a given program or initiative, which has as its corollary the quality of interactions
4. The level of retention in a given program or initiative (although Moffatt suggests that engagement can be more valuable than retention)
5. Whether volunteers feel as predisposed to further volunteering after a given program or initiative
6. Whether volunteers develop a habit for life (Moffatt, 2011a).

Another related measure is whether the type of activity is effective and / or makes an impact. This can be a key motivator in points three to six above.

As highlighted throughout this review, “there has been comparatively little focus on the involvement of young people in volunteering” where “Limited quality research on youth volunteering exists and governments have done little to establish clear priorities and goals for youth volunteering” (Bassett et al., 2011, p. 2). Given this lack of evidence, it is particularly important that volunteering organisations seek to “capture all activity (informal and formal) in reporting on volunteering” and “share knowledge about what works” (Moffatt, 2011a, p. 6).

Returning to a recurring theme of this review, the evidence base also needs to be widened to include the different and non-conventional ways that young people participate. As one United

Kingdom study found, young people are active in their communities but this activity is often obscured or unrecognised (as opposed to adult participation) (Smith et al., 2005). The researchers call for a “constructive social participation model of citizenship” (Smith et al., 2005, p. 441) that implements a shift from intervention policy that is exclusionary, to an inclusive policy that gives greater recognition and support for what young people do as citizens (including volunteering).

References

- Adams, N. (2009). GYV:Generation Y Volunteer. *Youth Development*. Tasmania: Volunteering Tasmania.
- Anderton, A., & Abbot, R. (2009). Youth Engagement - deliberative research. London: Youth Citizenship Commission.
- Astin, A. W., & Sax, L. J. (1998). How Undergraduates Are Affected by Service Participation. *Journal of College Student Development*, 39(3), 251-263.
- Auld, C. (2004). Behavioural characteristics of student volunteers. *Australian Journal of Volunteering*, 9(2), 8-18.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2005). *Australian Social Trends*. Canberra: Australian Government Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/7d12b0f6763c78caca257061001cc588/18173651bd0e7f4fca25703b0080ccc2!OpenDocument>.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2007). *Voluntary Work. Australia*. Canberra: Australian Government Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4441.02010?OpenDocument>.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2009). *Australian National Accounts: Non-Profit Institutions Satellite Account, 2006-07*. Canberra: Australian Government Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/5256.02006-07?OpenDocument>.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2010). *Voluntary Work. Australia*. Canberra: Australian Government Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4441.02010?OpenDocument>.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2012). *A comparison of Volunteering Rates from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing and the 2006 General Social Survey*. Canberra: Australian Government Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4441.0.55.002Jun%202012>.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2014a). *Australian National Accounts: Non-Profit Institutions Satellite Account, 2012-13*. Canberra: Australian Government Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/5256.02006-07?OpenDocument>.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2014b). Spotlight on National Accounts Retrieved 12/09/2014, 2014, from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/5202.0Main+Features1May%202014>

- Australian Government. (2008). *Volunteering in Australia: Changing patterns in voluntary work*. Canberra.
- Australian Government. (2011). *National Volunteering Strategy*. Canberra: Department of Prime-Minister and Cabinet Retrieved from <http://www.savolunteeringstrategy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/National-Volunteering-Strategy.pdf>.
- Avrahami, A., & Dar, Y. (1993). Collectivistic and individualistic motives among kibbutz youth volunteering for community service. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 22(6), 697-714.
- Bassett, K., Troy, D., Scarce, L., & McLaren, A. (2011). Youth Volunteering. Fortitude Valley: Left Right Think-Tank.
- Bell, J., Vromen, A., & Collin, P. (2008). Rewriting the rules for youth participation: Inclusion and diversity in government and community decision making *National Youth Affairs Research Scheme*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Bernardini, J. (2014). The Infantilization of the Postmodern Adult and the Figure of Kidult. *Postmodern Openings*, 5(2): 39-55.
- Bessant, J. (2000). Civil Conscription or Reciprocal Obligation: The Ethics of 'Work-for-the-Dole'. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 35(1), 15-33.
- Bittman, M. (2006). *Exploring the economic and social value of present patterns of volunteering in Australia*. Canberra: Canberra : Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
- Black, R. (2008). *Beyond the Classroom: Building new school networks*. Melbourne, ACER Press.
- Black, R. (2012). *Educating the reflexive citizen: making a difference or entrenching difference*. Melbourne: The University of Melbourne.
- Black, R., Taylor, F., & Walsh, L. (2011). Young people on the margins: what works in youth participation. *Youth Studies Australia*, 30, 42-48.
- Blanchard, M., Metcalf, A., & Burns, J. (2008). *Bridging the digital divide: young people's perspectives on taking action*. Sydney: Inspire Foundation.
- Boessler, J., & Ding, B. (2010). Gen Y and flexible volunteering. *National Emergency Response*, 24(1), 14-17.
- Bragg, S. (2001). Taking a joke: Learning from the voices we don't want to hear. *Forum*, 43(2), 70-73.
- Bringle, R., Hatcher, J., & McIntosh, R. (2006). Analyzing Morton's Typology of Service Paradigms and Integrity. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 13(1), 5-15.

- Brown, K., Lipsig-Mumme, C., & Zajdow, G. (2003). Active Citizenship and the Secondary School Experience: Community Participation rates of Australian Youth *Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth*. Camberwell: ACER and Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training.
- Cemalcilar, Z. (2009). Understanding individual characteristics of adolescents who volunteer. *Personality and Individual Differences, 46*(4), 432-436.
- Centres for Excellence for Children's Wellbeing (undated). What is Youth Engagement? Canada, at: http://www.engagementcentre.ca/files/Whatis_WEB_e.pdf
- Clary, E. G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R. D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A. A., & Haugen, J. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*, 1516-1530.
- Comber, B., Nixon, H., Ashmore, L., Loo, S., & Cook, J. (2006). Urban renewal from the inside out: Spatial and critical literacies in a low socioeconomic school community. *Mind, Culture and Activity, 13*(3), 228-246.
- Cornelis, I., Van Hiel, A., & De Cremer, D. (2013). Volunteer work in youth organizations: predicting distinct aspects of volunteering behavior from self- and other-oriented motives. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 43*(2), 456-466.
- Cox, P. (2010). The YIF Model. Washington: World Bank.
- Crocetti, E., Jahromi, P., & Meeus, W. (2012). Identity and civic engagement in adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence, 35*, 521-532.
- Crowley, S., Stirling, C., Orpin, P., Kilpatrick, S., (2008). Sustainability of Rural Volunteers in Tasmania. Hobart: University of Tasmania.
- Department of Premier and Cabinet (2012). 420 schools to Advance volunteering in 2012, Media Release, 11 May 2012 at: <http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/3871-420-schools-to-advance-volunteering-in-2012.html>
- Duke of Edinburgh's International Award (2014). at: <http://www.dukeofed.com.au>
- Duke, N. N., Skay, C. L., Pettingell, S. L., & Borowsky, I. W. (2009). From Adolescent Connections to Social Capital: Predictors of Civic Engagement in Young Adulthood. *J. Adolesc. Health, 44*(2), 161-168.
- Edwards, D. (2005). It's Mostly about Me: Reasons why volunteers contribute their time to museums and art museums. *Tourism Review International, 9*, 21-31.
- Eley, D. (2001). The impact of volunteering on citizenship qualities in young people. *Voluntary Action, 4*(1), 65-82.
- Ellis, S. J. (2007). By the numbers: what donors can learn from volunteer statistics. *The Non-profit Times, 21*, 18-19.
- Ellsworth, E. (1989). Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy. *Harvard Educational Review, 59*(3), 297-324.

- Ferrier, F., Roos, I., & Long, M. (2004). *Passions, People and Appreciation: making volunteering work for young people*. Canberra: National Youth Affairs Research Scheme.
- Fielding, M. (2003). The Impact of Impact. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33(2), 289-295.
- Flanagan, C. A., Bowes, J. M., Jonsson, B., Csapo, B., & Sheblanova, E. (1998). Ties that Bind: Correlates of Adolescents' Civic Commitments in Seven Countries. *Journal of Social Issues*, 54(3), 457-475.
- Flanagan, C. A. & Levine, P. (2010). Civic Engagement and the Transition to Adulthood. *The Future of Children*, 20(1): 159 -179.
- Fletcher, A. (2012). Convenient or inconvenient student voice? *Connect*, 197, 18.
- Foundation for Young Australians (2014a), at: <http://www.fya.org.au/inside-fya/initiatives/young-people-without-borders>
- Foundation for Young Australians (2014b), at: <http://www.fya.org.au/inside-fya/initiatives/change-it-up>
- Gage, R. L., & Thapa, B. (2012). Volunteer Motivations and Constraints Among College Students: Analysis of the Volunteer Function Inventory and Leisure Constraints Models. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 41(3), 405-430.
- Geale, J., Creyton, M., Tindoy, M., & Radovic, A. (2010). Youth leading Youth: a look at organisations led by young people. Queensland: Volunteering Queensland.
- Gilding, N., Sanders, C and Patterson, J. (2002). Volunteering and youth development: making a positive difference; good practice - an implementation guide. Adelaide: Ausyouth.
- Gregor, E., Geale, J., & Creyton, M. (2014). Young People as Volunteers: A guide to moving beyond traditional practices. Queensland: Volunteering Queensland.
- Hankinson, P., & Rochester, C. (2005). The face and voice of volunteering: a suitable case for branding? *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 10(2), 93-105.
- Hardy, S. A., Pratt, M. W., Pancer, S. M., Olsen, J. A., & Lawford, H. L. (2010). Community and religious involvement as contexts of identity change across late adolescence and emerging adulthood. *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, 35, 125-135.
- Harris, C. (2013). Promoting youth engagement and well being through student volunteer programs in schools. Canberra: Volunteering ACT.
- Hart, D., Donnelly, T.M., Youniss, J. & Atkins, R. (2007). High School Community Service as a Predictor of Adult Voting and Volunteering. *American Educational Research Journal*, 44(1), 197-219.
- Haski-Leventhal, D. (2009). Addressing social disadvantage through volunteering. Canberra: The Centre for Social Impact.

- Haski-Leventhal, D., Cnaan, R., Handy, F., Brudney, J., Holmes, K., Hustinx, L., . . . Zrinscak, S. (2008). Students' Vocational Choices and Voluntary Action: A 12-Nation Study. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 19(1), 1-21.
- Haski-Leventhal, D., Lucas C. P. M, & Hustinx, L. (2010). The Third-party Model: Enhancing Volunteering through Governments, Corporations and Educational Institutes. *Journal of Social Policy*, 39(01), 139-158.
- Hill, J. P., & den Dulk, K. R. (2013). Religion, Volunteering, and Educational Setting: The Effect of Youth Schooling Type on Civic Engagement. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 52(1), 179-197.
- Hill, M., Russell, J., & Brewis, G. (2009). Young people, volunteering and youth projects: A rapid review of recent evidence. London: Institute of Volunteering Research.
- Holdsworth, R. (2007). Servants or shapers? Young people, volunteering and the community. Working Paper 26. Melbourne: Youth Research Centre.
- Holdsworth, R., Lake, M., Stacey, K. & Stafford, J. (2005). Doing Positive Things: "You have to go out and do it": Outcomes for Participants in Youth Development Programs – A Report of a Three-Year Longitudinal Study. Canberra: Australian Government Youth Bureau, Department of Community and Family Services
- Holdsworth, R., Stokes, H., Blanchard, M., & Mohamed, N. (2007). Civic Engagement and Young People. Melbourne: Youth Research Centre.
- House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training (HOR) (2009). Adolescent overload? Report of the inquiry into combining school and work: supporting successful youth transitions. House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training. October 2009. Canberra: Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia.
- House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth (HOR). (2008). The Value of Volunteering. Canberra: Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia.
- International Baccalaureate (IB) (2011). Discussion document for the curriculum review of creativity, action, service, at: <http://www.ibo.org/research/programmedevelopment/programmedevstudies/documents/CurriculumReviewofCASeng.pdf>
- International Baccalaureate (IB) (2014a). Diploma Programme curriculum—core requirements, at: <http://www.ibo.org/diploma/curriculum/core/cas/>
- International Baccalaureate (IB) (2014b). Middle Years Programme curriculum framework, at <http://www.ibo.org/myp/curriculum/>
- Jahromi, P., Crocetti, E., & Buchanan, C. M. (2012). A cross-cultural examination of adolescent civic engagement: Comparing Italian and American community-oriented

and political involvement. *Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community*, 40(1), 22-36.

JobWatch (2014). JobWatch Employment Rights Legal Centre. Available from: <http://www.jobwatch.org.au>

Johnston, F., Grogan, K. & Savelsberg, H. (2004). *Young people and volunteering*. Adelaide: University of South Australia.

Jones, A. (2011). Theorising international youth volunteering: training for global (corporate) work? *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 36, 530–544.

Jones, F. (2000). Youth volunteering on the rise. *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, 12(1), 36-42.

Kahn, L., McNeil, B., Patrick, R., Sellick, V., Thompson, K., & Walsh, L. (2012). Developing skills for life and work: Accelerating social and emotional learning across South Australia. Adelaide: The Australian Centre for Social Innovation and the Foundation for Young Australians.

Kerr, L., Savelsberg, H., Sparrow, S. & Tedmanson, D. (2001). Experiences and perceptions of volunteering in Indigenous and non-English speaking background communities. Adelaide: Social Policy Research Group, University of South Australia.

Kimber, B. (2014). "Coalition announces it will fund LLENs in 2015." *The Ararat Advertiser*. 15 August 2014, at: <http://www.araratadvertiser.com.au/story/2489815/coalition-announces-it-will-fund-l-lens-in-2015/>

Kimberley, M. (2010). *What Works Australia: Inclusive Approaches with Young People*. Melbourne: Foundation for Young Australians.

Kuo, C. (2014). Primary school students take over Parliament. *Connect*, 209, 3-5. Available from: <http://research.acer.edu.au/connect/vol2014/iss209/>

Left Right Think-Tank. (2011). *Youth Volunteering: Increasing Engagement and Participation*. Queensland: Left Right Think-Tank.

Lewis, K. V. (2013). The power of interaction rituals: The Student Volunteer Army and the Christchurch earthquakes. *International Small Business Journal*, 31(7), 811-831.

LinkedIn. (2015). LinkedIn for Volunteers. Available from: <https://volunteer.linkedin.com/>

Lopes, J., Benton, T., & Cleaver, E. (2009). Young people's intended civic and political participation: does education matter? *Journal of Youth Studies*, 12(1), 1-20.

Lyons, K., Hanley, J., Wearing, S., & Neil, J. (2012). Gap year volunteer tourism: Myths of Global Citizenship? *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(1), 361-378.

Martin, S. (2006). Service learning and Transitioning to Adulthood. *Trends & Tudes*, 5(4), 1-6.

- Marzana, D., Marta, E., & Pozzi, M. (2012). Social action in young adults: Voluntary and political engagement. *Journal of Adolescence*, *35*, 497-507.
- McBride, A. M., Johnson, E., Olate, R., & O'Hara, K. (2011). Youth volunteer service as positive youth development in Latin America and the Caribbean. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *33*(1), 34-41.
- Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) (2008). *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*. Carlton South: Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs.
- Mission Australia. (2013). Youth Survey Retrieved 12/9/2014, 2014, from <https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/research-evaluation/youth-survey>
- Moffatt, L. (2011a). Engaging young people in volunteering: what works in Tasmania? Executive Summary. Hobart: Volunteering Tasmania.
- Moffatt, L. (2011b). Engaging young people in volunteering: what works in Tasmania? Full report. Hobart: Volunteering Tasmania.
- Mohamed, I. A., & Wheeler, W. (2001). Broadening the bounds of Youth Development: Youth as Engaged Citizens. New York: Ford Foundation.
- Moore, M.H. (1995). *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Muir, K., Mullan, K., Powell, A., Flaxman, S., Thompson, D., & Griffiths, M. (2009). *State of Australia's Young People*. Canberra: Australian Government, Office for Youth.
- Nenga, S. K. (2012). Not the community, but a community: transforming youth into citizens through volunteer work. *Journal of Youth Studies*, *15*(8), 1063-1077.
- New South Wales Youth Advisory Council. (2014). Response to additional questions. Volunteering and unpaid work placements among children and young people in NSW (Inquiry). Sydney: Parliament of NSW.
- Nicol, S. (2012). Volunteering and young people. *Youth Studies Australia*, *31*, 3-4.
- O'Dwyer, D. L. (2012). Volunteers worth more to Australia than mining. *The Conversation*. Retrieved from <http://theconversation.com/volunteers-worth-more-to-australia-than-mining-9197>
- Oppenheimer, M. (2008). *Volunteering: Why we can't survive without it*. Sydney: UNSW Press.
- Osborne, S., & Guenther, J. (2013). Red dirt thinking on aspiration and success. *Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, *42*(2), 88-99.
- Pancer, S. M., Pratt, M. W., Hunsberger, B., & Alisat, S. (2007). Community and political involvement in adolescence: What distinguishes the activists from the uninvolved? *Journal of Community Psychology*, *35*(741-759).

- Pantea, M. C. (2013). Young people in cross-national volunteering: Perceptions of unfairness. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 30*(5), 564-581.
- Patterson, J. (2001). Good practice in youth development: a framework of principles. A discussion document. Adelaide: Ausyouth.
- Phillips, N. (1990). Wellness during childhood/adolescent development. *Prevention Forum, 10*(4), 20-26.
- Porter, M. & Kramer, M. (2011). Creating Shared Value. Harvard Business Review. January, at: <http://hbr.org/2011/01/the-big-idea-creating-shared-value>
- Pro Bono Australia. (2011). Volunteer Work Leads to Employment: Survey. Available from: <http://www.probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2011/09/volunteer-work-leads-employment-survey#>
- Pye, J., Lister, J., & Clements, L. (2009). Young People Speak Out: attitudes and perceptions of, full-time volunteering. London: IPSOS MORI and V Research.
- Reed, V. A., Jernstedt, G. C., Hawley, J. K., Reber, E. S., & DuBois, C. (2005). Effects of a small-scale, very short-term service learning experience on college students. *Journal of Adolescence, 28*.
- Roker, D., & Player, K. (2000). Standing Out: Young People's Participation in Volunteering and Campaigning. *Gifted Education International, 14*(2), 160-169.
- Savelsberg, H.J. & Martin-Giles, B.M. (2008) Young people on the margins: Australian studies of social exclusion. *Journal of Youth Studies, 11*(1), 17-31.
- Scales, P.C. & Roehlkepartain, E.C. (2005). Can service-learning help reduce the achievement gap? In J. Kielsmeier & M. Neal (Eds.), *Growing to Greatness 2005: The State of Service-Learning Project*. Saint Paul, MN: National Youth Leadership Council.
- Silva, E. M. (2001). Squeaky wheels and flat tires: A case study of students as reform participants. *Forum, 43*(2), 95-99.
- Smith, M., Holbrook, A., Lyons, K., Macneil, J., Forster, D., Clement, N., . . . Freeman, M. (2013). Evaluation of the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2012-13: Final Report: Timebanking Trial: New South Wales Office of Communities.
- Smith, N., Lister, R., Middleton, S., & Cox, L. (2005). Young People as Real Citizens: Towards an Inclusionary Understanding of Citizenship The paper is based on the project 'Negotiating Transitions to Citizenship' (L134 25 1039), funded by the Economic and Social Research Council as part of the 'Youth, Citizenship and Social Change' programme. *Journal of Youth Studies, 8*(4), 425-443.
- Snyder, M., & Omoto, A. M. (2008). Volunteerism: Social issues perspectives and social policy implications. *Social Issues and Policy Review, 2*, 1-36.
- Spera, C.; Ghertner, R., Nerino, A., DiTommaso, A. (2013). Volunteering as a Pathway to Employment: Does Volunteering Increase Odds of Finding a Job for the Out of Work?

- Washington, DC: Corporation for National and Community Service, Office of Research and Evaluation.
- Spring, K., Dietz, N., & Robert Grimm, J. (2007). Youth Helping America: Leveling the path to participation: Volunteering and civic engagement among Youth from disadvantaged circumstances. Washington: Corporation for National and Community Service.
- Stanwick, J., Lu, T., Karmel, T., & Wibrow, B. (2013). How Young People are Faring 2013: The national report on the learning and earning of young Australians. Melbourne: Foundation for Young Australians.
- Torres, G. (2003). The future of volunteering: Children under the age of 14 as volunteers.
- United Nations. (2014). *Definition of Youth*. At: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf>
- Van Goethem, A. A. J., Van Hoof, A., Van Aken, M. A. G., Raaijmakers, Q. A. W., Boom, J., & De Castro, B. O. (2012). The role of adolescents' morality and identity in volunteering. Age and gender differences in a process model. *Journal of Adolescence*, 35, 509-520.
- Verba, S., Schlozman, K. and Brady, H. (1995). Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). (2013). Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) at: <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/vcal/index.aspx?Redirect=1>
- Victoria University. (2007). Advance Program Achievements and Evaluation Summary 2004-07. Available from <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/advance-achievements-and-evaluation-summary-2004-07>
- V Informed (2007) Barriers Preventing Passionate Young People Acting on the Concerns: a report from the V youth volunteering charity detailing the findings of a survey of 1000 16-25 year olds. London: V Informed.
- V Informed (2008). Youth Volunteering: Attitudes and Perceptions. London: V Informed.
- Volunteering ACT (2013). About Us, at <http://www.volunteeringact.org.au/about/about-us>
- Volunteering Australia (2001). *National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations*. Retrieved from: <http://volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/VA-National-Standards-for-involving-volunteers-in-not-for-profit-organisations.pdf>
- Volunteering Australia (2006). Involved and valued? Findings from a National Survey of Australian Volunteers from Diverse Cultural and Linguistic Backgrounds. Retrieved from: http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/files_mf/1377045874VAResearchBulletinFindingsfromNationalSurveyofAustralianVolunteersfromCALDBackgrounds2006.pdf

- Volunteering Australia (2011). National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not-for-Profit Organisations (2nd Edition). Retrieved from: <http://volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/VA-National-Standards-for-involving-volunteers-in-not-for-profit-organisations.pdf>
- Volunteering Australia (2014). Policy and Best Practice. Retrieved from: <http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/policy-and-best-practise/>
- Volunteering Queensland. (2013). Student Engagement Edition. In M. Creyton (Ed.), *Innovate Research Bulletin* (Vol. 8). Queensland Australia: Volunteering Queensland.
- Volunteering SA-NT (2014). At: <http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org.au>
- Volunteering Victoria (2011). Fast Facts: Involving Volunteers: The Principles. Retrieved from: http://volunteeringvictoria.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/16_Involving_Volunteers_principles.pdf
- Walsh, L. (in press). "Power", in Arvanitakis, J. (Ed.) *Sociologic: Understanding Everyday Culture and Society*. Oxford University Press.
- Walsh, L. & Black, R. (2011). *In Their Own Hands: Can young people change Australia?* Melbourne, ACER Press.
- Warburton, J., & Smith, J. (2003). Out of the Generosity of Your Heart: Are We Creating Active Citizens through Compulsory Volunteer Programmes for Young People in Australia? *Social Policy & Administration*, 37(7), 772–786.
- Watts, R. J., & Flanagan, C. (2007). Pushing the envelope on youth civic engagement: A developmental and liberation psychology perspective. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 35(6), 779-792. doi: 10.1002/jcop.20178
- Webb, M. & Bird, L., (2010). *State of Volunteering Report: Tasmania 2010*
- Wierenga, A. (2003). *Sharing a new story: Young people in decision-making*. Melbourne: Foundation for Young Australians and Youth Research Centre.
- Willems, J., & Walk, M. (2013). Assigning volunteer tasks: The relation between task preferences and functional motives of youth volunteers. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35(6), 1030-1040.
- Williamson, H. (2004). Opinion: When volunteering becomes compulsory. *Young People Now*. 09/06/2004.
- Wilson, B. & Holdsworth, R. (1991). *Young People and the Environmental Movement (Vols 1 & 2). Research Report 5*. Melbourne: Youth Research Centre.
- Wyn, J. (2009). The Changing Context of Australian Youth and its Implication for Social Inclusion. *Youth Studies Australia* 28(1): 46-50.
- Wynne, C. (2011). *Volunteering is Catching: A study into young people's volunteering in Victoria 2011*. Melbourne: Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.

- Wynne, C. (2013). *Getting Youth Friendly: Results of a consultation with Friends Groups 2012*. Melbourne: Youth Affairs Council of Victoria and Parks Victoria.
- Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic). (2012). *Young People and Volunteering: A Series of Tip Sheets*. Melbourne: Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.
- Youth Central (2014a). *Employment Rights*, at: <http://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/jobs-careers/employment-rights>
- Youth Central (2014b). *Advance*. Youth Central, at: <https://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/government-info-assistance/youth-programs/advance>
- Youniss, J., McLellan, J. A., & Yates, M. (1997). What we know about engendering civic identity. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 40(5), 620



The Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) facilitates collaboration between commissioning agencies and Australia's leading researchers to produce What Works for Kids Evidence Reviews.

This report has been prepared for the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme.

aracy.org.au