

Youth Justice Reform Select Committee inquiry into youth justice reform in Queensland

Submission No: 179 - including supplementary submission
Submitted by: Community Based Crime Action Committee (CBCAC) Rockhampton
Publication:
Attachments: See attachments
Submitter Comments:

Addressing & Preventing Youth Crime – Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee

27 February 2024

Background

The causation and prevention of youth crime has been extensively and credibly examined and researched in Australia and internationally for more than 25 years. Amongst many, the [Pathways to Prevention Project](#) (1999-2004) is an example of a Queensland based effort. This overall national and international body work which has broad uniformity in its findings raises challenging issues for existing public sector structures, social responsibility and the length of time required to address a matter that has been generations in the making.

The work raises the issue of whether youth crime should be considered as a standalone issue, as a symptom of the need to reassess public service delivery & social responsibility in a rapidly changing society or both.

What is very clear, is that increasing youth crime which has very little respect for individual responsibility is evident across our nation and other like-minded nations. Undeniably, this means that our current approaches and thinking are not effective enough, and the evidence is that continuing to operate within a current public sector structure and current public expectations, will continue to be ineffective in both the short and long term. Changing the relevant laws will not address causation in this issue and it is a moot point as to whether such an approach in isolation has been effective across a wide range of societal issues.

In beginning a process to address youth crime, the Rockhampton Community Based Action Committee (CB CAC) which is a loose alliance of up to 80 public servants, community groups, Not-For-Profit bodies, service clubs and multi-agency programs has undertaken a range of projects to define current engagement, develop a shared understanding and distil a strategy framework for a collaborative approach.

It found that there were more than 35 agencies delivering more than 90 projects relevant to dealing with youth development & youth crime and that there was very little formal or informal collaboration of effort. In point of fact there were numerous efforts competing with each other for scarce funds.

It found that the various programs and agencies had different meanings and responsibilities for similar key terms and concepts.

It undertook a wide-ranging formal consultation process using *Mindhive Methodology* with local, national and international efforts and people to develop a Prospectus for bringing effort together to address the 4 major themes that emerged. (An Integrated Service Delivery Mechanism, Localised Decision making, Collaboration Methodology and Reshaping 'education' services.)

In supporting such an approach, the highly credible international policy consultancy company [Mckinsey Corporation](#) undertook an analysis of the causation of the high rate of failure of government interventions across the world. It examined 80 major cases in 50 countries involving 2900 public servants. It found that success in government led interventions in normal circumstances was only 20%. They also found that success could be increased 3.5 times i.e. to 70 % success, by involving a minimum of 5 disciplines in collaborative decision making.

Fundamental to this success was the use of a *transdisciplinary approach*. This is fundamentally different to disciplinary (individual disciplines), multidisciplinary (involves several disciplines), participatory (engages people outside of the discipline) and interdisciplinary (crosses disciplinary boundaries).

[Transdisciplinary approaches](#) cross discipline and sectoral boundaries, create their own knowledge and develop and control decision making and resource allocations (see Figure below). Such approaches are now becoming common in dealing with complex social, medical and major projects.

Success is also dependent upon an engaged evaluation process which commences at the outset and informs the shape of the approach in real time. [Case Methodology](#) offers a very useful approach for such complex societal issues. They not only bring evaluation into meaningful interaction with the approach but also provide a basis for situation individuality, principle-based policy development and meeting government decision making timelines.

Action for a way forward

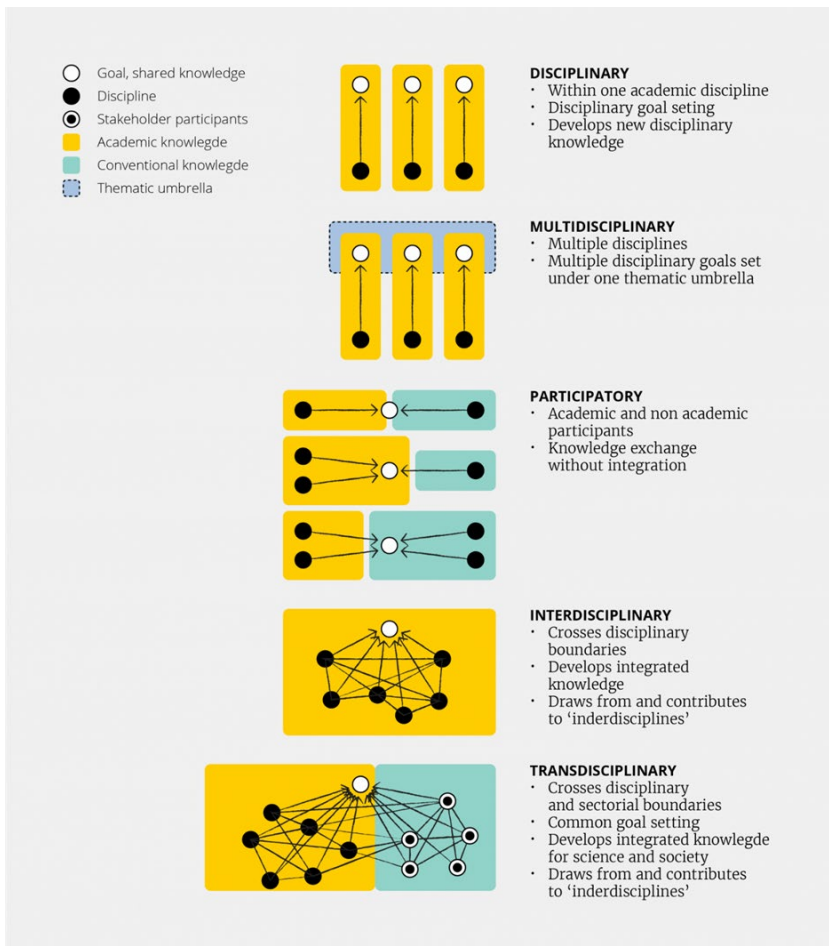
Rockhampton certainly needs an action-based response now. Given the background experience in this location, it seems evident that this could be best achieved by bringing together a Government Agency Task Force involving all relevant government agencies in a formal *transdisciplinary approach*. Given the experience and findings from the Rockhampton CBCAC over the last 3 years

coupled with priorities recently indicated by the Queensland Government, the Rockhampton CBCAC Uniting Effort would strongly support QPS leadership in immediately establishing a funded, multi-agency task force involving (but not limited to) QPS, YJ, Child Safety, Communities, Health, Education, Sport and Recreation to conduct a pilot integration & partnership Pathways Project for the reduction in youth crime.

Further, it would support this effort being guided by an advisory committee of retired senior public servants with senior agency, management, service delivery, evaluation, research and policy development.

The CBCAC experience in Rockhampton has reinforced the value of multiagency partnership approaches in providing a supportive development agenda for youth and which has had wide success in both relevant national and international settings.

Schema – An explanation of Transdisciplinary approaches



Mr Wal Taylor
Uniting Effort Working Group
Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee

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The Uniting Effort Working Group
A sub-committee endorsed by the Rockhampton
Community Based Crime Action Committee

Intent, Progress and Community Change Activities in the Rockhampton Region



Working group members: Nyree Johnson, Maxine Brushe, Ashley Hull, Lyn Harland, Susie Cameron, Friederike McCartney, Ben Carroll, Kadie Askov, Kate Ingram, Wal Taylor & Geoff Higgins

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**The Uniting Effort Working Group
acknowledges the Traditional Owners of
Country in the Rockhampton region, the
Darumbal people, and pay our respects to
elders past, present and emerging.**



Introduction

Purpose

Our purpose is to work to build opportunities for greater cooperation and collaboration between members of the Rockhampton CBCAC and other stakeholders.

Members

At the time of writing, the core members of this working group are Maxine Brushe (Chair, Every Child CQ), Nyree Johnson (Scouts & other interests), Wal Taylor (retired & active), Ashley Hull (retired & active), Kate Ingram (Education Department), Friederike McCartney (CQ Youth Connect, Qld Health), Lyn Harland (Carinity School), Ben Carroll (Inspector, QPS), Kadie Aaskov (CQID), Susie Cameron (CQ Health) and Geoff Higgins (Chair).

Goals

In supporting the first two recommendations of the Uniting Effort Mind Hive Report, 2022, our immediate goals are:

1. Securing funding for a backbone agency; and
2. Redefining education / addressing participation in education.

At this time our primary focus is on the first goal, as it is an important enabler of the much more involved and important second goal.

Reporting

The Uniting Effort Working Group reports to the Rockhampton CBCAC.



Some of the work contained in this document is inspired by Professor Mark Reed of Newcastle University, and his work on 'fast track impact' www.fasttrackimpact.com

About CBCAC

Rockhampton is a regional city with a population of about 86,000 people located in Central Queensland, Australia. It faces issues similar to other regional towns in Queensland. The Queensland Government established Community Based Crime Action Committees (CBCAC) in 12 cities across the state to address youth crime issues. Rockhampton is one of the 12 locations. The Rockhampton CBCAC has approximately 100 members from across, government, service providers, and community.

The Rockhampton CBCAC is working to address complex and intertwined youth issues including but not limited to crime, disengagement from education and employment, family breakdown and domestic violence, lack of family role models, social and emotional well-being, and undiagnosed health issues such as FASD. Indigenous youth are overrepresented in all these areas.

Across government, service providers, and the community there are thousands of dedicated, motivated, and committed people working towards better outcomes for youth. However, government and service provider workers are confined to working towards the limited and specific objectives of their own organisation and their responses are often confined to their organisational 'silos'.

The CBCAC has identified that there are currently 35 agencies running 99 youth programs in the Rockhampton area.

The CBCAC has identified significant process blockages that limit the achievement of successful long-term outcomes for young people in this area. These include getting government, service providers, and the community too, work across their individual 'silos', pool resources, work towards a common goal, be proactive rather than reactive, and overcome competition for funds and turf protection.



Image: Explore Rockhampton Facebook page

Needs of Rockhampton



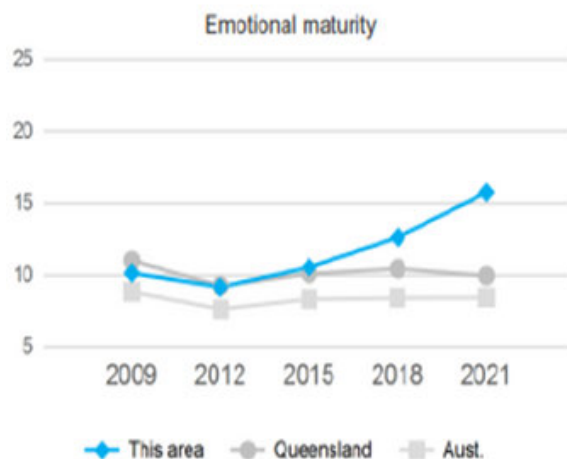
Image: Explore Rockhampton Facebook page

Most Recent Data on the Needs

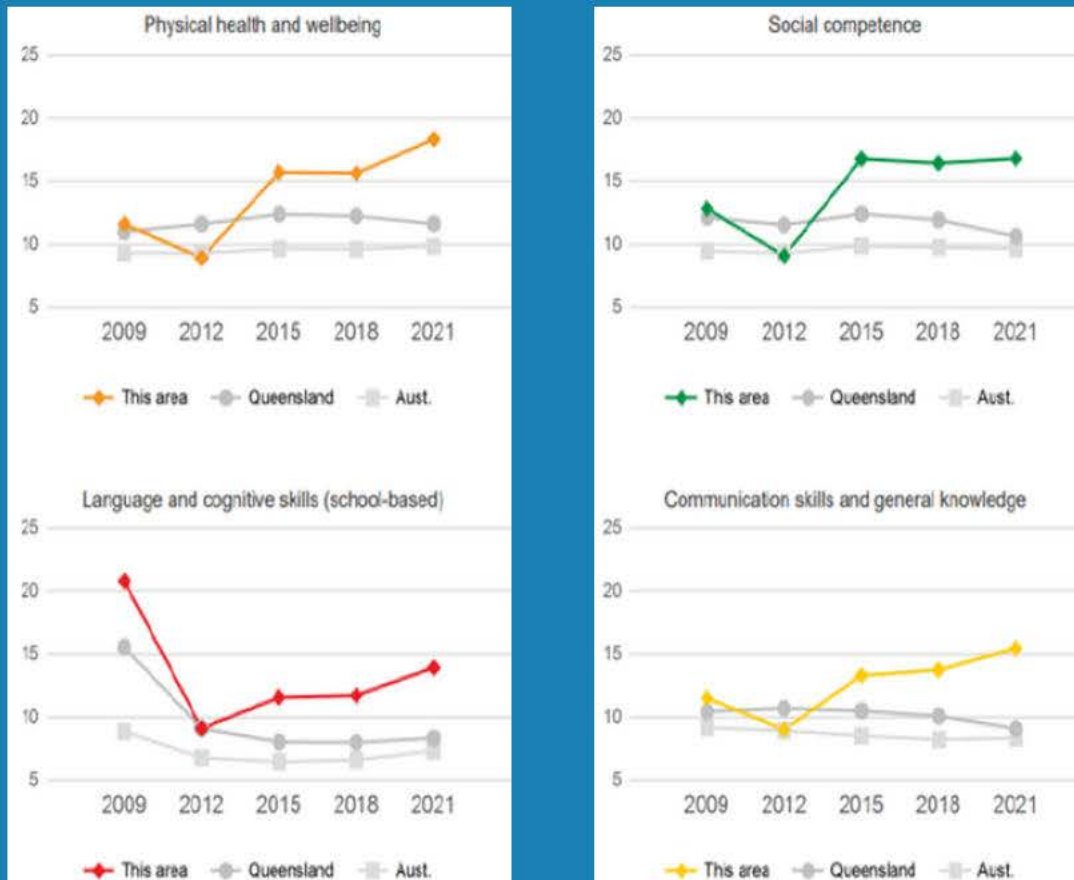
The Australian Early Childhood Census is a regular check of progress being made by children in their first year of full-time school (source: www.aedc.gov.au). The census is held every three years with teachers completing the Early Development Instrument.

As a community we want to know why there has been a significant deterioration in every domain except 'social competence' since 2012; why are we well behind Queensland and Australia in all domains; and why only half of the children (378) are on track in four or more domains. And what can be done to address this?

The AEDC reports whether children are on track, at risk or developmentally vulnerable across each of the five domains.



Graphs Source: Department of Education, Queensland



The AEDC reports whether children are on track, at risk or developmentally vulnerable across each of the five domains. Children that are developmentally vulnerable demonstrate much lower-than-average competencies in that domain.

- 29.8% developmentally vulnerable children in one or more domains in 2018
- 15.8% developmentally vulnerable children in two or more domains in 2018
- The physical health and wellbeing domain had the largest percentage of developmentally vulnerable children (14.7%)
- Within the region, Rockhampton (R) LGA had the largest percentage of developmentally vulnerable children in two or more domains (18.5%)

Capricorn region snapshot:

The Capricorn Region had a significant increase in the number of children developmentally vulnerable on Communication Skills and General Knowledge domain from 2009 to 2018. Livingstone had a significant increase in the number of children developmentally vulnerable on Physical Health and Wellbeing domain from 2009 to 2018. Rockhampton had a significant increase in the number of children developmentally vulnerable on Physical Health and Wellbeing, Social Competence and Emotional Maturity domains from 2009 to 2018.

Developmentally vulnerable children by domain by LGA, Capricorn region and Queensland, 2018.

Custom region / LGA / State	Domain					Summary		Children assessed
	Physical health and wellbeing	Social competence	Emotional maturity	Language and cognitive	Communication skills and general knowledge	One or more domains	Two or more domains	
	— per cent —					— per cent—		number
Capricorn region	14.7	14.1	10.7	9.7	11.6	29.8	15.8	1,554
Livingstone (S)	12.1	7.9	5.6	4.4	6.1	22.7	8.6	429
Rockhampton (R)	15.6	16.4	12.6	11.7	13.8	32.5	18.5	1,125
Queensland	12.3	11.9	10.5	8.0	10.1	25.9	13.9	61,781

Queensland Treasury: QG Statisticians Office, Commonwealth Department of Education and Training

External Contributions and Observations



Geographical Areas from Which People Contributed to the Uniting Effort MindHive project.

Contributions

During the development of the Connecting the Dots Community Change Model, interviews were conducted with people involved in community change projects, ranging from collective impact to social innovation, living from just up the Capricorn Highway at Emerald to the United Kingdom.

The interviewees included: Michelle Lucas (Logan Together); Carrie Deane (Canice's Kitchen, Sydney); Donald Mosby (Connected Beginnings Program, Townsville); Beth Stockton (Jeder Institute); Maureen McKenna (former Director of Education, Glasgow City Council); Hyemi Jacka (Malawi & NT); and Stacey Milbourne and Tanya Brooks-Cooper (Communities for Children, Tasmania).

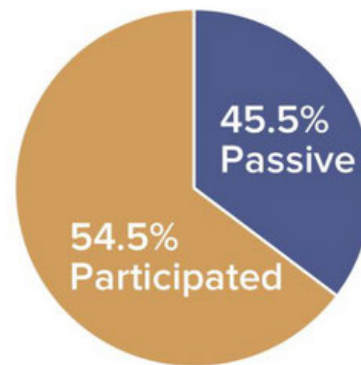
Mindhive

A core part of the Uniting Effort MindHive project was sourcing input “to scope, define and propose approaches to bring all local organisations involved in addressing the complex issues underlying the emergence of youth crime” (source: ‘Uniting Effort Project’ at mindhive.org).

Mindhive

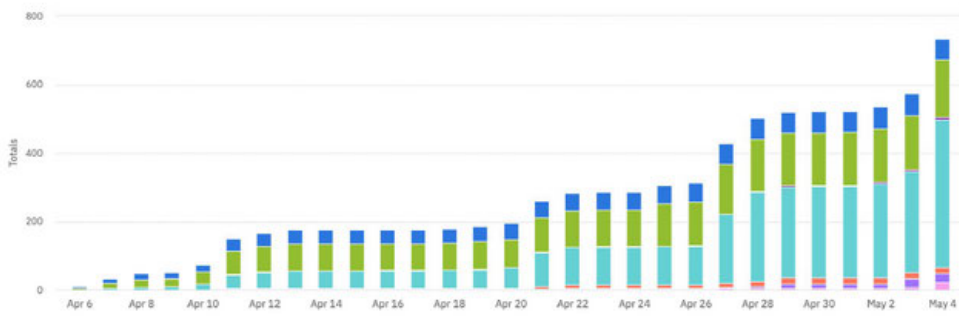
Overview of engagement across all platforms

Engagement with the discussion greatly exceeded typical engagement values for similar public discussions which illustrates the importance of this discussion and the issues presented within it for all known participants.



Engagement overview

↔ Mindhive



description of graphs
The table above details the total number of participants over the course of the discussion and what number of those participants contributed to the discussion and in what ways. For example, what number have commented and what number have liked others comments.



Overall Insights

Funding for a Back Bone Agency:

Backbone agencies come in varying structures and systems. A backbone agency should be independent, have strong community relationships, build collective effort and develop a collaborative, community-endorsed process to distribute and manage funding locally.

Localised decision-making for funding expenditure:

Empower local communities to manage and distribute funding that supports effective and efficient programs that provide positive outcomes for young people.

Collaborative effort:

Strengthening, educating, inspiring and empowering communities, to work together, set goals and solve problems.

Redefine Education:

Education is not a 'one size fits all' for all young people. Education needs to prepare young people with the skills for life, learning and work.

A Backbone Organisation



The Uniting Effort MindHive project included questions about how we as a community need to address undertaking the work.

In answer to a couple of questions about organising the work and creating synergy between government, service providers and community, 10 contributions discussed a **backbone**.

Example responses included:

“Just the initial steps: Create a compact that commits us to keep coming together. And fund a backbone organisation so that we have leadership to coordinate this activity and administrative support to make it happen.”

"I think it is really important that there is a 'backbone' agency that has the purpose of bringing together all agencies and services that work in the youth and family space in Rockhampton. It would be preferable if that 'backbone' agency was fully funded and supported by government to perform that role. The agency would need to be respected and accepted across the community."

In all the words **collaborate** and other derivations of the Latin verb ‘**collabōrāre**’ were used 52 times by contributors.

Many of these recognised that the work cannot be done by one or even a few people and organisations.

Example responses included:

“The local community could begin a process of reframing the targets and providing a structure that encourages government agencies to commit to the allocation of some resources to a collaborative effort that works with them to develop integrated pathways to support youth development up to 25 years of age.”

“A key to good collaboration between multiple government agencies and community groups is building trust. Without trust between organisations, collaboration is not likely to occur. All members need to feel part of the whole and their views and contribution is valued.”

Responses also recognised the cost of **collaboration**:

“If a funded program requires or could benefit from collaboration, the funder should be funding the time (and often travel given our geographic spread) to undertake this work. Collaboration is not free - it takes time, which is a cost to the organisation, and also that time has an opportunity cost in taking people away from other activities.”

Success Criteria

- Secure funding for the work.
- Continue to engage the larger group of people with an interest in community change.
- Continue to identify people new to our community or new to the work and invite them to get involved.
- Get the people involved to the table and contributing, so we maintain the momentum.
- Communicate widely that what we are doing won't work without a well-resourced organisation able to coordinate and support the work.
- Start to shape the approach to education, including making schools safer and more welcoming; an enlightened approach to 'behaviour management' (this language may be inappropriate); and addressing all the kinds of transition that occur (from entering the education system to leaving high school)
- Evaluate/critique all that we do.
- Ultimately achieve the promise of changing the way governments do business with our community. (Good example: the CBCAC funding model)

Source: CBCAC 'Uniting Effort' Working Group, An Outline V4



Key Events at Which a Commitment Was Made to Cooperative Community Change

Over the last 3 years, at the following large group events local people have committed to continue the work of community change (variously called collective impact, community development and community change):



mage source: Mick Joicey, used with permission.

Community Development Workshops introducing the Connecting the Dots Community Change Model in June 2022 – 71 people

Choosing Our Agenda (Building the Rockhampton Community Alliance) workshop in June 2021 funded and supported by Stronger Places Stronger People – 25 people

Finding the Work of the Rockhampton Community Alliance workshop in March 2021 funded and supported by Stronger Places Stronger People – 24 people



mage source: Local community event, used with permission.

Community Workshop in December 2020 (in association with the AGM of Every Child Central Queensland Inc) – 40 people

Series of facilitated Zoom sessions called Join, Design and Develop the Community Alliance – 60 people



mage source: Mick Joicey, used with permission.

Community Workshop in January 2020 facilitated by Mick Gooda and organised by Every Child Central Queensland Inc – 135 people

Launch of the Rockhampton Youth Pathways Wallchart with Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee in June 2021 – 40 people

Launch of the Uniting Effort Mind Hive project with Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee – 45 people

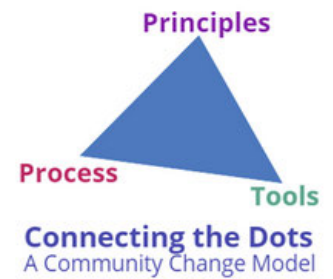


mage source: Local community event, used with permission.

Launch of the digitalised CQ Youth Connect Youth Service Directory and Wall Charts (over 500 Partner Services)

Rockhampton CBCAC Youth Referral Committee (22 Partners signed to shared confidential information and collaborate across domains and diversity to address at-risk youth better outcomes)

On the Community Change Model

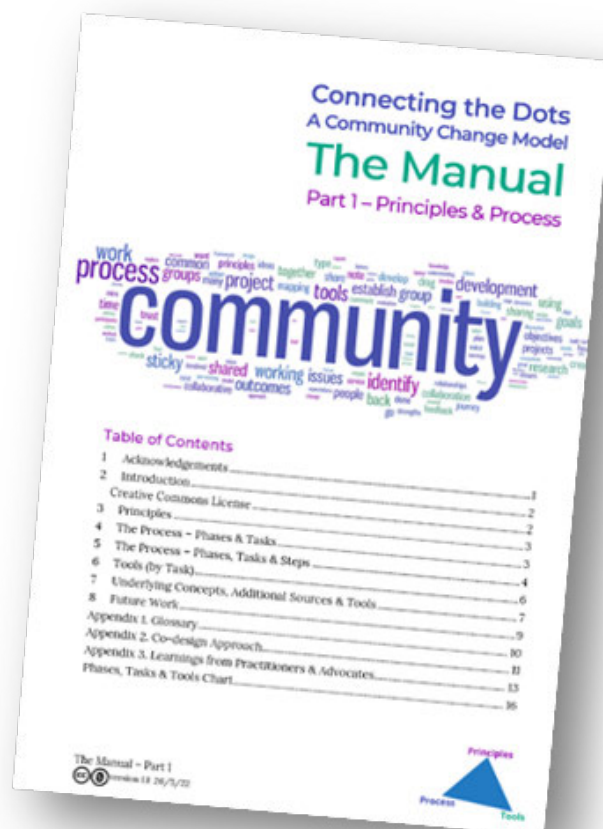


In the first 6 months of 2022, a group of 25 people came together to co-design a community change model. We called the model **Connecting the Dots**.

The project also involved interviewing 11 advocates and practitioners in our region and beyond.

101 people registered and 72 people attended three workshops in Rockhampton to begin learning to use the model.

During the workshops, the model was applied to issues such as developmentally vulnerable children; collecting Indigenous health data; a local community hub; a backtrack-style youth intervention; gender education; social housing; and more.



Current and Recent Significant Projects

Currently and over the last 2 years, here is a sample of the community development projects completed and underway in the Rockhampton Region:

- Connecting the Dots Community Change Model and workshops auspiced by Every Child Central Queensland Inc (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee and Communities for Children)
- Youth Opportunity Days by CQ Youth Connect and Rockhampton Boxing and Sports Promotions (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Uniting Effort Mind Hive project auspiced by Every Child Central Queensland Inc (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Uniting Effort Yeah-Nah project auspiced by Every Child Central Queensland Inc (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- CQ Youth Interagency Health Forum by CQ Youth Connect and auspiced by Every Child Central Queensland Inc (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Rockhampton Youth Pathways Wallcharts auspiced by Every Child Central Queensland Inc (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- CQ Youth Health Reference Group by CQ Youth Connect (funded by CQ Health)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Strategy by CQ Health
- Building the Community Alliance project auspiced by Every Child Central Queensland Inc (funded by Stronger Places Stronger People)
- ‘The Big Group’ aka the Rockhampton Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Conversations project auspiced by Darumbal Community Youth Service Inc (funded by Stronger Places Stronger People)
- Capricorn Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2026 by The Smith Family (funded by Capricorn Communities for Children)
- FASD CQ Alliance (Collaboration for Collective Impact, collaborative partnerships to affect change)
- Review of social housing in Rockhampton involving housing industry stakeholders led by David Grenfell OAM, 2022.
- 80 young people that were able to undertake the Cert II in Self-Awareness via the CBCAC funding. These spots and the funding were shared across all school sectors and were led by the most disadvantaged, disenfranchised young people in the region at Carinity Education Rockhampton during the collaboration.



In the broader context, here are a sample of on-ground projects in the Rockhampton Region that have multiple engaged community stakeholders:

- Construction of a mental health-focussed community hub by Selectability (funded by the Queensland Government and the resources sector)
- Establishment of the Berserker Street Community Hub by Integreat Queensland Inc
- Our Space auspiced by Every Child Central Queensland inc (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Community Active by Carinity Education (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Cultural and Spiritual Mentoring Program by One Mob Fellowship (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Darderrhi Music Group by Darumbal Community Youth Service Inc (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Love Bites by CQ Healthy Families (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Mundagutta Mt Morgan Youth Social, Emotional Wellbeing Program by Mt Morgan Historical Museum Inc (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Skills for Life by CQ Youth Connect and Our-Space auspiced by Every Child Central Queensland Inc (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Youth Wellbeing, Ngudyu Yadaba Cultural Therapy by CQID (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Youth Break by Roseberry (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Rough Road Right Choices by Rockhampton Boxing and Sports Promotions (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Sports Mania Days by Rockhampton Boxing and Sports Promotions (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Gracemere Kids in Care Sizzle and Chill event by Lives Lived Well (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Walali Bili Mentoring and After-Hours Diversionary Service by Darumbal Community Youth Service Inc (funded by Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee)
- Binbi Yadubay Healthy Beginnings rehabilitation centre by Lives Lived Well (funded by Queensland Health)
- Backing Excellence in the Early Years by Pathways to Resilience (funded by Capricorn Communities for Children)
- Resilient Parents, Resilient Families by Integreat Queensland Inc (funded by Capricorn Communities for Children)
- Capricorn Connect and Play by Play Matters (funded by Capricorn Communities for Children)
- Cultural Holiday Project by Darumbal Community Youth Service Inc (funded by Capricorn Communities for Children)
- Peer Skill provides training and resources to primary and secondary schools to help young people help themselves, their friends and peers in a safe and effective way. Peer Skill Facilitator training by Lifeline and CQ Youth Connect Funded by CBCAC.
- Annual FASD awareness Walks, impact of Alcohol on the unborn, Children and Youth, Community Services and Community Members Collaboration.

People Engaged in the Community Change Work



Image source: Mick Joicey, used with permission.

Between them, the Every Child Central Queensland Inc and Rockhampton Community Based Crime Action Committee mailing list consist of 276 people in Rockhampton and Central Queensland.

As many people attend multiple events, but not very many have attended all of the events listed above, it is difficult to identify the number of people who have attended and participated in workshops, working groups and committees involved in the work. However, it is possible to describe some characteristics of their life experience, including:

- People working for the government (local, state and federal)
- People working for not-for-profit and for-profit community organisations
- People working for health and education organisations (government and non-government)
- Informal community leaders
- Young parents
- First time parents
- Single people young + older
- Older persons
- LGBTQ+ people
- Aboriginal people
- Torres Strait Islander people
- South Sea Islander people, including descendants of enslaved South Sea Islanders
- Professional people
- Academics
- People with all levels of education
- People living in public housing
- People living in rural locations
- Survivors of domestic violence
- People with cancer in remission
- People living with chronic illness
- People living with chronic pain
- Parents & carers of people with disabilities
- People with a disability
- People with mental health conditions
- People relying on unemployment or other benefits
- People without stable housing
- People for whom English is not their first language
- People of diverse faith backgrounds
- People who volunteer in their community
- People involved in service clubs and other charitable organisations
- Younger people determined to have a voice



Contact

For more information or to discuss in further detail, please contact the Uniting Effort Working Group Chair, Geoff Higgins.

