



GLEN EIRA  
CITY COUNCIL

## **Glen Eira City Council *Building Safer Communities Forum*: Summary Report**

Glen Eira City Council held the *Building Safer Communities Forum* on Monday 22 July 2024. The purpose of the forum was to hear from experts on youth safety and how to support young people at risk and participate in discussions on how we can build a safer community for young people.

This report summarises the presentations and panel discussion with our guest speakers and the key themes from the roundtable discussions. The *Building Safer Communities Forum* report has been provided to the Glen Eira Community Safety Committee to guide future community safety planning to support young people in Glen Eira.

### **Expert speakers: key points**

#### **Victoria Police – Superintendent Martin Bourke, Southern Metro Region**

Superintendent Martin Bourke provided an overview of the current youth crime situation in Glen Eira. Key crimes include non-aggravated theft of and from motor vehicles and non-aggravated home break-ins. The primary age of young people engaging in these crimes is 13 to 17 years, and there has been a decline in young people aged 18 to 24 years engaging in these crimes since the pandemic.

In most cases, thefts occur due to doors left unlocked. Victoria Police emphasised the importance of locking cars and homes and keeping valuables out of sight. Victoria Police also reported that youth crime is not a prevalent issue in Glen Eira, with only a small group of young people reoffending.

#### **Crime Stoppers Victoria - Chelsea Tassone, Community Engagement Coordinator**

Chelsea Tassone gave a presentation about the launch of the *Share If You Care* campaign, which is aimed at young people aged 13-17 years. The campaign's goal is to reduce violence by encouraging young people to report crime anonymously, as a way for young people to help keep their loved ones safe from crime. The campaign is being promoted through communication platforms used by young people.

#### **Wounds & Wisdom and 16 Yards - Shayne Hood, Director of Wounds & Wisdom and Co-founder of 16 Yards**

Shayne shared his experience of supporting a young person and emphasised the importance of making young people feel valued. Asking the right questions plays a key role in supporting young people. Crime prevention and safer communities starts with asking the right questions. Shayne also provided an overview of Wounds and Wisdom and 16 Yards, both of which support people who have been at risk of entering or connected to the justice system.

## Jesuit Social Services - Nicole Salter, Coordinator

Nicole Salter provided an overview of the organisation's experience in supporting young people in the justice system through various programs, including the Youth Justice Community Support Service (YJCSS). YJCSS aims to reduce the frequency and rate of young people's offending, help them transition into adulthood and build their capacity to fully participate in society. YJCSS also provides after-hours support including sport and recreation, independent living skills development, family engagement, health, housing, cultural support, general support and mentoring. Young people engaging in crime typically have a fractured sense of identity, and the work that Jesuit Social Services provides helps young people find out who they are through psycho-social education.

## Panel questions and answer session: key points

### What are police doing to address youth crime?

The Victoria Police Crime Reduction team are reaching out to young people who have been in the justice system for a long time and checking on their siblings.

### How can the community assist police to reduce crime?

The community can assist police by engaging with Crime Stoppers Victoria to report crime, incorporating crime prevention strategies including locking home and car doors, keeping an eye out for their neighbours, and installing Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) where possible.

### What could be done to empower engaged young people to influence their peers and to report crime?

Promoting good social behaviour including building young people's capacity to have conversations with their peers, establishing youth advisory committees, and making resources available to young people in the community.

### What roles does social media play?

Young people engaging in crime, film themselves and upload the videos to social media to boast about the crime they have engaged in. However, there are opportunities for young people to report these videos and what they see anonymously to Crime Stoppers Victoria.

## Roundtable discussions

Young people from the Glen Eira Youth Engagement Team hosted the discussions for the roundtable sessions. Each table was given two questions to discuss.

### What are the significant safety issues for young people in Glen Eira?

- Young people at risk or experiencing homelessness, experiencing insecurity such as food insecurity, disengagement in community activities and risk of family violence.
- Health-related safety issues including undiagnosed health issues and impact on mental health.
- Safety issues related to young people's education included a lack of confidence, existing educational gaps, a lack of flexible learning arrangements, and gaps in young people's life skills.

### What are the roles of key stakeholders in addressing these safety issues?

- Increasing education opportunities such as offering technical training opportunities in school.
- Providing training to school staff to build their capacity to identify at-risk youth and issues impacting young people.
- Addressing gender roles that exist in education.
- Providing additional resources to support young people in schools.

### What community actions can be implemented to improve the safety of young people?

- Increasing visible police presence in the community and zero tolerance to family violence.
- Implementing crime prevention campaigns such as Neighbourhood Watch programs to build community resilience.
- Increasing the community's capacity to speak to young people to create a safe environment for young people.

**What safety resources could be made available to the community to support these actions?**

- Offering greater anonymous reporting options.
- Providing community and vulnerable targets groups with crime prevention advice on key crime.
- Building the community's capacity to be active 'upstanders'.
- Resources co-designed with young people to provide young people with tools to speak to their peers about the risks of engaging in crime and alternative pathways.

**What are some community issues that may arise when addressing young people's safety?**

- Generational differences leading to generational gaps.
- Loss of safe spaces in the community for young people.
- Lack of diversion projects available to young people.
- Negative perceptions associated with young people socialising in public spaces.
- Using inappropriate language to address youth safety issues.
- Victimisation of young people.

**What can the community do to counteract any issues related to action on youth safety?**

- Use social media platforms to engage young people.
- Establish a Youth Committee.
- Avoid fearmongering when talking about youth crime.
- Ask the right questions when discussing youth safety.

**What should be the priorities for addressing youth safety in Glen Eira?**

- Perceptions of safety and delivering programs to support the community in addressing youth safety.

**How should safety priorities be addressed in Glen Eira to ensure our community feels safe?**

- Ensure the community feels safe by building the community's capacity to be active 'upstanders'.
- Educate the community on personal safety measures such as being aware of their physical surroundings.
- Work towards improving public community space to improve the perception of safety such as better lighting in public spaces and installing more CCTV.

**How should youth safety concerns be identified in Glen Eira?**

- By re-engaging local schools and organisations that have existing relationships with young people, to understand youth safety concerns, and what keeps young people engaged and motivated.
- Using social media platforms that are used by young people and creating a safe environment for young people to share information by offering anonymous reporting options, building trust with young people, engaging young people as a focus point in the discussion, and building young people's capacity to have conversations with their peers.

**Are there any youth-specific prevention measures that can be put in place to deter crime?**

- Engaging young people in conversations and offering young people peer mentoring programs and diversion programs.
- Increasing employment and education opportunities for young people, providing subsidies and benefits to young people to help with the cost of living, and building young people's capacity to speak up, talk to their peers and take the lead.

## Roundtable highlights

Additional discussions at the roundtables on how to improve youth safety included physical measures to help people feel safer including lighting, building community capacity to be active upstanders, and offering places that young people can access in the community.

Other discussion highlights included building teachers' capacity to identify early intervention opportunities, increasing youth representation in youth safety discussions, and engaging young people with lived experience in the decision-making process.

A graphic recording of the forum is attached.

# BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES FORUM

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## Welcome!

LET'S LOOK @ THE  
ISSUES & SOLUTIONS

CONNECTED  
INCLUSIVE  
SUPPORTED

THE RIGHT PATH

RESOURCEFUL  
COURAGEOUS  
PEOPLE SKILLS  
NETWORKING

...NOTHING



I WANT TO  
FEEL LIKE I'M  
SOMEBODY

"... WALKING  
TOWARDS SOMETHING  
ELSE."

ASK THE RIGHT  
QUESTIONS.

YOUNG  
PEOPLE  
are KEY



AFTER-  
HOURS

EDUCATION

SUPPORT

LIFE-  
SKILLS

IDENTITY



DIVERSION  
PROGRAMS vs.



\$5000/DAY!

OFFENDERS

VICTIMS

BYSTANDERS

(REMAIN  
ANONYMOUS)

# IMPACT

LATE  
NIGHT  
BURGLARIES

CONVENIENCE  
STORES

SHARE  
IF YOU  
CARE!



safe  
space

COMMUNITY  
WORKING  
TOGETHER



HOMES

AGE 10-17 HAS  
SKYROCKETED  
IN LAST DECADE!

- DAVID SOUTHWICK, MP  
 CHELSEA TASSONE  
 DIV. SUPERINTENDENT MARTIN BOURKE  
 SHAYNE HOOD  
 NICOLE SALTER

## SPEAKERS



# PREVENTION

FOCUS ON THE LITTLE BROTHERS... EARLY INTERVENTION

COOL SPORTS PROGRAMS



# BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES FORUM



BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH PRIMARY-AGE KIDS



TOLERANCE & UNDERSTANDING



WHAT HAPPENED TO DO THE CRIME, DO THE TIME?



CCTV

...AND LOCK YOUR DOORS



YOUNG PEOPLE ARE PART OF THE SOLUTION

LEAVE THE KEYS @ THE DOOR??



SERVICES THAT ARE culturally appropriate

YOUTH MENTORS



EMPOWER NETWORKS TO PROMOTE GOOD

INSTEAD of...



HOW DO WE ENSURE THE 99% ARE SAFE?

PSOs

LIGHTING

CHANGE the NARRATIVE



BE AN UPSTANDER. NOT A BYSTANDER.

FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION



## Q&A PANEL

CHELSEA TASSONE  
DIV. SUPERINTENDENT MARTIN BOURKE  
SHAYNE HOOD  
NICOLE SALTER

