



FRONTYARD YOUTH SERVICES

Annual report
2006 – 2007



Melbourne Citymission
Building Inclusive Communities

Frontyard Vision

Frontyard will be a recognised, respected and successful provider and service system navigator for young people at risk within the Melbourne CBD.

Core Values

Positive client and provider outcomes
Collaboration and co-operation
Client empowerment and self-determination
Prevention and early intervention
Accountability and transparency
Dedication, cooperation and effort of all staff
Community participation and responsibility



Target Group

The Frontyard target group is defined as young people at risk, aged between 12 and 25 years. “At risk” includes those young people who are currently or potentially experiencing:

Homelessness
Family breakdown
Early school leaving
Abuse—substance, physical, emotional or sexual
Mental illness and or developmental/adjustment difficulties
Social isolation

This does not exclude individual agency or service provider target group definitions and Frontyard recognises that a percentage of clients utilising their services will fall outside the definition.



Did you know?

- More than twice as many young people are homeless now, compared to 20 years ago.
- There are 540,000 young Australians not in full-time work or study- a figure largely changed since the 1990s.
- In some parts of Melbourne, the youth unemployment rate is as high as 30%

Melbourne Citymission's Youth Homelessness Campaign 2007

Frontyard Principles of Service Delivery

To ensure the provision of effective, high quality service we understand and commit to the following principles of service delivery:

Provide an integrated and collaborative service for clients accessing youth services

Cross-service promotion of the availability and accessibility of all youth services working with Frontyard

Provision of a welcoming, client friendly and equitable environment

Where appropriate, assist young people to reconnect to their family/carer and their community

Promote an ethos of client self-determination, autonomy and social independence that enhances self worth by building on individual strengths and abilities

Acknowledge the rights and responsibilities of young people

Promote the development of prevention and early intervention strategies

Develop collaborative systems for cross-service data collection and dissemination

Promote awareness and resolution of issues affecting young people at risk

Continually improve service delivery, success rates and client outcomes



Frontyard Manager's report

Did you know?



- The median rental for a two bedroom flat in CBD is \$400 per week*.
- The standard rate of Centrelink Youth Allowance (with full Rental Assistance) is \$226 per week"
- Rental vacancy rates in Melbourne are 1% of all stock*.

*DHS, Rental Report March 2007, Office of Housing.
"Centrelink.gov.au as at August 2007.

The 2006/07-year was a productive time for Frontyard Youth Services. The introduction of a new data collection system saw the service producing the most accurate and useful information to date regarding the number of young people accessing our services. Although it is pleasing to have an improved data system, it is unfortunate that this innovation allows us to report that over 1800 young people required service from Frontyard during this funding period. During the year we provided over 11,000 different contacts with young people, representing on average 30 separate occasions of care for young people every single day of the year. Despite these figures, Frontyard continues to work in the hope of reducing these outrageously high numbers, to statistics that reflect a just and equitable community where young people's right to housing, work, health and prosperity are honoured.

Human Resources

Shaye Chambers resigned as Frontyard manager early in 2007, which was a loss to the service, and we wish Shaye well in her future endeavours. Brett McDonald, our Senior Youth Worker, became Acting Manager while the Manager's position was recruited, with the new Manager due to begin in the 2007/08 financial year.

Morgan Hadjialexiou and Yin Yhang continue to provide excellent service to young people as our part time youth workers, ably assisted by our dedicated pool of casual youth workers.

Client Outcomes

Young people continue to receive a high level of service at Frontyard, with this year being no exception. The Frontyard team recognise that young people who are experiencing crisis are often experiencing a great deal of stress, and as such their decision-making ability or behaviour can be affected or compromised. In recognition of this fact, the Frontyard Team are very skilled at developing and implementing strategies that seek to keep all service users and staff safe and respected, while striving to achieve the best outcomes for young people. Policies relating to client behaviour, worker safety and emergency responses are constantly reviewed and improved.

Research

Frontyard research this year includes the "Emerging Needs of Young People in the City of Melbourne- An Agency Perspective", completed in February 2007. This report concluded that there has been an increasing demand for assistance by young people presenting to the CBD, and evidence suggests that this is likely to continue in the medium term. The research found that many young people presenting to Frontyard do not originate from within the City of Melbourne's boundaries, but have migrated or drifted to inner city precincts. The study suggests that preventative

Outreach

Frontyard was very fortunate to receive City of Melbourne's support in funding a Youth Outreach Program this year. The Program enabled Frontyard to diversify our service delivery, with very positive results. The program established a Youth Reference Group, undertook research into the emerging needs of young people, strengthened connections with the youth service sector and facilitated a youth music program.

Advocacy

This year Frontyard brokered a partnership between the Youth Reference Group and Melbourne Citymission's Research and Social Policy Unit, with the result being a joint submission to the National Youth Homelessness Commission. We hope that this is the beginning of an ongoing and productive relationship.

This year also saw Frontyard speaking out about youth homelessness at a number of forums and conferences, including the International Mental Health Conference (Sydney), the YACVic Forum and the Homelessness Conference. Frontyard is also an active contributor to youth and homelessness networks in the CBD and various regional forums.

Collaboration

Frontyard has continued to provide opportunities for services to collaborate and develop our unique integrated service system. Examples of collaboration opportunities include the regular Frontyard staff meetings, the Services Managers Forum, the Strategic alliance Group.

Student placements

In addition to our existing relationships with most academic institutions offering courses in youth work/ social sciences, this year Frontyard sought to create relationships with institutions for international students. We look forward to growing these relationships into the future in the hope of fostering positive multicultural work practices.

Sherri Bruinhout Frontyard Manager

Case study.

"Sally" is an 18-year-old young woman who presents to the reception at Frontyard enquiring about accommodation.

Sally is referred to Melbourne Youth Support Service where she is able to secure a 6 week placement at a youth refuge. The MYSS worker notices she has a cut to her arm. Sally is then referred to the Young People's Health Service (YPHS) where her arm is attended to..

As part of the assessment at YPHS Sally discloses she has numerous transport fines and has had several letters of demand in relation to her phone bill, which she is unable to pay. The member of the health team refers her to Youthlaw, who is able to see her that afternoon.

After her legal issues are addressed, Sally asks if there is anywhere she could find out why her unemployment benefits have been stopped. She is referred to Centrelink at Frontyard who see her the next morning.

At Centrelink Sally is able to sort out her unemployment benefits and enquires about finding work and skills training for employment. Centrelink arrange for Sally to meet with a JPET worker the same day.

During her interview at JPET Sally states that she is hoping to be able to keep in touch with her mum, her some aunties and her old school friends. Sally is referred to Reconnect.

In time, the Reconnect worker facilitates a meeting between Sally and her mother. While Sally re-establishes communication with her mother, they both agree that Sally is unable to return home to live. Instead, Sally and her mother set about to redefine their relationship in positive setting with a family mediator.

Program Statistics 2006/07

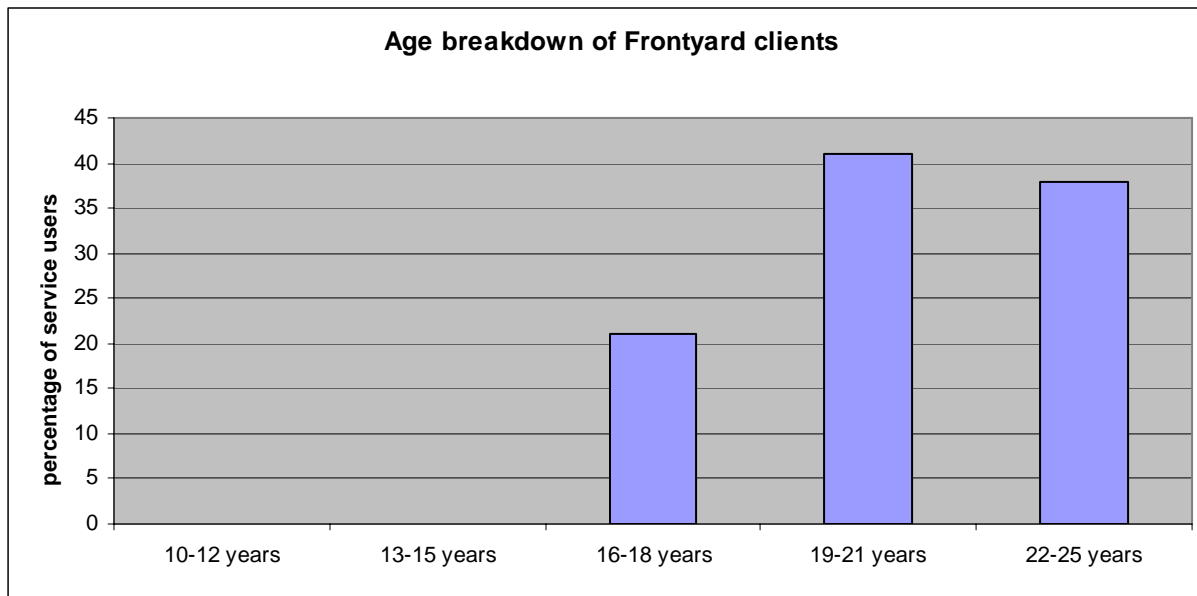
Client information

Throughput

Total number of young people accessing Frontyard Services - **1832**.

Age

A very small percentage of young people (0.1%) accessing Frontyard Services were aged less than 15 years. Most young people accessing Frontyard Services fall within the 18-25 age group (79%), however a significant proportion of the client group (21%) were aged 16-18 years.



Further analysis of the above data showed that young men from the upper end of the age range were more likely to access Frontyard Services (44% of young men were aged over 22 years), and young women were more likely to be at the lower end of the age range (30% of young women were aged 16-18 years).

Gender

56% of young people seeking Frontyard services were male, and 43% were female.

Ethnicity

Top 8 ethnic groups of Frontyard clients	
<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>% Service users</i>
Australian	69.5%
Somalian	2.5%
Sudanese	2.4%
African	1.9%
Aboriginal	1.7%
Ethiopian	1.7%
New Zealand	1.7%
Chinese	1.3%

It is encouraging to note that young people accessing Frontyard represent 89 different ethnic backgrounds. Statistics suggest that knowledge and information about Frontyard Services is successfully reaching young people of Australian background (69.5% service users) however client numbers for other ethnic groups, although broadly represented, are not large in numbers. While statistically small as separate nationalities, emerging African cultures represent 9.1% of the client group when combined (ie African, Cameroon, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Kenyan, Somalian, South African and Sudanese)

Postcodes

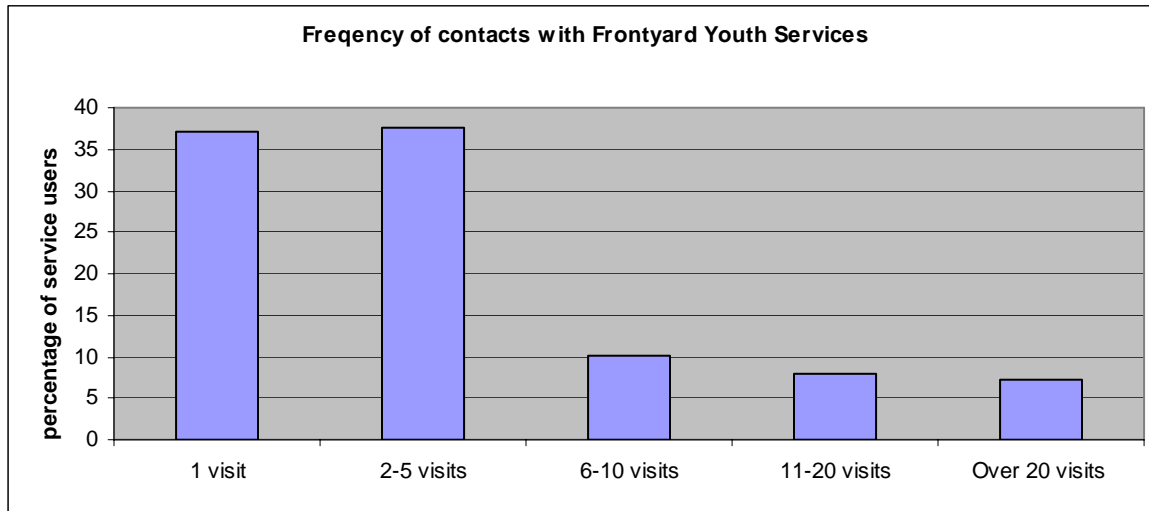
Top 10 postcodes of Frontyard clients	
<i>Postcode</i>	<i>% Service users</i>
Melbourne	30.7
Flemington	1.4
Ascot Vale	1.4
Preston	1.4
Richmond/Burnley	1.3
St Kilda	1.3
Sunshine	1.3
St Albans	1.2
Reservoir	1.1
Nth Melbourne	1.1

The breakdown of postcodes shows that young people from the Melbourne CBD are accessing Frontyard services. It is common practice from Youth workers to record the Melbourne postcode for young people who have experienced long-term housing instability, or are sleeping 'rough'. The remainder of the postcodes show that the northwest region of Melbourne is over represented in the statistics.

Service information

Occasions of care

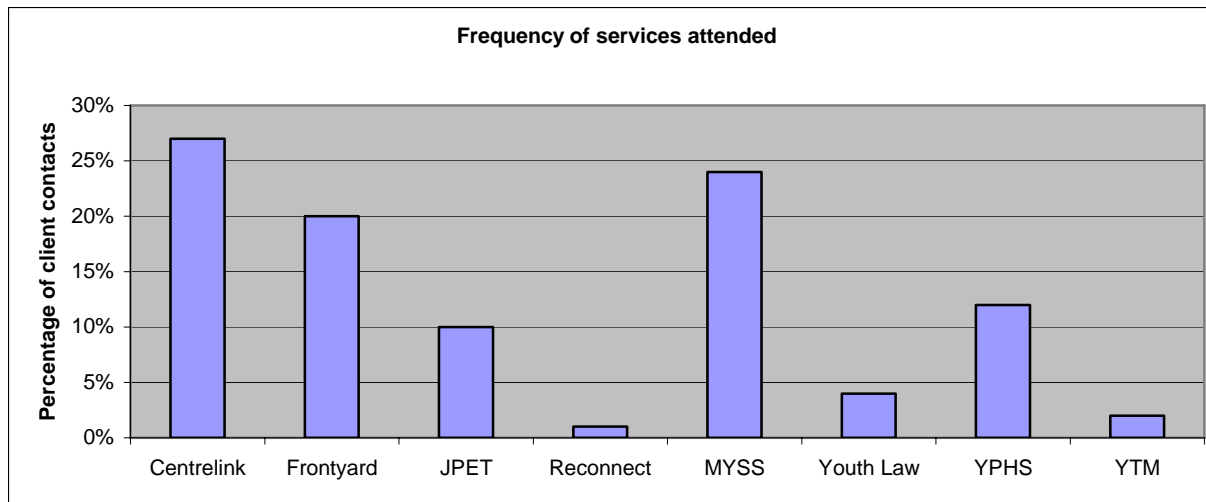
Total number of visits made by young people – **11,106**



This chart shows that most young people (74.7%) did not require more than 5 visits to Frontyard in order to either have their issue resolved, or to be referred to other appropriate support services.

Services attended

Of the 11,106 visits to Frontyard, the following graph illustrates the services that young people attended.



JPET- Jobs, Placement, Employment and Training.
MYSS- Melbourne Youth Support Service
YPHS- Young People's Health Service
YTM- Youth Transitions Model.