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Executive Summary

Projects that use digital media can provide an engaging medium for disadvantaged youth. The creative use of technology is an alternative model of learning for young people who are challenged by more traditional approaches (Orlando, 2013).

M.Y.van is an initiative of Save the Children Australia (SCA) launched in July 2013 that provides social, educational and recreational opportunities through digital media for young people in disadvantaged and isolated communities and in the context of this evaluation, Claymore NSW. Behind the projects sits a Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) that supports young people to have a voice and gain employability skills through the active management and leadership of the project.

Digital media is the central provision of M.Y.van. Young people of Claymore generally do not have access to technology or the internet at home or in public spaces. The van, is equipped with the cutting edge digital multi-media and music technology, addresses this gap. Digital media is creatively and impressively used to enhance health promotion messages through a weekly curriculum, to develop their individualized skills and interests with technology, as well as to support aspects of their life such as completing homework and job applications.

The blend of organised and informal learning in the M.Y.van project provides the opportunity for young people to pursue their interests, develop their technological capabilities, and gain transferable skills, to help them with schoolwork or elsewhere.

The project objectives are:

1. To provide a safe place for young people to learn and play each week in Claymore.
2. To improve the skills and wellbeing of vulnerable young people through non-formal education and diversionary activities.
3. To strengthen connections between young people and the community by referring them to available services.
4. To support young people to access their rights and voice their concerns about the issues that affect them.

Aim of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the outcomes and impact of the Mobile Youth Van (M.Y.van) digital media project on young people and their community. The evaluation was conducted by researchers from the Centre for Educational Research at Western Sydney University. At the time of this evaluation, the M.Y.van project had been operating a regular weekly program at Claymore for 2.5 years.

The evaluation addresses the following questions:

1. What progress has been made towards achieving the key objectives of the project?
   a. What role has digital media played in achieving the key objectives of the project?
2. What are the project’s most significant outcomes for children to date?
3. What effect did the program’s activities have on the community?
   a. What would be the impact if Save the Children were not delivering the M.Y.van project to young people in Claymore?
4. What are the cost savings to government of operating a Mobile Youth Service (cost-benefit analysis)?
Findings

The findings of this evaluation show that M.Y.van has made excellent progress in relation to its objectives, with a promising long-term positive contribution to the skills, employment, and connection of the youth of Claymore, to the community and also to those in other similar highly disadvantaged areas. In summary our findings are:

**Progress against objectives and the role of digital media**

The M.Y.van health promotion curriculum connects well with the needs of young people and their community. This strong connection is ensured by a continued community consultation, and ongoing conversations and surveys with children. The use of digital media to support learning is distinctive and outstanding. From our observations, it compares well above the ways schools currently use technology. Technology is used to provide opportunity for young people to creatively learn through virtual and real life activities.

The learning environment of the van is empowering. Staff state that the first big hurdle for the young people is getting them to engage in anything. The attendees explained that the opportunity to use technology on a first visit (instead of having a conversation with a youth worker) is very appealing and a less confronting experience.

Attendees stated that the informal opportunities to use a range of equipment to play and learn, coupled with the staff’s expertise and one-on-one guidance, provided a safe and energising space to develop their technological capabilities. Children use the van’s technology to complete homework, which importantly provides a leeway to keep up with school expectations. Young people are encouraged to learn at their own pace and to pursue their interests using cutting edge technology.

A trusting environment has been established in the van, which empowers young people to share their stories and help foster a strong sense of community among young people and a desire to make a difference in the Claymore community.

The steadily high increase in unique and repeat attendance over the past three years is evidence that the young people of Claymore identify M.Y.van as a valuable contribution to their community.

**Outcomes for children: skills, employment, connection**

Benchmarking of the attendees’ technology skills show that many young people have consistently improved their knowledge of computer and photography skills since attending M.Y.van. Many even displayed tendencies for peer supported learning, with older participants explaining digital processes to less experienced participants. Coding workshops run by SCA at the local school enhances this approach. The van attendees (and their parents) are proud of their achievements and are motivated and optimistic by the possibilities their digital skills now open up for their future careers.

The young people associated a sense of freedom, trust and control when they visited the van. They also developed important schooling, employment skills (using technology to research, to present and publish data and ideas, to search and prepare a CV). The ongoing availability of this empowering experience is highly significant for the young people’s self-esteem, confidence and positive outlook for the future.

Young people from the YAC are employed in the M.Y.van project to facilitate the running of activities. Having paid employment at an early age is particularly significant in a socio-economically
disadvantaged area such as Claymore where for some children they may be the only one working in their family. This is a very strong sustainable employment model.

Of particular note is the high number of young people who identify as being of Indigenous heritage who attend M.Y.van; they are well represented compared to other groups. This is a major achievement given widespread low representation by this group in the take-up of youth service provision (Palmer, 2010) and attests to the M.Y.van youth workers’ compassionate approach that is underpinned by acute sensitivity to the marginalising effects of poverty and a commitment to social justice.

**Impact on community**

Being part of the YAC provide young people with the resources and structure to make a difference in their community, while acting as positive and accessible role models for children and young people. The advantages of having local junior youth workers provide unique insights into the lived experiences of the young people of Claymore. This has enabled M.Y.van staff to provide support that meets the needs of young people and strengthens connections between young people and their community.

Multiagency partnerships established by the van have also culminated in successful joint initiatives for young people and the wider Claymore community. The distinctive mobile aspect of the van provides opportunities for extending partnerships and connecting young people with other resources in the Claymore area. While the van has a regular location, its occasional relocation to a street in need, or to a youth festival allows the program to extend its reach to those who may be reluctant to visit the van or who may not know of its availability.

**Recommendations**

The Western Sydney researchers who completed this evaluation have no hesitation in recommending the continuation of this innovative intervention with high positive impact on the young people of Claymore and their communities. However, there are areas for improvement that this reports highlights in the recommendations below.

1. **The project could benefit from additional digital media programs to engage young people.**
   New digital media devices such as *Kano* (or similar) may be a worthwhile new use technology to consider. This is a small computer that young people make and then build apps and learn code with it. Similarly, a *Makerspace* could be set up in the van (possibly beginning with a unique event). A *Makerspace* is a place where children can get hands-on and creative with maker technologies – to tinker, play and create. A *Makerspace* provides access to tools and resources to help drive innovation and entrepreneurship and this model would fit very well with the van’s approach to technology and alternative spaces for learning.

2. **There is enormous scope for using the technology to better capture data around the target group.**
   Extending technology use to track attendance and conduct resilience surveys would support creating a trajectory of young people attending the van. For example a digital attendance sheet may be introduced which can then be linked electronically to the profile of each individual attendee.

3. **Attendance data by age group suggest that the majority of users are between 7 and 11 years of age. While work with this group is crucial, there are limited opportunities for 12 to 18 year olds to engage in positive activities in their leisure time.** The M.Y.van team
should consider a targeted provision for the 12 – 18 year age group, for example through the designation of separate sessions in the early evening. This could also provide scope for focused interventions aimed at young people who may not be in employment, education or training.

4. **There is limited youth service provision during school holidays for young people in Claymore.** This is a high-risk period for young people in Claymore, as during school holidays they have no appropriate adult outside their family to talk to, nowhere to go and nothing to do for a considerable period of time. This could provide an opportunity for M.Y.van to offer structured holiday programs that are likely to see high participation rates by high numbers of males and females of different age groups.

5. **The Youth Advisory Committee is one of the most significant outcomes of the M.Y.van program in Claymore, with obvious benefits to the M.Y.van project, the young people and the wider Claymore community.** The M.Y.van team should consider spreading this example of good practice to other locations of NSW by replicating this highly successful intervention to, for example, other parts of Campbelltown, Glebe, Woolloomoooloo and beyond.

6. **The 12 item Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM) data collected through online surveys conducted by M.Y.van during 2015 provides useful indicators in relation to several dimensions of resilience and self-efficacy among the respondents.** Project staff should supplement the CYRM by periodic qualitative data capture through, for example, reflective one-to-one discussions with the young people about their perceptions of their progress in relation to the CYRM items. This is likely to help devise plans of action in relation to any concerns resulting from the surveys and is particularly important given the high numbers of health related referrals made by M.Y.van staff to health agencies in 2015.

7. **M.Y.van has a longstanding partnership with the Claymore Youth Centre staff from Mission Australia and the Benevolent Society and this gives the young people essential access to toilet facilities while they visit the van.** However, greater cooperation between the two organisations could maximise efficiency of youth provision delivery and minimise duplication. The evaluation team recognise that the M.Y.van team have made considerable efforts in developing collaborative working arrangements with the youth centre staff, but there is potential for better cooperation and synchronisation of working schedules and joined up working that could ultimately benefit the young people of Claymore.

8. **The monitoring and reporting systems used for gauging work achievements against project objectives observed in the quarterly 2015 reports is an example of good quality assurance process.** However, the following recommendations could strengthen the robustness of this tool:
   
   a. Provide more differentiated records of attendance at different sites. For example, indicate numbers of participants in each project.
   b. Provide more information about how the 12 item CYRM surveys were administered, with whom and over how long. It would also be useful to indicate if any identified needs have led to targeted intervention in response to the surveys.
   c. Provide a rationale for targets set against indicators (for example clarification on what are the targets based on).

The M.Y.van team might like to consider making greater use of social media in promoting and showcasing the work of the project. Social media could play a pivotal role in gaining and
sustaining the interest of the older age group in the Van activities as well as strengthening young people’s sense of belonging and connectedness with Claymore community. For example, developing discussion forums that focus on local issues, provide sign posts to education, employment and training opportunities, or providing confidential contact points for young people to contact the youth workers to request appropriate referrals, particularly during the weekends and holidays.

9. **More detailed anonymised reporting of the referrals is needed**, along with any follow-up actions to provide support for young people as part of the M.Y. van program of activities.

10. **The Alternative Learning Program piloted in early 2015 designed for young people who are suspended from school due to challenging behaviour has seen an increase in the number of referrals (eg. from Eagle Vale High School).** The youth workers reported that the young people responded well to the non-formal learning environment and engaged positively with learning through digital media. M.Y.van might like to consider capitalising on this success by forming further partnerships with schools in Claymore and the wider Campbelltown area with a view to making the Alternative Learning Program more accessible to young people who are hard to reach.

**Conclusion**

Since its launch the M.Y.van project has made an important contribution to the children and young people of Claymore by providing opportunities for them to engage in empowering educational, social and recreational learning around mental and physical health, community safety, conflict resolution, substance misuse, nutrition, resilience and connectedness in a safe and non-confronting environment.

All the evidence reviewed in this evaluation points to the significant positive, social impact this project has had on the young people of Claymore and their community. The M.Y.van team is working effectively and efficiently to achieve the project objectives. At the launch of the van in Claymore, bullying, low literacy levels, young people’s confidence and difficult relations between young people and their community were dominating issues that negatively impacted on their participation at the van. Over this time, however, our qualitative and quantitative data show a healthy and promising increase in the confidence of the young people, their active participation in creative digital projects and health promotion workshops; and the sense of ownership they have developed towards the program. There is now an obvious change in attitudes, behaviours and sense of pride that the young people feel in themselves and their community.
1. Introduction

The M.Y.van project caters for children living in the highly disadvantaged suburb of Claymore, located in the city of Campbelltown in south-western Sydney. The program delivers a weekly outreach program each Monday afternoon between 3 and 5pm, which consist of creative uses of technology to help young people articulate the issues they are facing, whether at home, school or in the community. This report focuses on evaluating this project – now in its 3rd year – to assess a range of elements in its approach to countering social and economic risk in a region of severe disadvantage in NSW.

The young people of Claymore face social and financial disadvantage that negatively impact on their family life, education, health and employment prospects. Their high risk of social exclusion is well documented in Growing up Poor (ABC, 2012) and in a research report highlighting the employment vulnerability index for Australia’s major urban regions or ‘Red Alert suburbs’ (Centre of Full Employment and Equity, 2009). The program’s commencement in July 2012 was prompted by a growing realisation of the significant risk the young people of Claymore were experiencing in terms of disengagement from positive social connections, peers and support networks and the lamentable scarcity of youth organisations offering structured social and recreational activities to support them. The M.Y.van filled a significant gap and one year later in July 2013 established a weekly outreach program.

The aim of the project is to divert young people from anti-social behaviour and also offer a refuge from adversity or instability in their lives. The van is equipped with the latest digital and multi-media equipment, musical equipment, sporting equipment and health promotion materials on iPads that are used in the provision of creative arts workshops which explore health promotion issues around mental and physical health, community safety, conflict resolution, substance misuse, nutrition, resilience and connectedness in a safe and non-confronting environment. The M.Y.van project has the following objectives:

1. To provide a safe place for young people to learn and play each week in Claymore.
2. To improve the skills and wellbeing of vulnerable young people through non-formal education and diversionary activities.
3. To strengthen connections between young people and the community by referring them to available services.
4. To support young people to access their rights and voice their concerns about the issues that affect them.

Since its commencement, regular quarterly reports have been undertaken by SCA to track changes and assess the program’s impact on the youth of Claymore. The most recent in December 2015 concluded that in spite of many challenges the program provided young people with the opportunity to feel empowered that they would have been highly unlikely to achieve had they not attended the van. For example, the reporting of YACs liaising with Campbelltown City Council to get the voices of young people heard by local Councillors is one such opportunity for empowerment. The report also pointed to the vital importance of wellbeing support, and supportive relationships in general.

Social Disadvantage in Claymore

Claymore is a suburb in south-western Sydney that has been identified as one of the most disadvantaged suburbs in NSW; the Socio Economic Index for Areas rating of relative socio-economic disadvantage for Claymore is 495 (ABS, 2015). It was also described as home to 3,300 of the poorest
people in the country in *Growing up Poor* (Four Corners, 2012) and was included among a list of ‘Red Alert suburbs’ in a research report that highlighted the employment vulnerability index for Australia’s major urban regions (Baum & Mitchell, 2009).

M.Y.van was launched in July 2013 in response to concerns raised by research reports, national media, and community services groups such as MTC Australia, who highlighted the lack of suitable and appropriate health and welfare services, education and training, recreational opportunities in Claymore and the resultant high risks of social exclusion its young people were facing.

The particular social issues associated with living in a suburb such as Claymore places children at risk of social and economic failure (Jesuit & Catholic Social Services, 2015). Compared to the rest of NSW, those living in the most disadvantaged postcodes such as Claymore are: 3.6 times as likely to have spent time in prison; more than 3 times as likely to be experiencing long term unemployment; nearly 3 times more likely to have a low level of education and/or have suffered domestic violence; twice as likely to have a disability or significant mental health problem. More than two-thirds of such community’s record criminal convictions; over 60% record high levels of unemployment; and 60% of those living in such areas state that family violence is a major issue.

Indigenous youth are well represented in M.Y.van. The economic costs to the government are exacerbated with the Indigenous population who are significantly more vulnerable to ‘constant and consistent’ (Gray & Beresford, 2008, p. 197) inequality in all areas of life compared to non-Indigenous (NI) Australians, as evidenced by data relating to: life expectancy (<17.2yrs; unemployment rates (>3.2%); weekly household income (<$200); suicide rates (I) 12 – 36 / (NI) 11 – 16 deaths / 100000); and education (School attendance, learning outcomes on Benchmark measures).

**Methodology**

*Design principles*

Since 2013 a series of internal evaluations have informed the development and refinement of the M.Y.van Claymore project. These evaluations have also reflected a closer and dynamic understanding of the needs of the youth of Claymore, as well as shifts in understandings and policy concerned with mitigating disengagement and enhancing educational prospects for young people. The approach to this 2015 evaluation is informed by an interpretive approach that values highly the personal and educational experiences of the young participants, as well as the insights of frontline and coordination staff.

*Components*

Data collection included semi-structured interviews, focus groups, observation visits, and data analysis with input from SCA management, youth workers, YACs, young people attending the program, those who do not attend the program but are affected by it such as parents, agencies that SCA collaborate with in Claymore.
The data collection procedures are detailed in Table 1, below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semi-structured interviews</th>
<th>Focus groups</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Document Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 x Youth workers</td>
<td>4 x focus groups (10 children in total)</td>
<td>4 x 3 hour visits to the van during operating hours. This included observing staff discussions before and after the each session.</td>
<td>The M.Y. van operations manual The Save the Children internal review 2014 Quarterly attendance data The M.Y. van end of year reports (2013, 2014, 2015) Program documentation Educational session resources Debrief documentation Attendance data Curriculum Examples Review 2013 conducted by Save the Children Photos and videos created by Van attendees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 x Parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 x Youth Advisory Committee Members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 x Representatives of agencies that work with the M.Y. Van project</td>
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</table>

All efforts were made during the selection process to ensure that the interviewees formed a representative sample of the program community.

The questions asked during interviews and focus groups, aspects of the program that were observed and analysis of all data was informed by five specific themes, Program design, Governance and efficiency of the program, Personnel, Partnerships and Costs. These themes and their sub areas are detailed in Table 2, page 29.

An analysis of a wide range of data (Internal Reviews, Year End Reports, Summary Reports, Quarterly Reports, Survey Reports, and Planning Documents) captured in M.Y.van Claymore SCA internal accountability processes and procedures was also undertaken.

**Scope and limitations**

Since the commencement of M.Y.van, there has been one internal review (2013) and three end of year reviews (2013, 2014, 2015) conducted to assess the program’s impact on the youth of Claymore. No other external reviews or evaluations have taken place. This evaluation report has been commissioned by SCA to externally evaluate the project. This report combines findings from previous internal and yearly reports with new qualitative data to demonstrate the impact for young people after two years of implementation of the program. This evaluation includes a cost-benefit analysis for current and potential future corporate partners. SCA also anticipate using this evaluation to improve current service provision and scale up the project in other locations across Australia.

**Exclusions**

Fewer children aged 14-18 years were attending the van during the data collection period in November 2015, as a result their views are under represented in this evaluation. Generally, there is limited interaction between the parents and the youth workers at the M.Y.van and, as a result, their views are also under represented. The time of year the data collection took place was also a busy end of the year time for youth agencies and therefore partner organisations are also under represented.
**Ethics**

The Western Sydney University Ethics Committee approved the evaluation procedures. All interviewees were provided with a plain language statement about the study, and consent was sought for their participation. These documents outlined the research aims as well as the prospective participants’ rights to confidentiality, anonymity and access to the final report.
2. Progress towards achievement of objectives
Learning from internal review and reports (2013-2015)

- Young people in Claymore have gravitated towards M.Y.van because of the unique and engaging features of the programs. There are no other services for young people offering outreach programs centring on the use of up to date technology.
- Many young people attending the van face significant challenges in their lives, and there are insufficient community resources to support them.
- When introduced to the smaller, more intimate M.Y.van environment, young people consistently describe a sense of security and acceptance. All youth identify staff at the van as supportive and trustworthy adults in their life.

In common with previous internal reviews and reports, most of the 2015 cohort of young people had backgrounds marked by instability and often severe hardship. The following section details how the van is operating to make a positive contribution to their lives. The explanation is presented in terms of the four objectives of the van.

**Objective 1: The provision of a safe environment to learn and play**

The M.Y. van project provides a subtle mix of technologically mediated education and play, to support the health and wellbeing of the young people in Claymore. This approach is proving to be very successful with all stakeholders, particularly with attendees who have highlighted it to be an empowering and fun place to learn.

**Curriculum meaningful to the young people**

The van’s education program centres on a weekly health, safety and/or advocacy topic that connects with the needs of the young people and their Claymore community. We have identified this as a significant outcome of the project and this is discussed further in the report. Finding out what is important to the young people comes from a continued community consultation process, as well as ongoing conversations and surveys with children. This data is then developed into a weekly health topic, which is explored via a creative digital activity. The weekly program is pre-planned but sensitive to the needs of the attendees and what is going on privately in the community. The program is adjusted accordingly.

**Engaging and safe use of technology**

Safe technology use is a priority in the program. All apps pre-loaded onto the iPads that children access, have been checked by staff to ensure that content and interaction meet the Van’s objectives for safety, health and well-being. Access to YouTube and social media is restricted and consistently monitored. Staff state that they aim to ensure that the online content that the young people access at the van is high quality.

The use of digital media to support learning is distinctive and outstanding. From our observations, it compares well above the ways schools currently use technology. Technology is used to provide the opportunity for the young people to creatively learn through virtual and real life activities. The blend of organised and informal learning also provides the opportunity for the young people to pursue
their interests, develop their technological capabilities, and gain transferable skills, to help them with schoolwork or elsewhere.

**Curriculum that leads to a safer and enhanced community**

The van has very successfully developed community projects to address the children and parents’ concerns regarding the lack of physical safety in Claymore. The Claymore community have embraced these activities to create a safer environment and enhance young people’s sense of belonging in their environment. One youth worker explained:

‘We found out that rubbish was an issue...this led to the development of a curriculum around rubbish and then the successful clean up campaigns.... Also information sessions about recycling... It allowed the van to have an impact on the attendees but also the community more broadly’.

The BBQs frequently organised by the project not only promote a sense of belonging among children and young people by creating a familiar and safe place where they feel at home, they also provide an opportunity to talk about healthy eating. As one Youth Worker pointed out:

‘...when they’re hungry the first thing they think of is either fast food - so now with that we provide - as a van we provide the health. We’re also developing their skills in cooking, learning to barbecue, [and] they feel that they can be leaders amongst themselves and they take on the duties’ (Youth worker).

Ordinary activities such as organising BBQs can provide opportunities for health awareness raising messages while also creating a sense of belonging in a safe and familiar environment. An example of this was observed during one of the visits to M.Y.van. As they left school the young people came straight to the Van. They knew that the staff had planned to organise a BBQ. Under the supervision of a youth worker, five young people were busy preparing the food while they talked about their day at school. They also talked about the ingredients used and the harmful effects of eating saturated fats to the body. It was clear that they felt at home and there was a sense of good teamwork in their interactions with the staff and one another. One of the young people talked about how he appreciated the warm and friendly atmosphere at the Van. He said:

‘I feel at home when I come here because it seems just like seeing the kids play, like seeing your little brother or little sister playing’ (Attendee, aged 16 years).

**Accepting and empowering environment**

All children and parents referred to the lack of social safety in Claymore. Part of which relates to tense relationships and negative personal networks in the lives of the children. Part of the safe space the van offers is in the small numbers of children they aim to work with and the relationships that can develop as a result. Approximately 20 children attend the van each week. As the attendance patterns in section 2 (Program Profile) indicate some are regular visitors but others visit more sporadically. This smaller group size provides ample opportunity for youth workers to spend one on one time with each attendee.

The atmosphere is focused yet relaxed and this allows for a deeper impact. It allows ample time to share, for children to tell their stories and, for youth workers to pursue areas of need. For example, when chatting to youth worker one new attendee (aged approximately 15 years) stated that he was having trouble telling the time and this was negatively impacting on him getting to school on time. The youth worker pursued this need and, after some discussion with the child, began teaching him
how to read time. It was a one-on-one learning experience and an invaluable opportunity for the young person.

There is time within a normal two-hour engagement period for the young people to have free time. Young people spoke very favourably of the flexibility in the program as they had the opportunity to pursue their interests with photography, music and other digital creative forms of expression. As one attendee stated:

‘I like coming here because it has lots of stuff... (I like) Going on the computers... (for) songs... pictures. I take photos and print them... I get to meet some people that I haven’t met before - - and you get to take photos with friends and you get to take them home... I get to show my mum - I got a couple of them. She goes, oh, that’s good. I’ve got a couple’.

Both the young people and the staff value the van in promoting a sense of belonging in the community, building self-esteem and enhancing the opportunity for learning new and relevant skills and knowledge.

**Aspects working well:** Curriculum content connects with needs of young people and their communities; opportunities to learn through virtual as well as real life play; young people are encouraged to learn at their own pace and to pursue their interests using cutting edge technology.

**Areas for improvement:** Parent’s and staff’s perception of physical lack of safety among the young people and their parents regarding the regular location of the M.Y.van, particularly in the winter months, due to poor lighting. While this location has not resulted in any issues, parents and stakeholders stated that an alternative location, or adjusting the van by attaching floodlights may address this concern.

**Objective 2: To improve the skills and wellbeing of vulnerable young people through non-formal education and diversionary activities**

As noted earlier in this report, the children and young people in Claymore face many challenges and uncertainties resulting from living in one of the most socio-economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Greater Western Sydney. The M.Y. van staff demonstrated a deep understanding and sensitivity to these challenges and made the young people feel valued and welcome.

**Young people keeping up with technology**

Children in Claymore generally do not have access to technology or the internet at home or in public spaces. This lack of opportunity is a concern for the young people because they stated that developing good technological skills to be a priority and feel they are missing out. Children expressed that a lack of access delayed their technological skills as well as their confidence and learning at school:

‘(At the van) I’ll play a game or we sit down and talk with them. I have trouble getting on (at school), because I don’t use it that much and it’s very hard for me’ (regular male attendee).
Enhanced technology skills

The M.Y. van project offers state of the art digital equipment and relevant technologies including iPads, a printer, laptops, and digital music equipment. Benchmarking of the attendees’ technology skills show that many have consistently improved their knowledge of computer and photographic processes since attending the van. Many young people even displayed tendencies for peer supported learning, with older participants explaining digital processes to less experienced participants. Coding workshops run by SCA at the local school enhances this approach. The van attendees (and their parents) are proud of their achievements and are motivated by the possibilities their digital skills open up for their future careers.

Technology use attracts and engages children

Staff state that the first big hurdle for the young people of Claymore is actually getting them to engage in anything. The attendees explained that the opportunity to use technology on a first visit (instead of having a conversation with a youth worker) is very appealing and a less confronting experience for the young people. That initial visit then provides the opportunity for staff to strengthen connections between young people and the community by referring them to available services. Staff added an important benefit of their engagement was that it opened spaces for relationship building, further learning and advocacy. It opens up opportunities for them to tell their story:

‘We give them some pointers on how to use the equipment, but actually to get their hands on that kind of gear is not common. With every activity that is your entry point into conversations, whatever topic it is for the day.’ (M.Y.van worker)

Observations of van activities show children to be consistently engaged in the technologically mediated activities. This is well supported by attendees who value the use of technology and find it to be very relevant to their lives. During observation visits, the researchers observed snapshots of the non-formal and diversionary interventions organised by staff at the M.Y.van project. A music workshop was observed one afternoon that began with a youth worker talking about how childhood and children’s rights were experienced differently around the world. The group then proceeded to write lyrics based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and within 10 minutes, they were all rapping, with one of the young people displaying exceptional Beatboxing skills, which surprised everyone. The observers were subsequently informed by the youth worker that this young man had been withdrawn and uncommunicative due to personal family difficulties, but his newly discovered beatboxing and rapping talents shone through as he sang ‘I’ve got rights! I’ve got child’s rights!’ As demonstrated in this description, M.Y.van staff use these teaching times, when children are involved in technologically mediated activities, to encourage critical awareness of the young people’s rights to be heard, to make informed decisions about issues that affect their lives, and to be able to make a positive contribution to their environment and the communities in which they live.
Flexible and compassionate non-formal pedagogic approach

Central to the success of the M.Y.van Claymore project is the flexible and compassionate non-formal pedagogic approach adopted by the youth workers to engage in interactions and relationships with vulnerable children and young people. The non-formal approach they use is characterised by a commitment to promoting young people’s active participation in decision-making and to making a positive difference in young people’s lives. Their approach is holistic and person centred. For example, a workshop on audio speaker design can turn into a safe space to talk about young people’s hopes, fears and desires. There are also many options for children to engage in sporting activities and like the technology activities, youth workers engage with children in playing cricket or basketball and use these times as opportunities to informally develop supportive relationships with the children.

| Aspects working well: Activities are engaging and promoting young people’s active decision making, informal pedagogic approach supports deeper conversation with youth about important issues in their lives. |
| Areas for improvement: Health related referrals, mental health in particular account for more than 50% of all referrals made in 2015, more detailed anonymised reporting of the referrals and any follow-up actions to provide support for young people as part of the M.Y. van program of activities. |

Objective 3: To strengthen connections between young people and the community by referring them to available services

Paucity of services and support available

There is a paucity of youth service provision in Claymore. With the exception of the youth club where the Benevolent Society run a program twice weekly, there very limited access to recreational activities on a drop in basis. This is particularly important given the recurring concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour in the participants’ descriptions of their experiences of their neighbourhood.

Youth workers and young people expressed serious concerns about the lack of safety in the Claymore area and the considerable risks associated with high levels of crime to the children and young people. Some of their concerns about lack of safety in Claymore included:

‘I see people at night, walking up and down my street smashing bottles and what not’ (Attendee aged 17).

A M.Y.van youth worker echoed these concerns when she said:

‘Night time it’s not safe in Claymore. It’s a very high crime area. If you go into those shops .... if you sit outside the newsagent in Claymore for more than 15 minutes for sure you’ll see some behaviour that you wish you didn’t see’ (Youth worker).

One of the Community Development Workers from the Benevolent Society also pointed to the seriousness of the risks associated with early school leaving for a significant group of young people in Claymore. She said:
‘It’s basically all the youth that are sitting under the bridge, you know, having a shot of ice that haven’t been engaged in education for four or five years and they’re only 15. Because there’s a lot of them out there’ (Community Development Worker, Benevolent society).

Building on strong sense of community among young people

We found however countervailing evidence of a strong sense of community among young people, youth workers and stakeholders we interviewed that was expressed in a desire to make a difference to the lives of children and young people in the Claymore. A youth worker said:

‘My feelings about Claymore change week to week, they can. The strong sense of community is really unlike a lot of places I’ve worked in’ (Youth worker, M.Y.van).

Activities are strategically developed that support the young people to know their community more and build their pride in it. The recent “Clean up Claymore project’ that aimed at beautifying the suburb is an example of this.

YAC model fosters and models empowering engagement with local community

The formation of the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) is viewed by all participants in this evaluation as a success story and poignantly highlights the significant contribution that M.Y.van has made in terms of fostering the engagement of young people in their local community through the provision of opportunities for them to undertake work experience and employment on the van.

Young people were given an invaluable experience in the selection and recruitment process involved in securing employment. During the focus group they described how they were personally transformed by the opportunity to be part of the YAC and to be able to contribute to the design and delivery of M.Y.van activities. A young man said:

‘Well I’ve definitely learnt more communication skills and I have built on my confidence. Before I started working here, I was basically antisocial. I wouldn’t really talk much...but ever since I started working here, it’s just gotten a lot better for me. I’ve learnt how to speak better. Also learnt how to definitely build my confidence and encourage myself and have that self-esteem’ (Male YAC member).

Partnerships and Referrals

Providing health promotion and referrals was identified by M.Y.van staff in the Internal Review 2013 conducted by Save the Children as one of the deliverables that was partially not met. However, there is currently no shortage of health promotion and information materials at the M.Y.van and records from the 2015 report shows that there has been a significant improvement in this area. As table 9, page 34 indicates, a total of 120 referrals were made by the M.Y.van to community and government partners and 15 referrals were made by other agencies to M.Y.van which solely focused on education and training. It also shows that most of the referrals related to mental health, grief and trauma and other health, 46 and 21 respectively, this was followed by child protection issues, 24, then safety, education and training and employment.

Since the Internal Review staff have invited health specialists to run workshops at the van and plans were underway to involve an Aboriginal health organisation. However, few referrals to secondary health agencies had been made and while pointing out that it was challenging to encourage children and young people, particularly 8 to 12 year olds in Claymore, to request referrals where appropriate, a youth worker said:
‘...last time we had someone from New South Wales Department of Health who ran a dental hygiene workshop’. However, one child who disclosed that he had been bullied was referred to his school.

A member of staff explained:

‘Because a lot of that bullying or trouble with learning happens at school so we have referred to Claymore public school to get a young person into counselling after what they disclosed to us’.

While the provision of referrals is a desired outcome, it is predicated on building trusting relationships between young people and youth workers and the example given above shows that the staff on the project have made progress in achieving this. However, building enduring relationships of trust and mutual respect requires persistence and patience and is likely to take a considerable time, particularly given that the M.Y.van only operates in Claymore once a week. It is expected that, given time, the young people are more likely to talk to youth workers about sensitive issues in their lives and request appropriate referrals.

| Aspects working well: Multiagency partnerships have culminated in successful joint initiatives for young people and the wider Claymore community; M.Y. van programs, such as YAC model, help foster a strong sense of community among young people, a desire to make a difference in the Claymore community, and strong sustainable employment outcomes. |
| Areas for improvement: M.Y.van could build on and extend current programs that address young people’s concerns about lack of safety associated with high levels of crime in Claymore |

Objective 4: To support young people to access their rights and voice their concerns about the issues that affect them

Advocacy for the rights and voices of children is a priority for the M.Y.van project. This commitment permeates all aspects of the van’s activities, with a particular focus on ensuring young people have the knowledge, confidence and know-how to create positive change in their own lives as well as in the lives of other young people.

Technology used to enhance children’s voice

The weekly program that focuses on health promotion content via creative digital activities is underpinned by a goal of supporting the attendees to find their voice, communicate what’s important to them, and to be able to effect change in their world. Recent activities have included storyboarding and creating a short film about crime in their neighbourhood, and creating a rap based on children’s rights.

The van incorporates several strategies to foster this priority. This includes creating a trusting environment, which empowers van attendees to share their stories with peers, staff and their community. The focus on creativity in the curriculum is another layer, which encourages a sharing of ideas and stories. As one youth worker states:
‘Each creative activity is structured so that children can express themselves and find the ways to communicate what’s important to them... whether it's through rapping or whether it's through music or graphics or speaking or whatever we do that’s a really important core value’.

**Choice as a strategy to support voice**

Young people are given choice to pursue their interests at the van; this includes the opportunity to use the technology equipment or to pursue new learning in ways that personally connect with their interests and needs. Staff explained that attendees had serious anger issues and as a result their school life was unhappy, often with consistent behaviour management issues. M.Y.van’s focus on choice, personal expression and respect for children gives attendees the understanding that it is a ‘safe environment’. As one youth worker explains:

‘When they consecutively come it means yes they trust us. They believe in us.... It fosters changing their perceptions about teachers and learning and themselves’.

Youth work is often associated with older children, however in the Claymore area, the van has high appeal for younger children with children attending from as young five years. The curriculum has been revising accordingly by the project team to ensure that it resonates with the needs of both younger and older children. Staff express the view that the opportunity to connect with children when they are younger has enormous benefits in terms of the impact of long term, focused youth work. Interview data from staff at other youth agency’s however shows that the van’s work with this broader age range of children requires a shift in identity into how they position their target age group and focus their focus in relation to other youth agencies in the area.

**YAC – giving young people a voice**

As part of M.Y.van the development of the YAC is a very positive advocacy and employment strategy that aims to nurture young people to become youth leaders in Claymore. One YAC member aptly stated: ‘We are the voice of the young people’. The young workers are regularly asked to voice their concerns and then supported to take action to contribute to positive change. They work with the school, council, the youth centre staff, and with the young people who attend the van. The program’s recent, ‘Clean up Claymore’ campaign was initiated by this process.

In a focused conversation with youth workers, the YAC has identified their concern about the high levels of rubbish in Claymore. They then surveyed around 50 locals who confirmed it to be an issue for the broader community as well. This information was actioned into a process of change and the YAC successfully applied for a grant to address the situation.

The YAC also have the opportunity to gain the experience and develop the skills and confidence needed to work at a more complex policy level. One YAC was a Save the Children Youth Ambassador and went with three other young people from around Australia to develop a manifesto to Federal ministers in ACT. The intention of this process was to advocate for other young people that don’t have that same access to government or similar groups that can make change.

The YAC members speak with undeniable pride in their role, and their high attendance rate and commitment to their work is evidence of this. This strategy is also having significant long-term impact on these young people who acknowledge the importance of this role for their confidence in their future employment and direction. Reflecting on the positive experiences she had had as junior youth worker one YAC member talked about her future with enthusiasm and optimism. She said:
‘Well I didn’t really know what I wanted to do with my career and stuff, but since working on M.Y. van and the YAC I’ve just enrolled in the Diploma of Youth Work. So that’s my pathway. It’s what I want to do’ (YAC member).

M.Y. van’s commitment to children accessing their rights and voicing their concerns is a standout feature of the project, positively contributing to the lives of children in the short and long term.

Aspects working well: A trusting environment has been established in the van which empowers young people to share their stories; empowering strategies of choice and voice; YAC is a very positive intensive advocacy strategy.

Areas for improvement: Consider providing differentiated sessions for different age groups in order to maximise the take-up of M.Y. van provision by older age groups.

Central Role of Digital Media

SCA are to be commended on the outstanding use of technology to achieve their objectives. There is an overarching strategy for empowerment and advocacy in the ways technology is used in the van. Freedom to use technology to learn and pursue interests, coupled with the employment of staff with high technology expertise importantly facilitates shifting children away from simply being consumers of technology to using technology to create, communicate with and to empower themselves in the future.

Attendees stated that the informal opportunities to use a range of equipment to play and learn, with meaningful and skilled guidance when needed, provided a safe and energising space to develop their technological capabilities.

Children used their free time with technology to develop creative skills such as music production. With the guidance of youth workers, young people also used it for imperatives such as to completing homework, writing a resume, which importantly provides a leeway to keep up with school expectations and aspirations for employment.

Future uses of technology should incorporate new initiatives and devices such as Kano (or similar) or establishing a Makerspace. Both these approaches are underpinned by creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship and would fit very well with M.Y. van’s approach to technology and alternative spaces for learning.
There is enormous scope for using technology to support understanding the young people who attend the van however technology appears to be used minimally for these aspects. Using the iPads to track attendance, to conduct resilience surveys so that it supported understanding the history and trajectory of young people is an important consideration for future use of technology. This idea is explained more fully in the recommendations section of this report.

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<th>Aspects working well: Creative uses of technology, which the young people enjoy and want to engage with.</th>
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<th>Areas for improvement: extending uses of technology to incorporate new approaches such as Kano and Makerspace; greater use of technology to support the administrative aspects of the project</th>
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3. Cost-benefits of the M.Y van project

Effective early interventions that partially remEDIATE the effects of adverse environments can reverse some of the harm of disadvantage, benefitting not only the children themselves, but also their community, and society at large. The following costs-benefits analysis of the M.Y van project evaluates how effective the van project is in cutting through the social deprivation that characterises Claymore, and increasing the career and life opportunities of the young people.

Cost of the delivery of the program: efficiency and effectiveness

Given the limited financial resources in the early intervention space, one measure of success relates to how efficiently a program can work to leverage the budgets they have available. The following section details the budget and costs per beneficiary. The evaluation found that M.Y.van has decreased its costs per beneficiary over the past two years.

Costs per beneficiary

The current cost per beneficiary for the M.Y.van Claymore is $56.13. This figure is based on the program costs for 1 x 2 hour session per week (Monday 3–5pm) for 4 X 10 week terms each year; it does not include the costs for the team leader or for depreciation of the van. As the tables show, the cost per beneficiary has decreased by 4.86 % since 2013. The decreased cost indicates that M.Y. van is managed efficiently and the increasing take-up of its diverse programs is set to improve efficiency further. As highlighted in the recommendations section of this report, maximising the number of high profile events organised by M.Y. van is likely to reduce costs and offset additional expenditure incurred as a result of resource intensive interventions.

Aspects of the van that support its cost effectiveness

The mobile aspect of the van is a significant contributor to the cost effectiveness of the project. This has numerous advantages for running the program, ensuring the program remains close to the needs of the community and working with other agencies. The mobile aspect of the van has several advantages:

• M.Y.van has a large reach so it is good value on a cost per beneficiary scale.
• It can easily change locations to reach changing demographics. Trialling of new locations is an important possibility.
• The van does not bear the costs of a fixed building and location.
• It has greater scope for multi-agency networking. This supports enhanced opportunities for working in partnership, which is conducive to sharing/cutting costs.
• The program can increase attendance at large community/youth festivals, which increases reach and will improve cost per beneficiary figures.

It is important to note that M.Y.van is 100% externally funded through Corporates Partners. This is beneficial as it allows for innovation and addressing immediate needs. This is in contrast to the at times lengthy process associated with government funding, which can lead to the delivery of outdated or generalised strategies, which do not necessarily meet the needs of that specific location.

Social benefits of the M.Y Van

M.Y.van is an innovative project that uses a new approach to early intervention. There is an urgent call in the literature (Jesuit & Catholic Social Services, 2015) for new approaches to early intervention
projects that target the small number of communities that experience persistent and entrenched disadvantage such as Claymore. This new approach is characterised by:

- Sustained and long-term commitment to change.
- Addressing economic and social disadvantage at the individual and community level.
- Developing local solutions that bring the community, business and government together.
- Integrating government services to support local solutions and effectively drive change.

Below is an explanation of what the evaluation team identify to be the most significant outcomes of the project in terms of the outcomes that are being achieved for the young people and also the impact on the community.

**Outcomes for children**

M.Y.van offers an inclusive program model that builds relationships with young people and the Claymore community to offer localised strategies and solutions in a safe and empowering environment.

**Curriculum addresses needs of the youth and builds on their strengths:** An essential aspect of all of these factors is that they contributed to raising aspirations. M.Y.van used peer teaching which involved identifying attendees who had particular skills and asked them to teach the other children. For example, one child with exceptional skills and interest in drawing was asked to teach art classes, and another with excellent cooking skills was asked to run cooking classes for the attendees. The idea of peer mentoring was part of the youth workers’ focus on identifying young people’s strengths and harnessing those strengths to not only share them, but to build their own confidence and development. The contribution to the children’s self-esteem was significant. The implementation of the YAC also provides unique insights into the knowledge and experiences of young people of Claymore. This has enabled M.Y.van staff to organise responsive youth activities to strengthen connections between young people and their community.

**Alternative, engaging and safe space for learning:** Children, staff and parents repeatedly talk about the lack of safety in Claymore, both in the suburb’s environs as well as in the children’s’ home life. They also refer to the lack of resources for children. Given the scarcity of regular youth service provision in Claymore, M.Y.van fills a gap in Claymore. The staff stated that children who attend M.Y.van activities are the ones who are allowed to be unsupervised in the unsafe environment of Claymore. These children are the most vulnerable.

**YAC as an intensive advocacy strategy:** The formation of the Youth Advisory Committee is one of the most significant achievements of M.Y.van. It allows young people to earn while they learn. The application/interview process gave them the opportunity to think about the kinds of dispositions, demeanor and communication skills that are essential to effective presentation skills. The induction training for junior youth workers gave the young people further insights into a professional working environment including the opportunity to shadow senior members of staff who modeled ethical and professional youth work practice through providing them with mentoring and guidance.

For some of the young people who were successful in securing paid junior youth worker roles, this was an achievement of the highest order as they were the only members in their families to be in paid employment.
Being part of the M.Y.van team provides YAC members with the resources and structure through which to make a difference in their community, while acting as positive and accessible role models for the children and young people they work with.

During the focus groups young people were asked to reflect on their learning journeys since they became YAC members. They all talked about how they were transformed by the experience. A Youth Worker gave an example of a young woman whose aspirations were raised since she became involved in the YAC. She said:

‘...one of the YAC left school at the end of Year 11...She’s just said last week that she wants to go back and finish Year 12 because she wants to go on and do uni. I don’t know if that would have been her trajectory if she didn’t have this job here to support her’ (Youth worker, M.Y.van).

In speaking of another very successful YAC member, one Youth Worker stated:

‘X is the only worker, well consistent worker in the family... X would not have gotten a job elsewhere. The confidence that X has built... X was the one that spoke to Bill Shorten and X contributed to this work. You hear X speak, X would not be here in this position, right now, without the support of this program. We are one of the only things that X does every week. X is not at school, X is not in other training while we’re trying to support X but these are the two things that X does every week consistently. X doesn’t have anything else’ (Youth worker, M.Y.van).

The Youth Advisory Committee learnt other transferable skills they honed through their active involvement in community development projects:

‘We’ve also learnt a lot about event coordination and a lot about stakeholders in the community and who you have to contact a lot, because even such a simple thing about putting a recycling bin in the youth centre, that we realise how many people we need to contact and who’s going to empty it, who’s this affecting’ (YAC member M.Y.van).

**Staff as positive role models for youth:** Central to the success of the M.Y.van Claymore project is the collective expertise of the Youth Workers. As a group the staff have skills and knowledge in technology in a range of activities that are integrated into the van project. For example, some Youth Workers possess considerable expertise in the use of cutting edge digital media as a catalyst for achieving educative outcomes; others are passionate about engaging youth in outdoor sports activities. Collectively this range of skills connects with the interests, needs and knowledge of the youth. Also of particular significance is the flexible and compassionate approach used by the Youth Workers in their interactions with young people in Claymore. The staff communicate a collective message of trust and safety to children. In addition, each member has skills pertinent to the objectives of the van, including high-level technology skills, and a deep understanding of the needs of young people. The youth workers’ commitment to making a difference in young people’s lives was expressed in their focus on youth empowerment through active participation and involvement in decision-making, which was reflected in all the materials reviewed and the activities observed in this evaluation. This was particularly evident in the development of the Youth Advisory Committee.

Since its launch in Claymore, the M.Y. van has made a significant contribution to addressing some of the social and education challenges faced by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people and their communities in Claymore. This has been done through establishing multiagency partnerships with a range of voluntary and statutory organisations, such as MTC Australia, White Lion, Mission Australia, the Benevolent Society and the Aboriginal organisation Muru Nanga Mai.
Positive engagement with the indigenous community: Of particular note is the high level of positive engagement with the Indigenous community. As the unique attendance by ethnic and cultural group outlined in table 7, graph 4, page 33 shows, the number of young people who identified as being of Indigenous heritage are well represented compared to other groups. This is a major achievement given widespread low representation by this group in the take-up of youth service provision (Palmer, 2010) and attests to M.Y.van Youth Workers’ compassionate approach and commitment to social justice. The partnership with Muru Nanga Mai has led to a joint initiative in health promotion that would not have taken place without the leadership of the M.Y.van staff. The continuation and perhaps expansion of M.Y.van activities in Claymore is therefore crucial to meeting the complex needs of Indigenous young people in Claymore.

Leveraging networks: Multiagency networking is an important part of the M.Y.van strategic development plan and these partnerships have led to the design and implementation of innovative joint initiatives, including Ramps 2 Real, which involved Skateboarding workshops on a Tuesday and health promotion on a Wednesday, which attracted favourable feedback from the children, young people and their parents. Some of M.Y.van program activities are specifically designed to harness the strong sense of community in Claymore by drawing on an extensive multiagency network to further strengthen relationships between young people and their community. A Youth Worker said:

‘In Claymore we’ve certainly worked with a whole multitude of agencies, both in terms of having agencies, there delivering their own thing and we’re delivering our own thing and we’re referring young people across’ (Youth worker M.Y.van).

Transferable skills via engaging technology use: The creative use of technology is another outstanding outcome for children as it provides an alternative model of learning for youth who are challenged by more traditional approaches (Orlando, 2013). Young people associated a sense of freedom, trust and control when they used technology at the van. They also developed important skills of using technology to research, to present and publish data and ideas, to search (including searching for employment), and prepare a CV. This overall creative strategy supported youth learning about the health promotion themes, positive youth-staff relationships, and how the youth interpret their identity as learners. The choice of high quality equipment is also an excellent strategy as it shifts the focus from the technical aspects of the equipment to youth and staff exploring the creative possibilities of the technology.

Provision of alternative learning programs: The provision of a growing suite of alternate workshops that build on the project’s health promotion curriculum is an important alternative learning initiative by SCA. The Alternative Learning Program piloted in early 2015 was designed for young people who were suspended from school due to challenging behaviour has seen an increase in the number of referrals (for example from Eagle Vale High School). Young people responded well to the non-formal learning environment and engaged positively with learning through digital media.

Increasing youth resilience

A further aspect that affirms the social impact of the project is the increasing resilience of the attendees. Resilience refers to the ability to adapt to stress and adversity. In recent years, due to its potential influence on health, wellbeing and quality of life, resilience has become a major focus of interest for academic researchers, policymakers and practitioners working in the area of mental health and wellbeing (VicHealth, 2015). Progress towards the achievement of the project objectives, particularly to improve the skills and wellbeing of vulnerable young people through non-formal education and diversionary activities are measured against the 12-item version of the Child and
Youth Resilience Measure (Liebenberg, Ungar, & LeBlanc, 2013). One of the Youth Workers pointed out that focus on well-being and resilience is a part of the youth framework. He said:

Over the last two years we've put down our principles of care, so strength based, trauma informed, culturally open and appropriate, as well as some others but they're the core ones. We've developed a youth framework which is based on resilience so draws out some of the preconditions for resilience. (Youth worker).

M.Y. van staff have administered a series of online resilience surveys with young people at quarterly intervals. The survey questions were wide ranging and can be divided into 3 subscales; individual; context and caregiver related questions. For example, in the individual questions asked young people about their personal and social skills and whether they felt they could get support from peers when they needed help. Questions relating to the context mainly focused on young people’s attitudes towards Education and whether they felt they belonged at school and had positive role models in their community. And finally, questions relating to psychological caregiving mainly focused on how much they felt their parent(s) or caregiver(s) knew who their friends were, what they liked to do and if they felt they could get their support when times were hard.

Information provided in the four quarterly reports 2015 indicates that surveys using the 12-item CYRM were conducted with a total of 34 young people who responded positively to some of the CYRM items. As shown in Table 9, page 34, the percentage of targets achieved shows that M.Y. van has exceeded some of the targets, while falling just below others. The CYRM proved to be a useful tool for identifying young people’s thoughts and feelings about their lives and their relationships to significant others and the wider community. The survey results indicate a significant improvement across all the subscales measured in the CYRM survey. Young people who completed the surveys on at least two intervals showed on average a 78% increase in resilience. Furthermore, qualitative data elicited through interviews with the young people and their parents strongly indicate significant positive change in several CYRM related measures. However, in order to derive maximum benefit from CYRM, sustained contact with the same individuals over time is required so that progress can be gauged against immediate, intermediate and long term resilience measures. As pointed out by one of the Youth Workers, building relationships with young people takes time:

We could advertise at the school but we've made a conscious choice, not necessarily to do that because if you really want to get that one on one time with them or really kind of work on their self-esteem and their resilience and all those things we're aiming for it doesn't work with 40, 50 kids (Youth worker M.Y. van).
4. Recommendations

All the evidence reviewed in this evaluation points to M.Y.van’s significant positive social impact on the young people of Claymore and their community. Youth Workers’ focus on promoting advocacy and raising young people’s critical awareness of important issues in their lives has sown the seeds of transformation that are likely to continue to evolve beyond the project timeframe. The Western Sydney researchers who completed this evaluation have no hesitation in recommending the continuation of this innovative intervention with high positive social impact on the young people of Claymore and their communities. However, there are areas for improvement that this report highlights in the recommendations below.

1. The project could benefit from additional digital media programs to engage young people. New digital media devices such as Kano (or similar) may be a worthwhile new use technology to consider. This is a small computer that young people make and then build apps and learn code with it. Similarly, a Makerspace could be set up in the van (possibly beginning with a unique event). A Makerspace is a place where children can get hands-on and creative with maker technologies – to tinker, play and create. A Makerspace provides access to tools and resources to help drive innovation and entrepreneurship and this model would fit very well with the van’s approach to technology and alternative spaces for learning.

2. There is enormous scope for using the technology to better capture data around the target group. Currently there is not enough use of the technology (i.e. iPads) to track attendance, to conduct resilience surveys so that it supported understanding the history and trajectory of young people is an important consideration for future use of technology. For example, a digital attendance sheet may be introduced. The attendance can then be linked electronically to the profile of each individual attendee.

3. Attendance data by age group suggest that the majority of users are between 7 and 11 years of age. While work with this group is crucial, there are limited opportunities for 12 to 18 to engage in positive activities in their leisure time. The M.Y.van team should consider targeted provision for 12 - 18 age group, for example through the designation of separate sessions in the early evening. This could also provide scope for focused interventions aimed at young people who may not be in employment, education or training.

4. There is limited youth service provision during school holidays for young people in Claymore. This is a high-risk period for young people in Claymore, as during school holidays they have no appropriate adult outside their family to talk to, nowhere to go and nothing to do for a considerable period of time. This could provide an opportunity for M.Y.van to offer structured holiday programs that are likely to see high participation rates by high numbers of males and females of different age groups.

5. The Youth Advisory Committee is one of the most significant outcomes of the M.Y.van program in Claymore, with obvious benefits to the M.Y.van project, the young people and the wider Claymore community. The M.Y.van team should consider spreading this example of good practice to other locations of NSW by replicating this highly successful intervention to, for example to other parts of Campbelltown, Glebe, Woolloomooloo and beyond.

6. The 12 item Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM) data collected through online surveys conducted by M.Y.van during 2015 provides useful indicators in relation to several
dimensions of resilience and self-efficacy among the respondents. Project staff should be supplement the CYRM by periodic qualitative data capture through, for example, reflective one-to-one discussions with the young people about their perceptions of their progress in relation to the CYRM items. This is likely to help devise plans of action in relation to any concerns resulting from the surveys and is particularly important given the high numbers of health related referrals made by M.Y.van staff to health agencies in 2015.

7. M.Y.van has a longstanding partnership with the Claymore Youth Centre staff from Mission Australia and the Benevolent Society and this gives the young people essential access to toilet facilities while they visit the van. However, greater cooperation between the two organisations could maximise efficiency of youth provision delivery and minimise duplication. The evaluation team recognise that the M.Y.van team have made considerable efforts in developing collaborative working arrangements with the youth centre staff, but there is potential for better cooperation and synchronisation of working schedules and joined up working that could ultimately benefit the young people of Claymore.

8. The monitoring and reporting systems used for gauging work achievements against project objectives observed in the quarterly 2015 reports is an example of good quality assurance process. However, the following recommendations could strengthen the robustness of this tool:

   a. Provide more differentiated records of attendance at different sites. For example, indicate numbers of participants in each project.
   b. Provide more information about how the 12 item CYRM surveys were administered, with whom and over how long. It would also be useful to indicate if any identified needs have led to targeted intervention in response to the surveys.
   c. Provide a rationale for targets set against indicators (for example clarification on what are the targets based on).

The M.Y.van team might like to consider making greater use of social media in promoting and showcasing the work of the project. Social media could play a pivotal role in gaining and sustaining the interest of the older age group in the Van activities as well as strengthening young people’s sense of belonging and connectedness with Claymore community. For example, developing discussion forums that focus on local issues, provide sign posts to education, employment and training opportunities, or providing confidential contact points for young people to contact the youth workers to request appropriate referrals, particularly during the weekends and holidays.

9. More detailed anonymised reporting of the referrals is needed, along with any follow-up actions to provide support for young people as part of the M.Y. van program of activities.

10. The Alternative Learning Program piloted in early 2015 designed for young people who are suspended from school due to challenging behaviour has seen an increase in the number of referrals (eg. from Eagle Vale High School). The youth workers reported that the young people responded well to the non-formal learning environment and engaged positively with learning through digital media. M.Y.van might like to consider capitalising on this success by forming further partnerships with schools in Claymore and the wider Campbelltown area with a view to making the Alternative Learning Program more accessible to young people who are hard to reach.
5. Background materials reviewed

Mobile Youth Service Van Claymore Year End Report, 2013, Save the Children Australia.
Mobile Youth Service Van Summary Report, January to December 2014, Save the Children Australia.
Mobile Youth Service Van Quarterly Report, Quarter 1, 2015, Save the Children Australia.
Mobile Youth Service Van Quarterly Report, Quarter 2, 2015, Save the Children Australia.
Mobile Youth Service Van Quarterly Report, Quarter 3, 2015, Save the Children Australia.
Mobile Youth Service Van Quarterly Report, Quarter 4, 2015, Save the Children Australia.
Internal Review Mobile Youth Van
M.Y.van Case Study Template, (last modified 2015)
Claymore Q3 2015 Safety survey
Survey Report: Claymore Q2 - 2015 Consolidated survey
Survey Report: Claymore Q3 - 2015 Consolidated survey
Survey Report: Claymore Q4 - 2013 Youth Well-Being Survey
Logical Framework- Mobile Youth Service
Planning Documents:
Daily activity plans 2/2/16, 9/2/15, 16/2/15, 2/3/15, 9/3/15, 16/3/16
M.Y.van (Claymore) Daily Activity Plan 5, 7, 8
6. References


## 7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Data for M.Y. van project research report, 2015

Table 1. Research themes for M.Y. van project evaluation report, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of inquiry</th>
<th>Program design</th>
<th>Governance and efficiency of the program</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
<th>Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theories/principles underpinning the approach to education/support</td>
<td>Policy development and application</td>
<td>Recruitment processes and staffing levels.</td>
<td>Formal/informal links with other stakeholders</td>
<td>Funding sources, staffing expenses, equipment and other expenses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach to using digital media in programs and engagement of participants</td>
<td>Data collection systems for attendance and referrals.</td>
<td>Professional development for all staff including the Youth Workers and Youth Advisory Committee Members.</td>
<td>Partnerships and interactions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives of program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborations and referrals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Areas for future collaboration and activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Unique Attendance


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 1. Claymore - Unique attendance by gender by year, 2013 - 2015

Unique attendance

M.Y.van - Claymore unique attendance by gender during years 2013, 2014 and 2015. Unique attendance relates to when an individual is only counted as having attended the M.Y.van once during the term regardless of the number of times they actually attended during the term.

As table 3 shows, there has been a sharp increase in unique attendance over the past 3 years. The number of young people taking up the M.Y. van provision went up by nearly 47% between 2013 and 2014. It then jumped a further 74% between 2014 and 2015.
Graph 2. Unique attendance by age group by gender 2015

Unique attendance by age by gender shows a consistently higher attendance by males compared to their female counterparts over the past 3 years. The M.Y.van achieved a total of 239 attendance over four terms in 2015, including 135 male and 104 female, a 67% increase in the number of young women participating in the activities compared to 2014.
Appendix 3: Repeat Attendance

Table 5. Claymore - Repeat attendance by age group by gender in 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-11 years</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-18 years</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-21 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Repeat attendance by age group & by gender

In most instances an individual has attended the M.Y.van on more than one occasion. Repeat attendance therefore refers to all the visits made by an individual male or female to M.Y.van during a term.

Graph 3. Claymore - Repeat attendance by age group by gender, 2015.

Table 6. M.Y.van Repeat attendance by location, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Total for 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claymore (including Scratch and Alternative Education and Selvana Way)</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glebe</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolloomooloo</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contextualising attendance at M.Y.van Claymore

The M.Y. van is located in Claymore on Monday afternoon each week, however it is also located in Glebe and Woolloomooloo on other weeknights offering youth outreach programs. The table above shows the total number of attendance by location. As the table shows, M.Y.van Claymore project (including the Scratch and Alternative Education projects) attracts a considerably large number of participants compared with the other locations.
### Appendix 4: M.Y. van Attendance By Cultural Group

Table 7, Graph 4, attendance by cultural group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural group</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook Islander</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koori</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maori</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZ</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoan</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Pacific</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudanese</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongan</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Bar chart showing attendance by cultural group](chart.png)

**Unique attendance by cultural group**

Attendance records captured in the signing-in sheets and quarterly reports, consistently show high levels of participation by children and young people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the M.Y.van activities. Data outlined in table 7 and graph 4 above, rely on young people’s self-identification rather than any predefined ethnic or cultural group classifications, hence the diversity of user responses. We have kept the ethnic grouping as the young people have self-defined.
Appendix 5: M.Y. van Program Profile

Table 8. Number of attendees at M.Y. van events, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Number of attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown Youth week</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrating Claymore</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tug of Hope</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tharrawal</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reiby detention centre</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolloomooloo Community BBQ</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony day</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEAVE youth week</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claymore youth week</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolloomooloo Community BBQ</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monster Family Event</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yummy Café - Ambarvale</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAIDOC - Glebe</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>283</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 5 - number of attendees at M.Y. van events, 2015

Attendance at M.Y. van events

In addition, the M.Y. van Claymore organised a series of high profile events attracting a total of 283 young people as shown in Table 8, graph 5. It is clear from the diversity of these events and their popularity among young people, that they can attract large numbers of young people.
Appendix 6: Referrals

Table 9. Type and number of referrals to and from M.Y. van, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referral and interagency activities</th>
<th>Number of referrals FROM community and government partners</th>
<th>Number of referrals TO community and government partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Speech Therapy/Occupational Therapy)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health /Grief Trauma</td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 7: Performance Indicators Against Targets, 2015

Table 10. Outputs and outcomes, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of target achieved</th>
<th>Annual target 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicators (National) - Output (immediate change)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. # of life skills sessions delivered by SCA youth projects</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>137%</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. # of young people attending life skills session</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. # of cultural activities held by SCA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. # of young people participating in SCA cultural activities</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. # of young people supported to engage with formal education.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. # of young people supported in improving employability.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>120%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. # of individuals receiving case management support</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicators (National) - Outcome (intermediate change)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. # of young people who have developed life skills that support positive life choices</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>135%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. # of young people who increase education/training engagement and/or attainment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>120%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. # of young people who have pathways to sustainable employment</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>120%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. # of young people who have increased their connection to personal support networks</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. # of young people increased their engagement and participation in their community</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. # of young people have increased their safety</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. # young people who are supported to voice their concerns about issues that affect them</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. # of clients achieving their goals / resolving their issues (case management/mentoring)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. % change in offending levels by young people (where relevant)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicators (Project Specific)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. # of festival events attended</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. # of young people exposed to M.Y.van at festival events</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8: M.Y.van Expenditure 2015

Table 12. Operating costs breakdown per term – Not including Team leader wages and depreciation costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost breakdown</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wages: 2 x youth workers (digital media/music facilitation specialists)</td>
<td>5h x 10 weeks @ 32.90 = 1895.97 7h x 10 weeks @ 28.89 = 2473.13</td>
<td>$4,369.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Supplies</td>
<td>Digital media maintenance and supplies (paper/printer ink/Wi-Fi/CDs etc) 60$ per week.</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Running Costs</td>
<td>Fuel / maintenance/rego  Over 10 weeks (100$ per week)</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food (snacks for young people)</td>
<td>Fruit / muesli bars etc ($60 per week)</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total per Term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$6,569.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total per Year (Term x 4)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$26,276.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13. Operating costs breakdown per term – Not including Team leader wages and depreciation costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sites of operation</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glebe</td>
<td>26276.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolloomooloo</td>
<td>26276.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claymore</td>
<td>26276.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total program costs</td>
<td>78829.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14. Cost per young person per site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Repeat attendance 2015</th>
<th>Cost per person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woolloomooloo</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>469.2214286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glebe</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>80.3559633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claymore (including Scratch and Alternative Education and Selvana Way)</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>56.63017241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Repeat attendance</td>
<td>847</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>