

Matthew Stanley Foundation



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Submission

House of Representatives

Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youths

Inquiry into the Impact of Violence on Young Australians

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1. Foreword

In September 2009 the Matthew Stanley Foundation was pleased to receive an invitation to respond to House of Representatives, Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youths, Inquiry into the Impact of Violence on Young Australians from James Catchpole Committee Secretary. We welcome the opportunity.

The Foundation works closely with Queensland Police and the community as a committed contributor to the elimination of youth violence from our culture. The Foundation has supported Federal strategies and championed related Queensland Government initiatives including the One Punch Can Kill Campaign, Party, Safer Schoolies and the Social Marketing Campaign on Responsible Drinking.ⁱ

In October 2006 the Queensland Government announced the formation of the Youth Violence Taskforce to examine ways to reduce the incidence of violent behaviour amongst young Queenslanders.ⁱⁱ Chaired by the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Sport Ms Judy Spence, the Taskforce consisted of Government representatives, and community members, including Paul Stanley, founder of the Mathew Stanley Foundation.

There is no doubt that a great deal of the impetus for the Task Force came from the murder of Paul's son, Matthew. The Task Force Report states:

After the tragic death of teenager Matthew Stanley following a party in September 2006, the Queensland Government announced the formation of the Youth Violence Taskforce. Over 12 months the Youth Violence Taskforce examined ways to reduce incidents of violent behaviour amongst young Queenslanders and report back to Queensland Government.ⁱⁱⁱ

The horrendous and violent theft of Matthew's life triggered an outpouring of grief in his local community and beyond. The community and Matthew's family demanded action and in the face of the horror that befell Paul and Kay Stanley and their surviving son, Nic, the Stanley family drew together the support of a number of good people and established the Matthew Stanley Foundation.

As part of its own program, the Foundation continues to support the recommendations of the Task Force and contributes to the Ministerial Advisory Council on Youth Violence.^{iv} The Foundation has also made submission to the Inquiry into the 2009 Queensland Government Law Justice and Safety Committee Inquiry into Alcohol-Related Violence.^v The Foundation anticipates that the Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youths will draw information from each of these endeavours and collaborate in the response to this important issue.

Having interaction with a range of motivated elected representatives on different sides of the political ledger and different levels of government, the Foundation calls for a bipartisan approach to address the youth violence issues in our country. We are also aware of the violence levels in war ravaged parts of the world and the propensity for protagonists to recruit the young to their causes. The strategies suggested within will assist in providing resilience against the recruitment of young Australians causes that may have sinister intent.

The Foundation also recommends that when decision makers espouse awareness that youth violence has significant social and economic costs, that they do so only after hearing first hand what it means to have lost a loved one to violence or to have a family member traumatised for life as a consequence of violence. Disfiguration from glassing is more than a surface wound! We also believe that where members of the judiciary make judgments and impose sentences on issues relating to violence, that they would come closer to matching community expectations if in their professional training they were exposed to something more than a victim statement. The printed word is insufficient...ask any victim.

If we are guilty of bias it will be to take a victim orientation and to focus our energies on violence in the youth demographic. We are however mindful that what happens with adults sets norms and models in place for young people on their way to adulthood and look to the larger picture to unravel causes and cures.

We respect that government decisions must be evidence based, but we implore the government to ensure that data adequately represents the qualitative and subjective domain. The community at large looks for evidence that this has occurred.

In the many forums attended by youths and other members of the Matthew Stanley Foundation, the message that has become crystal clear is the need to engage youths in addressing their peers. The following summing comment from a community leader's forum characterises this point. The content relates to a discussion on the life-skills programs that are adopted as core curriculum components in Queensland high schools.

Peers also had an important role to play. It was suggested by many attendees that the life-skills program would only really work if administered by young people. These young people would be better equipped to contextualise the issue and explain the statistics behind youth violence. Attendees also mentioned that within schools, peers played an important role in regulating each others behaviour.^{vi}

Whilst a fair share of our input is about what government bodies and other groups are doing and what they can do to silence the violence and address the link with alcohol we see personal responsibility as a cohabitant with respect and an understanding of human rights that extends beyond the self.

As we look at our community, we see future generation of adolescents who are presently small children and we see adolescents with the potential to become adults and parents who model the self perpetuating scourge of bullying and violence. We also have personal experience with a magnificent cadre of young people who say no to violence, who will create a critical mass that will eventually win the day. They do however need the support of decision makers at all levels until they themselves can become the stewards of our future.

Inquiries of this type are important in ensuring that government hears the concerns that our community has towards youths and violence and that the government responds with policies and actions that are restorative, developmental, and preventative. We must acknowledge what has been and address the issues that have been caste, we must then look to crafting our preferred future, a future without the trauma and premature loss of life that that comes from violence, and we must do it in partnership with the people that will inhabit the greater part of that future, our youths.

2. Executive Summary

The Matthew Stanley Foundation is pleased to submit a response to the Inquiry into House of Representatives, Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youths, Inquiry into the Impact of Violence on Young Australians. The Inquiry seeks to inquire and report on the Impact of Violence on Young Australians. The response from the Matthew Stanley Foundation addresses:

Perceptions of violence and community safety among young Australians

- The DNA of Non Violence

- The Impact of Media & Government

The Link between illicit drug use, alcohol; abuse and violence among young Australians.

- Our Approach

- The Insidious Effect of Alcohol

- Culture Change

- The Link with Sport and Sporting Events

The relationship between bullying and violence and the well being of young Australians

- Bullying and its Dark Companions

- Bullying

- Cyberbullying

Social and Economic Factors that contribute to violence by young Australians

Strategies to reduce violence and its impact among young Australians

- Whole System Platform

Alcohol Related Strategies

- Partnering

- A Sporting Chance

- Responsible Service of Alcohol

- Glassing

- Sanctions and Support Systems

- The GO Vodka tube and designer products

- Opening Hours

- Transport- Getting Home

- Party Safe

- Education campaigns

- Legislation on Secondary Supply of Alcohol to Young People – Legislation and Action

Widening the Brush

- From Prevention to Skilling for Survival

- Parents as Intervention Agents

- At Risk Youths

- Specific Groups including Populations with Cultural and Linguistic Differences

- Matthew Stanley Foundation – Spreading the Message

- Bullying – A Path not to Follow

- Cyberbullying

The Matthew Stanley Foundation response to the “Inquiry into the Impact of Violence on Young Australians” provides discussion and recommendations based on its relationship with young people as well as grounded research and the experience of the many friends of the Foundation. Whilst the main focus has been on youth related issues the Foundation does not treat them in isolation from the larger system in which the issues reside.

3. Response to Inquiry Questions

3.1 Perceptions of violence and community safety among young Australians

3.1.2 The DNA of Non Violence

In addressing perceptions of violence and community safety among young Australians it is appropriate to understand that these perceptions exist within a larger context, the world stage. A World Report on Violence and Health in 2002, indicated that an average of 565 children, adolescents and young adults between the ages of 10 and 29 years die each day as a result of interpersonal violence across the world.^{vii} In citing this terrible statistic we are reminded that another class of youth violence exists in a form which is directed at the self as self harm or suicide. Whilst we have not treated this as main discussion area we do make the point that that such self directed harm may indeed be precipitated by the psychological and or physical harm inflicted by others through bullying and cyberbullying.

As a Queensland based organisation we note the informed view expressed by our Premier, The Hon. Anna Bligh in announcing the Queensland Government, Inquiry into Alcohol related Violence:

This culture tends to lead to binge drinking and anti-social behaviour. There's been a fundamental breakdown among young people in respect for themselves and each other and this is something that has to be addressed through this planned Inquiry. We need to restore that respect.^{viii}

We concur with our Premier and add two complementary R's (Rights and Responsibilities) to complete the essential DNA for an anti violence programs and moral IQ. It is our contention that respect for others must be grounded in respect for the self. Self respect is therefore a prerequisite to having fun without self destruction and damage to others, the environment and property. We also have concern about the self centred way that rights are often proffered in our community. If we accept that all people have a right to peaceful existence we will understand that the rights of the self must work hand in hand with respect for the rights of others.

In 2007, the previously mentioned Youth Violence Task Force convened a number of forums to gain an understanding of youth perceptions. We expect that the summary report would be of interest to this inquiry.^{ix}

The majority of students applauded the empowerment of young people through forums. They saw promoting choices, promoting personal responsibility, promoting positive messages that young people can make a difference, educating parents and the community and consultation with marginalised youth, as key issues for the future. Students wanted support for young people to be able to stand up for these issues, along with role model encouragement to say "no" to excessive alcohol consumption and violence and make fighting 'uncool'.

Again we see youths suggesting that it is youths that can make much of the difference in addressing youth issues.

We also commend and look forward to the results of the on line youth survey being conducted as part of this inquiry. ^x

3.1.3 The Impact of Media & Government

It would be folly to speak about perceptions of violence and community safety among young Australians without referring to the critical role of the media and government in impacting on the perceptions of young people and our society.

Throughout this document we have referenced the potential of the media and advertising to deliver positive messages and the need for legislation to impact on manipulative messages which can damage the combined efforts of people serious about reducing the youth violence. In making our observations the Matthew Stanley Foundation is enormously grateful for the support from the media as an important ally in addressing youth violence and community safety.

In this document we reference ways in which this relationship can benefit mutual goals. In a Youth Violence Forum conducted to inform the previously mentioned Youth Violence Task Force, students recommended that the media take responsibility for more balanced reporting and promote positive images of young people. Students also suggested a campaign should be undertaken to promote how great it is being a young person, and the ability for young people to make their own choices and be responsible for them. ^{xi}

Equally the government which employs many people to help shape perception and engineer positive social change can have a profound impact on the self identity of young Australians.

The task of delivering a positive message whilst needing to name real issues clearly provides a challenging paradox. We address elsewhere the importance of positive language and the downside of fear campaigns. In that regard, we applaud the authenticity and attention to rigour in the Office for Youth, report on the “State of Australia’s Young People”. ^{xii} The report delivers a positive picture of young people and the importance of investing in strategies to lift their outcomes. This is balanced by discussion and research on areas of concern.

3.2 The Link between illicit drug use, alcohol; abuse and violence among young Australians

3.2.1 Our Approach

The Matthew Stanley Foundation suggests that in order to address the issues and risks associated with drugs and alcohol in a morally responsible manner we must face the reality that both are toxic to human beings and therefore carry the potential to damage the human body and given certain conditions contribute to violence. If we regard the social consumption of alcohol as acceptable, whilst being aware of the adverse and sometimes fatal consequences of excessive consumption then we must find ways to encourage moderation and promote safety in the settings in which consumption takes place. Whilst our focus here is predominantly associated with alcohol, we and the inquiry must remain cognisant of the harmful consequences of drugs in their own right and the synergistic effect when combined with alcohol. Law enforcement officials also know only too well that crowded licensed venues can become targets for the pedlars of these destructive substances. Adolescents may be seeking fun oblivious to the fact that each substance consumed decreases their

chances of living out their natural life. The image of Russian roulette comes to mind, but the bullets are drugs.

3.2.2 The Insidious Effect of Alcohol

The Queensland Department of Education initiative, Act Smart Be Safe provides a reminder of the insidious effect of alcohol:

- * Alcohol use directly affects cognitive (thinking) and physical function.
- * Harmful alcohol use can reduce self-control and the ability to process information and assess risks.
- * Harmful alcohol use can increase emotions and impulsivity and make some young people more likely to resort to violence in confrontation.
- * Reduced physical control and ability to recognise early warning signs can make some young people easy targets.
- * Individual and social beliefs about the effects of alcohol (e.g. increased confidence, increased aggression) means that alcohol may be consumed as preparation for involvement in violence.
- * Alcohol and violence is often a central part of youth gang culture.^{xiii}

3.2.3 Culture Change

Confronted with the damage of the unbridled use of alcohol we must seek to enact our preference for a culture where drunkenness, intoxication and violence are not only seen as unacceptable but shunned. Noting the complex relationship between alcohol, violence and cultural norms we need to adopt strategies that impact on the total system as well as addressing specific issues.

3.2.4 The Link with Sport and Sporting Events

The Matthew Stanley Foundation has a concern about the way some marketing campaigns manoeuvre to craft a link between alcohol, sporting events and the Australian identity and then fall silent when violence occurs. Put bluntly the, One Punch Can Kill Message also applies in the last three minutes of the State of Origin. What provokes our concern is not simply the silence on violence from an industry that generates income from sport but the number of media commentators who either excuse violence as tribal behaviour or applaud offences that on the street would constitute assault. It is of course double edged as sport does a lot to provide youths with a focus and an environment in which to explore fitness principles, team behaviours and learn positive life skills and yes, role models of the ilk of people like Grant Hackett and Tiger Woods. On the positive side the Foundation applauds those producers, marketers, retailers and other vendors who put health goals alongside of profit aspirations as a demonstrated commitment to corporate responsibility.

In the Strategies section reference a number of positive moves in this arena, whilst calling on all media that commentate on sport to lend their weight to these efforts.

3.3 The relationship between bullying and violence and the well being of young Australians

3.3.1 Bullying and its Dark Companions

In addressing the relationship between bullying, violence and safety of young Australians it is appropriate to first address bullying as a whole and then the specific instance of cyberbullying.

Whatever the form, bullying is violence and carries a footprint that can destroy a child or young life and render its trauma long after the offence has been committed. Rosemary V Barnett reminds us that "Children who don't escape the cycle of bullying are at higher risk for serious academic, social, emotional, and legal problems".^{xiv}

3.3.2 Bullying

Through this document we have mentioned the direct action that the Matthew Stanley Foundation is undertaking to address youth violence. Our position is that violence and intimidation in any form escalated to its ultimate conclusion, causes trauma and can lead to the loss of life, either as a direct consequence or as a flow on from the mental anguish caused to the victim. What may start off as pushing, shoving, and other forms of physical intimidation are all part of the continuum that can escalate to inflict terrible harm. Each episode that goes undetected also moves one step closer to ingraining bullying behaviour as the individual's first choice in solving life's problems. Sadly the actual event may well have nothing to do with the victim and all to do with the internal psychology of the perpetrator and the chemistry at play in their body at the time. It follows that the child that learns to cause harm, and trade on imbalances of power can in fact damage their own psyche and capacity to negotiate the world in a socially acceptable manner.

We are also aware that with some of the social manifestations of bullying, gossiping, social exclusion, and verbal teasing it is all too easy to miss the cues that a person could be entering the slide into the habitual use of violence as a solution to their internal issues. Add drinking and drugs to this deciduous spiral and we have an unsavoury and explosive cocktail.

Guelph psychology professor Karl Hennig, whose "Anti-Bullying Research Project" targets students' social skills makes the point that children who bully typically acquire that behaviour early in life and are often viewed by their peers as "cool" for their ability to convince others to comply with their wishes.

They often have been witnesses to adult conflict and aggression such as spousal disagreements and abuse at home, and these experiences suggest to them that aggression pays off. Bullying and victimization are complex problems to address, so intervention needs to happen on multiple levels.^{xv}

In accepting this premise it follows that our efforts to eliminate violence will be enhanced if we can address the issue of bullying, during the developing phase of a child's life.

Let us be clear however, that we are not suggesting an approach that advocates going easy on violent offenders that with the coaching of legal advisors, conveniently locate dysfunction in their early life as if an excuse for their violent behaviour. We believe that maximum penalties must be applied to violence in our society and whilst we have seen positive results from youth justice conferencing we see this as needing to coexist with a system of strong penalties for repeat and serious offenders. Regardless of age we take the stand that an individual capable of inflicting severe trauma or death on another human not only must be subject to appropriate penalties but they must forfeit their right to live in the specific community where the violence occurred. That said our preference is an approach that intervenes much earlier in peoples lives. Our position is that developmental approaches will be most successful where they exist in a society that adopts a zero tolerance approach to bullying and violence. We are frankly tired of arguments that sentencing does not work in the long term. If applied in isolation from other methodologies that may well be true but before we succumb to those arguments we need to pay closer attention to the role of rehabilitation and resocialising in the custodial environment.

3.3.3 Cyberbullying

As a society we are encountering amorphous growth through the web and mobile phone technology. When we consider how long alcohol has been with us and the challenges in addressing its implications for violence it is not surprising that we face a significant challenge with the rapid evolution of networking technology and the speed of uptake within our youth population.

As an organisation committed to the prevention of youth violence we are aware that where a young person harbours mental attitude that entertains violence as an appropriate behaviour, we have the potential for serious consequences when that youth is affected by alcohol or drugs. Sadly with modern technology that potential can be activated at any time of the day or night. The issue is complex in that 24 hour supervision is difficult and demands current competence with the tools being used. There are detectable visual indicators of intoxication, but it is harder to detect evil intent when it is played out at a time more opportune to the perpetrator than that of a possible supervisor.

If anyone has doubts about the crossover between electronic technology and violence, they would do well to talk with their local crime prevention officers about the “swarming”^{xvi} effect where mobile phones are used to summon the hordes that can arrive uninvited and “gatecrash” a party, already intoxicated and or drug affected, with intent that is outside of the purpose of the gathering. Once there with the bravado of their altered state a mob mentality can take over with dire consequences. Another consequence of swarming is with the formation of “flash mobs” that move into an area, do something of an irreverent nature and then disperse. Our position is that such gatherings are potential powder kegs when fuelled with alcohol and drugs.

Our efforts to prevent technology being used for bullying is made more difficult where it is bullying is perceived as entertainment. Additionally our challenge is not assisted by the many forms of entertainment from computer games to television shows that desensitise violence by putting it before us as a medium for enjoyment and distraction. Sadly the hypnotic effect of the onslaught occurs during the years when a youth is learning to engage the world.

Sadly it is far too easy for real life consequences to be denied with the rationalisation that an act of cyberbullying was “just a game” or a related variation of the sport idiom, “what happens on the field stays on the field”. This latter point also serves to maintain the secrecy that allows evil to prosper under its many web based disguises without being reported to a responsible person.

Another danger comes when in the absence of tangible feedback, the perpetrator comes to believe that no harm was done. The ease with which personal responsibility can be avoided with the lame excuse that “it was not me it was my on line persona” is a concern. The message here is clear games are not just games and roles become real for the game player.

The notion that “everybody does it” is incorrect in fact and lacks any semblance of the notion of personal choice and responsibility. The idiom that on the internet “I have the right to say what I like” also avoids personal responsibility for the consequence of ones action.

In order to address cyberbullying we need to locate it in the social networking phenomenon and realise that in all its benefits, like any tool it can be used with improper intent. Nancy Willard points out a reality that we know only too well. “Unfortunately, there are increasing reports of teenagers (and sometimes younger children) using these technologies to post damaging text or images to bully their peers or engage in other aggressive behaviour.”^{xvii}

The paradox however is that with the dangers we are also presented with the opportunity to use this medium for social good which we will return to later in this section. The fact is that the internet fulfils a fundamental need for connection and identity. Unfortunately for the at risk youth with an increased need to search for acceptance and attention from people, the online pathway renders them more vulnerable to the manipulative influence techniques used by dangerous individuals and groups.

In order to fully address the cyberbullying phenomenon we must recognise that there are parents and other adults that are unwittingly providing the resources to support the darker side of so called social networking. The very same people who would run a known paedophile out of town may in fact not know who may on line with their child whilst they pursue their vigilante intent. In a letter to the editor, one of our volunteers suggested that parents in signing contracts for mobile phones needed to understand the technology and how they could be used.^{xviii}

How many adults are aware processes such as flaming, harassment, outing, denigration, impersonation, trickery exclusion, cyber stalking and the sex related abuses that occur via mobile phones and digital imaging? The danger extends where the perpetrator may be someone the victim knows or worse an on line stranger solicited to aid an abusive intent. This latter danger even has its own name “cyberbullying by proxy”. The problems also can remain under cover with teens unwilling or unable to tell their parents or an authority figure. This may be because of fear of retribution, self doubt and self blame and emotional trauma. There is also the fear that mobile or internet use may be restricted.

At the extreme level edge type communities such as suicide and self-harm communities, hate groups, gangs, violent gaming networks and those engaged in risky and indiscreet

sexual behaviour prey on the naivety of young people, rebellious behaviour and the need for connection.

3.4 Social and Economic Factors that contribute to violence by young Australians

In considering the social and economic factors that contribute to violence we need to take a step back and consider the physiological affects of alcohol and their adverse consequences for the developing brains of our young Australians.

For more than a decade, research has been showing that alcohol affects an adolescent brain differently from an adult brain.^{xix} During adolescence, alcohol use can damage the area responsible for logic, reasoning, self-regulation and judgment, as well as affecting an area of the brain related to learning and memory.^{xx} It follows that there is the potential for this damage to impact on a young person's thinking, functioning and behaviour. Without educating young people to the danger of long-term and irreversible damage, we would be leaving our younger citizens in the hands of those who either encourage under age or adolescent drinking or turn a blind eye. "We did it", simply doesn't cut it! Perhaps some of us did, but let us look at what we have created, the damage, trauma and lives lost.

It is with the cognizance of the complexity of the relationship of the many contributing factors from our sporting psyche to the role of parents that we see strategies needing to be restorative both to individuals and the community, whilst recognizing that some things cannot be restored. Being honest with ourselves about what cannot be restored leads us to also frame strategies that are developmental and preventative, because they are about the future and that is something we can craft by changing the present.

Whilst we are aware that there are macro social issues such as unemployment and poverty that live amongst the factors that may contribute to youth violence and the consumption of drugs and alcohol we have stuck to our knitting and leave those to people more equipped to advise our government.

3.5 Strategies to reduce violence and its impact among young Australians

3.5.1 Whole System Platform

As the issue of youth violence is multicausal no single intervention conducted in isolation from a battery of approaches is likely to fully address our youth violence challenge. We have therefore taken a whole systems view and put forward an array of strategies, which offer restorative benefits, whilst putting in place developmental and preventative pathways to youth safety.

We will start by addressing strategies to deal with the link between alcohol and violence.

An important resource that needs to be brought to the attention of the inquiry exists with the, Centre is a World Health Organisation (WHO) collaborating centre for violence prevention and works to support and develop violence prevention in the UK and internationally. The collaborators have launched "Violence prevention: the evidence" as an

eight-part series of briefings on the evidence for interventions to prevent interpersonal and self-directed violence.^{xxi} The Centre conducts original research, systematic literature reviews, and maintains intelligence systems for measuring and monitoring violence. With the intent of providing clear directions for how violence prevention funders, policy makers and programme implementers can boost the impact of their violence prevention efforts the Centre should be of interest to this inquiry. The Centre for Public Health a collaborator with the World Health Organisation provides links to further resource including a search facility for freely available online publications and resources for violence prevention.^{xxii}

3.5.2 Alcohol Related Strategies

3.5.2.1 Partnering

In true partnering individuals maintain their own identity whilst joining hand across certain core values. In our quest to impact on the role alcohol plays in youth violence we already have existing partnerships that are lighting the way. The Matthew Stanley Foundation and the Valley Liquor Accord^{xxiii} serve as Queensland examples. Both operate differently but similarly engage members from the local business community, local councils, police, government departments and other community organisations. It makes sense to engage the organisations who take stock and draw a line in the sand by correcting venue risk factors and ensuring that the products merchandised do not contribute to at risk behaviour amongst their clients or those who may seek to secure alcohol by secondary means.

Our attitude of working together with vendors and other stakeholders from the liquor and hospitality industry is consistent with the intent of the Queensland Government, which states “...the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation will work with licensees and local communities to enhance and extend voluntary participation in the development and management of Liquor Accords.”^{xxiv}

Liquor accords are voluntary industry-based partnerships working in local communities to introduce practical solutions to liquor-related problems. They reach agreements on ways to improve the operation of licensed venues so that entertainment venues and precincts are safe and enjoyable.^{xxv}

Whatever the format of the coalition, such groups can:

- Engage young people in fact finding forums, as advisors on youth culture and project leaders,
- Identify youth violence and alcohol related issues in the local community,
- Develop youth violence prevention plans with local agencies, organizations and communities,
- Develop and improve links within and between government and non-government agencies,
- Facilitate community education programs,
- Facilitate training of workers and specialist staff,
- Facilitate capacity building in communities,
- Develop, implement and evaluate projects to reduce violence and alcohol consumption.

The Matthew Stanley Foundation conducts a number of activities through a range of task appropriate partnerships such as the arrangement between the Matthew Stanley Foundation and the Easts Leagues Club, who have contributed sponsorship funds towards the production of an educational DVD and the emerging relationship with McGuires, yielding valuable safety education measures for patrons.

In two examples the McGuire's, owners of the Alexandra Hills Hotel and have bought the Capalaba licence for the "Welcome to Our World" DVD by Adair Donaldson. Thanks to the McGuire brothers, the ALH Group and the Foundation itself The DVD's will be available for all schools and community organisations to use the entire Redland City. With support of this nature the Matthew Stanley Foundation has been able to service its local community whilst addressing youth violence issues across the breadth of Queensland.

The McGuires have indicated interest in promoting the One Punch Can Kill and the Cool Down, Walk Away message, throughout their hotels and with their staff and wearing associated message based merchandise. They will also place and billboards in their premises to promote these messages.

The Federal Government inquiry may well indeed add value to such coalitions, by publishing a consolidated list of such activities. Such endeavours need to be celebrated. Perhaps the next Australian of the year could be a partnership.

3.5.2.2 A Sporting Chance

We repeat our earlier comment that the Foundation applauds those producers, marketers, retailers and other vendors who put health goals alongside of profit aspirations as a demonstrated commitment to corporate responsibility. We now look to the sporting arena to aid our efforts and negate those who do not operate for social good.

We are aware of two emerging rays of hope with the Good Sports Program and the Championmoves initiative.

Queensland Health in partnership with the Liquor Licensing Division of Treasury and the The Good Sports Program, an initiative of the Australian Drug Foundation aims to shift the culture of smaller sporting clubs from being alcohol focused to a family entertainment focus.^{xxvi} Our view is that the model which should be encouraged with major sporting groups.

We argue that if the Matthew Stanley Foundation, which is community funded can sponsor a local rugby team, participate in events dedicated to community safety such as the Matthew Stanley Shield Touch Football Competition (See CRYPAR p.15) and merchandise footballs carrying the Matthew Stanley message then encouragement of the "good sports" orientation could be built into the contract of government support to sporting teams and sporting bodies.



The Championship Moves campaign based in Victoria superbly captures the language of the sporting arena and delivers the message that – “it takes a real champion to keep their mates safe”.^{xxvii} The site heralds a further encouraging message from Danny Frawley, CEO with the AFL Coaches Association

Real champs look after their mates hits the nail on the head for any coach, where it is all about the team and making the right move at the right time. We want to see young men take this same approach to life, and especially when they are going out to have a good time with their mates.

That's why AFL coaches are going to be taking Championship Moves out to coaches and players at all levels of the sport – so that they can be our ambassadors in spreading the message.^{xxviii}

The Chamionmoves group also asked young people if they had the moves to keep out of trouble through a radio competition and have published the top 20 ideas published on their site.^{xxix}

As we have indicated the Matthew Stanley Foundation is no stranger to the sporting nexus. Matthew himself making a social contribution through his significant sporting prowess, in the course of his all too short life.

Paul Stanley recalls an experience in sharing the rostrum with Ben Ikin a renowned rugby league player and past commentator. Sharing his thoughts on responsibility Ben made the point that whilst the label of role model may not sit well, each player has a personal responsibility and would do well to look at their player contracts.^{xxx} Whether it was the message or simply their normal behaviour, a cluster of young Broncos players escorted Paul to his car as a safety measure at conclusion of the night's program. They never said that this was their intent, but they surely knew.

In 2008 and 2009 the well respected Christian Bothers School in Brisbane joined with members of the Coordinated Response to Young People at Risk (CRYPAR) program to host a Youth Violence Expo.^{xxxi xxxii} The Community Against Youth Violence Expo incorporated the “Matthew Stanley Shield Touch Football Competition” into their day along with resource and information stalls for students and parents and promotion of the "One Punch Can Kill" campaign. Paul Stanley is quoted on the 2009 event web page:

Today's Expo is a great way to reinforce to young people the tragic consequences that can occur while having fun. Matthew went off to a party and through the actions of someone else, he didn't come home. If being involved with events like this and telling Matthew's story helps just one young person think about the consequences before they act, we've achieved what we wanted to.^{xxxiii}

In the face of such endeavours we call upon media outlets such as radio stations with dedicated sporting programs to take heed of such non violence champions and lend their weight to these efforts. Perhaps we need an award for the most responsible sport sponsored prevention and harm minimisation program, with a name that suggests the

positive i.e. the “Be a Good Sport’ media award, with the writer and the team or individual both receiving the award.

If the sponsorship of sports teams by liquor related companies is deemed acceptable we must manage the message. In the instance of national teams we need to ensure that alcohol consumption is not promoted as the Australian way or as the thing that winners do in our culture. It is noted that the TV and Radio advertising bites for on line betting companies usually include a warning about gambling responsibly.

Whilst the link with the Australian mythology is unique to our shores we note that calls for restrictions on alcohol advertising have been touted by advocates across the globe. Referring to high-risk drinking amongst US college students DeJong and Russell indicate that advocates have pushed for reform or other restrictions on alcohol advertising.^{xxxiv} Others have sought to influence entertainment producers to end the glorification of high-risk drinking on television and in the movies (Montgomery).^{xxxv}

The promotion of a product that produces toxic effects on the body and behavioural changes should be balanced by at least equal coverage with relevant safety warnings. We have no desire to demonise alcohol but the difference in treatment between gambling and alcohol and tobacco and alcohol is a tad curious.

3.5.2.3 Responsible Service of Alcohol

Whilst we understand that in the main the responsible service of alcohol is a state issue we address it as an important part of the total picture. In this section we focus on the interaction between vendors and patrons. We applaud recent the reforms to the Qld Liquor Bill. The mandatory training of all staff involved in the service and supply of liquor and the requirement that they possess a current certificate in Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) within 30 days of commencing employment is a positive move. Additional legislative provisions that ban the advertising of tricky drink promotions aimed at on-premise consumption should also to be applauded.

We have lent our weight to the Queensland Government’s social marketing campaign on responsible drinking whilst addressing industry and community concerns about patron behaviour on licensed premises and binge drinking. We have also supported related Federal programs.

3.5.2.4 Glassing

The issue of glassing as a specific form of alcohol related violence warrants attention by the inquiry team. The scars from many forms of violence often sustain within, long after their physical visibility disappears. Sadly however with glassing, the disfigurement and where present, the loss of sight is there for all, who retain the gift of sight to see. We defer to the psychologists and researchers at the disposal of the inquiry to examine what type of self concept resides in the individual who would inflict such callous harm on another human being.

The Mathew Stanley Foundation acknowledges the Queensland Government's intention to crack down on the use of glass in problem venues across the state in a bid to improve public safety and reduce alcohol-fuelled violence. In addition we support the promise of our Premier to replace glass with plastic or similar cups by the end of the year. Recognising that State Boundaries can leave premises with totally different legislation less than a few minutes walk and in the interests of a consistent message across Australia we hope that the Federal Government will encourage similar approaches in other states.

The views proffered by some, that the focus should be on addressing management standards rather than removing glass is in our view severely blinkered. Improving management standards is important but in addition, what has become a weapon must be removed whilst we set about changing cultural trends. The introduction of metal detectors in night spots to eliminate knives and other potential weapons is a positive move.

The issue of glassing cannot be divorced from the issue of alcohol consumption. It is noted that the NSW Police launch of their 2009 Safe Drinking Campaign and the message "Its About You" was introduced in the wake of new liquor licensing laws – including time outs and plastic cups replacing glass after certain hours claim impressive results whilst responsibly indicating that there is still much work to be done. "We have seen a 10.9 per cent drop state-wide for assaults at licensed premises and a 22 per cent drop in glassings on licensed premises from 2007/2008 financial year to 2008/2009."^{xxxvi}

3.5.2.5 Sanctions and Support Systems

In order to shift a norm, it is necessary to ensure that enforcement officers are backed by appropriate sanctions to address the behaviours that threaten our right to a safe and secure community. It is equally important to reward desirable behaviour.

If we are to enculture respect for the self and others in our society we also must seek to "catch" those who demonstrate respect and reward them. Criminologists talk about the "anticipatory benefits effects" which encourages change before the change becomes the norm. As an example, young people seeing the connection benefits enjoyed by a few youths who utilize a particular space dedicated to their use may be motivated to use that space before it becomes trendy. Journalist rewards for responsible reporting could help in acknowledging positive behaviour. Will we give good news stories to journalists that sensationalise selected negative events or those who help spread the word about positive behaviours from our youths?

That said we will not engender respect in our youths if we are seen to be going soft on offensive and violent behaviour. The Matthew Stanley Foundation supports proposals in Queensland to impose court orders on people found guilty of alcohol related offences such as urinating in public places, refusing to leave licensed premises and other public nuisance related offences. Such court orders could impose appropriate restrictions such as limiting the alcohol level allowable or the actual consumption of alcohol.

We however go further than calls for court orders to ban people from specific precincts such as Fortitude Valley or Surfers Paradise or the equivalent locations in regional areas and other states. Our proposition is that a person considered at risk in one location cannot be

considered risk free in another licensed venue. We do support calls for a common ID scanner system, ideally linked Australia wide with the possibility of an international option to be accessed by accredited people. We would see such a tool also being made available to suburban and country locations so that we can ensure that patrons refused entry at one venue simply do not simply move onto another licensed location. Our proposition is that it is simply too easy and indeed dangerous for at risk youths to move from one precinct to another without this system in place.

With explicit violence we see common assault as warranting a criminal conviction with mandatory minimum sentences for glass or other weapon assaults, with built in barring from alcohol for a specified period after the sentence has been served. Our position is more than simply getting people off the street as it also embraces the desire for long-term behavioural solutions. Such sentences must therefore have a built in re-education requirement, to be completely fulfilled prior to the offender ever being permitted to re-enter a licensed location or consume alcohol.

The Matthew Stanley Foundation is also clear that where the death of a victim has been caused by deliberate violence, the perpetrator should be tried for homicide, whether alcohol was present or not. In our society life must be considered sacrosanct and defences based on provocation arguments should not be tenable in our criminal justice system. It is also high time that sentencing for major crimes such as homicide have consistent sentencing arrangements throughout Australia.

Programs such as the One Punch Can Kill campaign can only be taken seriously if this is understood. We see those who provoke violence, even if in a crowd sadly applauding violent behaviour or those who knowingly protect violent behaviour as accessories who should be charged.

It is also our view that the legal system must impose mandatory minimum sentences for serious assaults against police, other emergency service personnel and health workers.

3.5.2.6 The GO Vodka tube and designer products

The Mathew Stanley Foundation applauds the Queensland Minister responsible for Liquor and Gaming, Peter Lawlor MP, who invoked his Ministerial banning power of undesirable products to prohibit the sale of the alcohol, based "GO Vodka Tubes". The tubes are a designer vehicle for spirits which looks like a viced up sunscreen tube which could be easily secreted away from potential observers such as parents and school teachers. Such products would likely only be detected through an actual body search.

The Youth Violence Task Force was originally alerted to similar products that were retailed outside of Australia and via the internet. The Foundation notes the implied concealment message that was associated with the advertisements. This legislation should be supported at the Federal level with measures to ensure that such products cannot be purchased via the internet and sequestered into the hands of under age consumers or users that wish to indulge, where alcohol is banned. It is worth noting a directive at the international level from the Economic Union, Audiovisual Media Services who stipulated that commercial communications for alcoholic beverages on television and in other audiovisual services "shall not be aimed specifically at minors and shall not encourage immoderate consumption

of such beverages”. The directive also covers on-demand audiovisual media services, including those available on the internet.^{xxxvii} This latter point may assist us to address on-line marketing from outside of our shores.

3.5.2.7 Opening Hours

Our propositions on the matter of opening hours is informed by the experiences of our youth population and the plethora of studies which have shown that the level of alcohol-related violence is at its highest late at night, and corresponds with bar and nightclub closing times (e.g. Australia,^{xxxviii} Norway,^{xxxix} England and Wales.^{xl}).

The notion of having a vibrant night life can only be acceptable where:

- excesses are not the norm,
- community safety is a priority, and
- licensing laws do not place business competition ahead of public health and safety.

We see virtual 24 hour trading as inconsistent with these conditions and we support the Queensland based 2008 changes to the Liquor Act which included a new permit system for licensed venues trading between midnight and 5am and facilitated a crackdown on pubs and clubs which fail to address patron safety. The Foundation further notes that the Liquor and Other Acts Amendment Act, prioritises harm minimisation and applauds the moratorium on all applications for extended hours between 12am and 5am, to and remain for 12 months pending the outcomes of the Law Justice and Safety Committee Inquiry into Alcohol related Violence.

We believe that there should be 2.00 am limit for city locations and would support a move to limit the level of alcohol merchandised after 12.00. It is hard to see how additional imbibing after 12.00 adds value to the patron’s experience, but easy to see the dangers. We advocate a 12.00 closure for the suburbs as we see no necessity to establish suburban areas as risk laden night spots that may divert emergency resources away from other community safety needs. Such a move would also bring cost and stress savings with transport facilities, police and emergency personnel. The Queensland move to close entertainment venues at 12.00 in the precincts inhabited by adolescents during schoolies in a positive one.

We add a concern regarding the way dense clustering of venues facilitates “preloading” in one venue before patrons move on to another venue already intoxicated. Our concern is not so much with clustering as it is with practice of preloading at one venue and moving on to another. We question whether the merchandising of “shots” accompanied by rapid consumption is consistent with legislation pertaining to the responsible service of alcohol.

3.5.2.8 Transport - Getting Home

Queensland research into the task of making licensed venues safer for patrons identified the availability of late night transport as a key factor in reducing physical violence in nightlife areas.^{xli} Discussions with the younger members of the Matthew Stanley Foundation provide a good deal of anecdotal evidence to support these findings.

The Matthew Stanley Foundation sees this as an area where a whole system orientation is required. In the area of opening hours and transport we are aware that managing the risks

linked to one part of a system may lead to unintended consequences in other parts of the system. The unintended adverse consequences of poor late night transport services coupled with people on the street, can include increased drink and drug affected driving, with more individuals walking home and becoming vulnerable to assaults and accidents. These dangers increase when people are intoxicated.

People visiting large sporting events at Suncorp and The Gabba in Brisbane would be aware of the rapid movement of people from these events. We call for a scaled level version of this type of service for peak night life closing times. The issues are serious enough to warrant consideration of these services on a free basis. Many service clubs provide free transport and we suggest that a pooling of resources from lucrative night spots could fund similar services. In Many (Sydney, NSW) a service was launched in 2004 as part of the Manly Safe Summer Campaign.^{xiii} The service includes several pick up points with security guard presence. The service is free and has been extended.

These recommendations require cooperation and partnering between transport providers, local government, police, bar and nightclub owners to fund bus services. Risk management measures associated with transport may include the installation of cameras in vehicles as well as radio links between drivers and police. Some modification of vehicles may also need to be built in to protect customers and drivers. It would also be necessary to review scheduling to ensure that the problem was not simply displaced to other areas where connecting transport was not available. Additional measures such as the availability of security personnel, effective street lighting CCTV cameras, queuing strategies would assist the safe movement of nightlife patrons and lend towards introducing a different culture into city and country entertainment precincts.

Our experience with young people suggests that attention also needs to be given to encouraging people to travel home accompanied by friends and to ensure that they retain enough money to pay for transport after a night out. Measures such as pre-paid taxi vouchers purchasable from train and bus depots and newsagents are a consideration.

3.5.2.9 Party Safe

The Foundation notes that community forums conducted under the auspices of the Queensland Safe Youth Parties Taskforce led the members to express concern over a lack of parental responsibility for children's behaviour and the consumption of alcohol at youth parties.^{xiiii} The report drew attention to the general lack of supervision by a responsible person at many parties and reported that parties were becoming out-of control, with flow on consequences for young people who are ill equipped physiologically or behaviourally to handle the consequences. Importantly the Youth Parties Taskforce identified that young people themselves expressed the need for increased supervision by parents at parties.

Since its inception the Matthew Stanley Foundation has diligently supported the Queensland Police Service Party Safe initiative to educate young people about how to avoid potentially dangerous situations and make parents and teenagers aware of possible risks at parties and what they can do to make them safer. The Foundations efforts covering many parts of Queensland have featured media engagements, presentations and distribution of the Party Safe material at public events. Notably the bands of youths that support the Foundation were

well received by business and the community in the Redlands as they visited shops and other businesses to distribute the material and spread awareness.

3.5.2.10 Education campaigns

The Mathew Stanley Foundation is clear that drinking and the potentially devastating effects of alcohol and drugs are an aspect of the broader social milieu of our society. We therefore see education programs that impact “on the street” as fulfilling restorative, developmental and preventative goals.

The Matthew Stanley Foundation endorses the relevant Queensland Youth Violence Task Force recommendations and sees the equivalent equally applicable across Australia, with the proviso that young people are involved in the design of the message, the program and its delivery:

Recommendation 2 Queensland Government fund and deliver a highly visible community education and social marketing campaign over the next 5 – 10 years, specifically targeting young people and their parents in purpose built and wide ranging flexible delivery formats, with a view to creating and maintaining a safe drinking culture.

Recommendation 3 Sources for revenue to deliver education campaigns are investigated including from the liquor and hospitality industry.

Recommendation 4 Community based education programs should be funded for delivery across Queensland communities with a view to engaging youth, particularly school leavers, in the impact and effect of high risk drinking practices, including the dangers of high alcohol volume products.

The proviso is about building a necessary prerequisite for success based on our own experience and the call from young people to respect them, their competence, language and communication channels.

In education and awareness campaigns a note of caution must be offered with fear campaigns. Most experts have concluded that fear campaigns are extremely difficult to execute, rarely succeed and should be used only under limited circumstances.^{xiv} Further, they argue that there is a real risk that fear appeals will backfire, making the problem behaviour even more resistant to change (DeJong and Winsten).^{xiv}

The same authors suggest caution use of celebrities should be approached cautiously for several reasons:

- the message may be overwhelmed by the celebrity's presence and ultimately forgotten,
- celebrities can lose their lustre; among adolescent fans, perceptions of entertainment and sports stars change very quickly and unpredictably, and

- celebrities can suddenly become newsworthy in ways that directly undermine the campaign or are otherwise inappropriate.

An additional concern is posted by the Harvard Business School who state that adolescents often view celebrity messages sceptically because they suspect the celebrity was paid to deliver the message or they believe that many stars are substance users.^{xlvi}

Education and awareness campaigns can also be used to reinforce legislative and policy changes. DeJong informs that the mass media provide a superb vehicle for publicizing these changes, not just through news coverage, but also through special advertising and promotions.^{xlvii} Research in drunk-driving prevention has shown, for example, that widespread publicity of "sobriety checkpoints" and other law enforcement measures is essential to their general effectiveness. In the absence of publicity, such policy changes have little or no discernible impact (Ross).^{xlviii} A good example of a positive message occurs with the NSW police message, "It's About You" which focuses on personal responsibility.^{xlix} The NSW Police have also utilised modern media to deliver this message with versions appearing on YouTube^l and Twitter.^{li}

Whilst the Foundation is open to the use of graphic images depicting the terrible effect of violence we have seen more dramatic results from the presentations delivered by Paul Stanley. The power of connecting with the heart and then bringing the mind and behaviour along appears to most effective strategies. The Foundation site provides a plethora of comments supporting this assertion. Our move to develop a DVD, the utilise of web based information systems, facebook and media relations in addressing youth violence s recognises that a central tenet of commercial marketing and advertising is to use a variety of media channels to provide a clear and consistent message. We would add where youth is the target it would be a misuse of resources to ignore the language of young people and the channels that excite them.

Act Smart - Be Safe an initiative of the Department of Education and Training supporting the Queensland Government Youth Violence Taskforce is worthy of mention. With links devoted to violence, parents, students, teachers, school leaders and downloadable posters that It is clear to see from the site links that in bringing this resource into the equation that the department recognises the importance of schools and communities working together to address violence and promote actions that young people can take to stay safe.^{lii}

3.5.2.11 Supply of Alcohol to Underage People – Legislation and Action

The Foundation is aware that in Queensland it is not currently an offence for parents to supply their children with alcohol on private property or for young people to consume alcohol on private property. Notwithstanding this point the seizure of alcohol by police from underage youths associated with schoolies suggests that despite significant awareness campaigns about the potential damage of alcohol to young people, there are parents who continue to sanction large quantities of alcohol in their possession and in certain instances actively facilitate this possibility.

The Matthew Stanley Foundation therefore supports Recommendation 1 of the Youth Violence Task force in its call for the Queensland Government to revisit the legislative environment in relation to the secondary supply of alcohol to young people by adults.

Drawing on numerous reports and research studies The Task Force identified that the main source of alcohol for minors parent and/or older siblings and/or older friends.

In its deliberations the Taskforce sought to balance the rights of responsible parents to provide their underage teenagers with an alcoholic beverage in small quantities at a supervised family event with their ability to protect minors from the harm associated with excessive alcohol consumption. Taskforce recommended an amendment to the Act which makes it an offence to recklessly supply alcohol to minors. Such moves will increase the chances that more children and adolescents will not only survive but survive in a way that can only be possible if their developing brain is not exposed to alcohol.

With the above in place we then need to go further. Despite our best efforts and in no way condoning underage drinking we need to face the reality that it occurs and where we can, we need to limit consumption and manage the behaviour the behaviour of under age people lured into the alcohol pathway. .

Restricting alcohol at local sporting activities or events can also assist in ensuring that underage youths do not fly under the radar and procure alcohol as a result of less than stringent supervision. Local businesses can also play a role by sponsoring alcohol free events and scheduling the events for the times, days, and locations that have historically been the most problematic.

A powerful protection must be for an underage person to have the confidence to say “no, that’s not cool” when confronted with the opportunity to consume alcohol. With this in mind, the Matthew Foundation is impressed with the offerings of the “Step Back Think Group”.^{liii} This coalition of motivated young people was formed in the wake of the horrific injuries sustained by their young friend, James Macready Bryan. The extent of James's brain injuries rendered him completely incapacitated; a state he will remain in for the rest of his life. By educating young people about the potentially tragic consequences of getting into a fight, "Step Back Think" hopes to reduce the incidence of violence and assault in Melbourne and throughout Australia. Their web site indicates “hundreds” of school students will become "respect champions" under a \$150,000 State Government pilot education program to curtail youth violence. This is yet another example of young people stepping up and being enabled by appropriate government funding.

3.5.2.12 Methamphetamines - A Queensland Initiative

The recent Queensland State Government indication that its ICE-breaker initiative is reported to be making inroads in tackling rates of methamphetamine use in Queensland is reassuring and the announcement of \$ 5.5 million over three years in additional funding for youth alcohol and drug treatment services across the State must demonstrate a return on the lives saved and the reduction of costs to our health and court systems.^{liv} The Foundation expects that the above measures will also impact as new designer drugs into come into play with the youth population. It is also heartening that the Queensland, Department of Communities on its Schoolies November 2009 site^{lv}, delivers the clear message, “Be Safe and Watch Your Mates” which is supported by a downloadable booklet.^{lvi} The associated safety tips link ^{lvii} includes a page addressing drugs and alcohol makes the point that drugs are illegal and can kill. Our Brisbane.com an initiative of the Brisbane City Council provides

short warning on its Surviving Schoolies^{lviii} page and a link to Drug Arm,^{lix} so that people can discover the devastating effect of illicit drugs.

3.5.3 Widening the Brush

3.5.3.1 From Prevention to Skilling for Survival

Our purpose in providing this section is to extend the preventative strategies associated with drugs alcohol and violence to location focussed strategies such as waterside events. We also want to put safety training on the agenda as an important tool saving the lives of young Australians.

The Hannah's Foundation founded by the parents of a young girl, Hannah Isabella Alyson Grace Plint tragically lost in a pool incident, works in a cooperative way with the Matthew Stanley Foundation and other complementary groups to promote positive choices.^{lx} The "Positive Choices – Life Safety" initiative, launched on 22nd October 2009 at Caboolture State High School by Mrs Deanna Allen is dedicated in memory of her 12 year old girl, Brandi who drowned at the Caboolture Weir on April 13th 2009. The program which can be delivered in schools to target age appropriate students promotes the dangers of waters in Australia and the power of "positive life choices".

A scan of the topics included in the program will demonstrate the cross over to the focus of this enquiry

- Drowning & Water Safety
- Alcohol and Drugs
- Assaults, Deaths and Violence
- Road Vehicle Safety
- Peer Pressure, and
- Personal Responsibility

The positive choices approach advocates the following four important steps in any life situation:

- STOP (Look at the environment)
- THINK (access the dangers)
- SAFETY FIRST (ask yourself AM I safe?)
- RETHINK (your actions).

From our perspective this is risk management in day to day life. In addition to its primary goals associated with water danger the program teaches a thought pattern that could prevent youth violence and provides the skills necessary to render first aid to victims of violence. In our own language this constitutes "skilling for survival".

Our point is that the dangers to the Australian youths intertwine and create risk scenarios in a variety of circumstances. It is clear therefore that we need to maximise all available resources and all who demonstrate a comprehension of the complex nature of human safety.

3.5.3.2 Parents as Intervention Agents

Research informs us that children's anti-social behaviours can be traced along a trajectory beginning in pre-school years.^{lxi} Confronted with this data it is important to ensure that developmental strategies are included so that we can nurture and enhance the earlier stages of children's lives. . If parents aim up in the early stages of a child's life, then perhaps their children will step up to something more than the bar in their adult life.

Parents impact in many ways that can either contribute to youth violence or model behaviours that will ensure that children and then youths will have the resilience to say no to violence, when confronted by a conflict situation or a violent individual. Parents' interactions with each other, their behaviour toward their children, and their emotional state have been shown to be important predictors of children's violent behaviour (Webster-Stratton 1997).^{lxii} Hendrix and Molloy.^{lxiii}

As in most aspects of life it is easier to criticise rather than to find solutions. It is therefore important that we don't enter the blame game and follow the lead offered by Prinz and Miller who suggest "Interventions should increase parents' sense of self-control and self-efficacy, giving them confidence in their interactions with their children and making them feel accountable in a positive way for improvements in their children's behaviour".^{lxiv}

Interventions aimed at parents will ideally include education about developmental issues, including sexuality, growing independence, and the communication skills and strategies to build the personal resilience and safety skills of young people.

Chic's Chat is an example of a program within the Matthew Stanley group with a broader that will engage girls and their mums in fun, meaningful and relationship building activities. Considerations are underway to extend the reach of the Foundation below the current age group of 12-16.^{lxv}

The resources from a range of groups have application in the quest to build the resilience of young people. By way of a few examples the recent Children's Safety Package distributed to Schools under the auspices of Children's Safety Australia helps build the skills that allow young people to make safety based choices and say no to those, who would steal that option.^{lxvi} The sister organisation Personal Safety Australia also offers a range of training opportunities for adults interested in developing protective behaviours. The Education Department also provides useful links for students, teachers, school leaders and parents from its Act Smart Be Safe^{lxvii} initiative. Kids Help Line^{lxviii} provides support to children whilst Safety House^{lxix} not only provides sanctuary for children in safe settings but engages in a range of community awareness activities.

A number of programs of interest have also been undertaken around Australia using developmental or early intervention approaches to the prevention of crime, and violence.^{lxx} Utilising a range of approaches from Pre School initiatives, developmental approaches aim to intervene early, especially at critical points, to minimise the risks and maximise the protections so that the chances of a successful transition to adulthood are increased. Our position is that youths will have a greater chance of successfully managing this transition if the predisposing factors in alcohol abuse and violence have been addressed during earlier developmental stages.

We therefore look to programs, policies, and funding that support young people in becoming healthy, contributing adults with a positive sense of self, connection and commitment to others. We also look to programs that engender motivation to succeed in school and participate fully in family and community life.^{lxxi2} Recognising that there will however be children who for whatever reason, struggle with peer relationships problems, we also need mechanisms to identify these children / youths and provide teachers and parent's ways of enriching their social-emotional development.

3.5.3.3 At Risk Youths

Where young people emerge from their early life experience with dysfunctional behaviour patterns, specific strategies apply. Primarily, this is the realm of professionals trained and qualified for the task of coordinating the appropriate and person / family specific response.

In this context we are staunch supporters of the CRYPAR (Coordinated Response to Young People At Risk) approach.^{lxxii} Our Foundation regards CRYPAR (See 3.3.14) as particularly valuable with young people who do not have traditional support networks and subsequently begin committing crimes or are considered at risk, but not yet recognised as a repeat offender. In these programs a young person's problems can be addressed without entering the dangerous area of self fulfilling labelling and the regrettable badges of honour, amongst offenders that can be a by product of entering the Juvenile Justice system. CRYPAR is a referral service that allows police officers in the field to refer young people (aged 6 to 25) to an agency that can assist them with their problem. All that is required is the person's consent, with the referral form later faxed to the appropriate agency. All agencies currently involved in CRYPAR have agreed to respond within 48 hours. CRYPAR has the ability to be implemented in regional 'hot spots' as required when using the preferred best practice model to ensure support and consistency in providing 'at risk' youth with strong referral pathways.^{lxxiii} We advocate strong ongoing government support for this and like programs.

3.5.3.4 Specific Groups including Populations with Cultural and Linguistic Differences

Programs targeting groups with specific needs assist in ensuring that our Australian ideal of equality is fulfilled whilst lowering the possibility of discrimination based violence.

The impact of violence and alcohol on young women warrants mention with the disproportionately negative impact alcohol has on female bodies and because of the increased risks young women may be exposed to when intoxicated. The Queensland Health, Young Women and Alcohol Campaign has made important contributions in dealing with the danger of excess drinking amongst young women. The campaign encourages young women aged 18 to 22 years to change harmful alcohol consumption practices. Key campaign messages are "Make up your own mind about drinking" and "It feels good to say no when you want to say no".^{lxxiv}

The Foundation was also impressed by the Safe Youth – Safe Communities initiative which was presented to the Taskforce by the Office for Youth, Department of Communities.^{lxxv} The initiative seeks to implement a project that holistically responds to youth violence in the Logan/Ipswich corridor. The target age is 10-17 years and is culturally appropriate to engage

Pacific Islander young people as well as other cultures in the area. Multicultural Football tournaments also provide a fertile ground for educational and preventative activities.

The Mathew Stanley Foundation also endorses the Task Force support for programs that reach people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Due to our partnering with Crime Stoppers and Queensland Police we see the power of engaging ethnic community leaders and their communities. We acknowledge the translations of Crime Stopper material that we see in Metropolitan South and believe this should be replicated with alcohol-violence related material such as the Party Safe package and the One Punch Can Kill message. Ethnic cinemas and media outlets should also be engaged in this process.

At the Federal level we see the necessity of translation as a human rights issue, so that all Australians get a fair go by having access to developmental, restorative, educational and prevention materials and programs.

3.5.3.5 Matthew Stanley Foundation – Spreading the Message

The Matthew Stanley Foundation, since its inception has understood that young people significantly underestimate the harm that can arise from even one act of violence. We have also been acutely aware that some young people lack the ability to manage conflict without violence and that a percentage of youths lack the peer support to be able to walk away from potentially violent situations. The Foundation has been proactive in delivering an intensive program of presentations conducted in conjunction with schools and police to play its part in setting the record straight with young people. In addition to providing direct information about the potential of harm of violence we have supported government initiatives to ensure that young people have access to the resources they need to manage their world and say no to violence. Paul; Stanley has just completed an extended series of presentations in North Queensland and is looking towards the launch of the Mathew Stanley DVD. (See 3.5.2.2).

The below comment from the Senior Community Crime Prevention Officer, Mackay District Office is indicative of the impact of presentation sessions delivered by Paul Stanley.

In conjunction with Qld Police officers and Qld Ambulance officers across the Mackay District we addressed over 3200 students in 9 high schools. The impact on students, teachers, and police and ambulance officers was overpowering. In my extensive involvement in working with youth, (20 years+) I have never seen youth so engaged in a presentation. Comments from Police, Ambulance officers and teachers that attended request involvement in any further campaigns in the future and wholeheartedly support the message and your delivery of it.^{lxxvi}

A snapshot of the local student centred evaluation presented on our web site provides will show that the messages being delivered by Paul are being heard.^{lxxvii} Numerous positive comments can also be found on the Mathew Stanley Foundation Web Site and Facebook page.^{lxxviii} Follow up and reinforcement at the local level with the possible inclusion of project work will ensure that the learning influences attitude development and behavioural change in local communities.

A useful nexus in the education domain came from the partnership between Crime Stoppers, Queensland Police, Emergency Services and the Matthew Stanley Foundation. A number of projects were addressing youth violence initiated as part of the 2009 Crime Stoppers Youth Challenge with the winners honoured at Parliament House in November 09.^{lxxix}

The development of an educational DVD which is nearing release will add significant value to the Matthew Stanley battery of delivery methods and those of other groups, committed to like purposes. With huge support from the Government and Private Sector groups such as Easts Leagues Club the result will further demonstrate the power of partnering.

3.5.3.6 Bullying – A Path Not to Follow

Given that bullying behaviour is part of a violence continuum many of the strategies mentioned in this document also have application in addressing bullying behaviour. Bullying does however bring specific challenges.

During adolescence, the influence of family is largely supplanted by peer influences which in certain circumstances can introduce such risk factors as weak ties to conventional peers, ties to antisocial or delinquent peers, or gang membership. For that reason we reinforce the importance of ensuring that youths draw resilience and a sense of moral responsibility from their childhood developmental experience. The relationship of respect, rights and responsibilities mentioned in our foreword is also crucial.

At a government level, social policy can also assist in the prevention of bullying and violence by providing adult centred education programs and strengthening support frameworks for families, neighbourhoods, and communities.

In adult and parent education campaigns we suggest the following content areas:

- Understanding bullying so that parents know what constitutes bullying, and the signs that a child has either been bullied or is indulging in bullying behaviour. Parents also need to be able to encourage the reporting of bullying behaviour despite peer pressures to “keep quiet”.
- Understanding the impact of what youths experience with particular reference to alcohol related behaviour, domestic violence and media generated material.
- Positive parenting approaches that include setting ground rules and conflict management
- The importance of being a role model that demonstrates tolerance, and acceptance of different cultures, values, and norms.
- The importance of a home environment that allow families to discuss problems together and learn how to deal with frustration, stress, and anger.

- Ways to discuss topics in sensitive areas such as drug use and sex
- Maintain involvement while fostering independence and an extended network
- Risk Management for youth safety:
 - Making decisions about viewing TV violence,
 - Supervising and monitoring teens (and their resources),
 - Supervise and monitoring teens. Includes knowing the teens social group, their parents and the proximity of adult supervision,
 - Ensuring that youths are trained in protective behaviours, and
 - Ensuring that emergency and contact numbers are immediately accessible at all times.

We address a number of complementary tainting and awareness needs in relation to cyberbullying in the next section.

In the many programs that are operational around the world we felt that the campaign "Take A Stand. Lend A Hand. Stop Bullying Now!" developed by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) warrants special mention.^{lxxx} The program aims to stop bullying and the associated verbal or physical harassment that occurs repeatedly over time. The producers of this program recognise and address the fact that these activities are intended to cause harm, and involve an imbalance of power between the child who bullies and the child who is bullied.

The campaign includes a web-based, animated story featuring a cast of young people who deal with bullies in the classrooms, hallways, and grounds of a middle school. With help from teachers, parents, and other adults, the bullied characters get support from fellow students who step up to the mark to make it clear that bullying is "not cool".^{lxxxi}

In addition to the animated webisodes which are updated every two weeks, the campaign features television and radio public service announcements distributed through the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) member stations. The campaign Web site also offers a resource Kit outlining bullying prevention programs and activities that can be implemented at the school or community level. The web site also provides a useful array of tip sheets.^{lxxxii}

Whilst more could be said the potential may exist to not reinvent the wheel but to negotiate the use of best practice material with the addition of an Australian slant. The University of Arizona, West Regional Equity Network provides a list of best practice Internet-Based Resources aimed Preventing Bullying and Cyber-Bullying.^{lxxxiii}

We note the report that in the aftermath of the shocking death of 15 year old Mullumbimby student Jai Morcom preceded by a number of school based incidents of violence in Queensland that the Queensland Education Minister, Geoff Wilson wrote to his Director-General asking all principals to reiterate at school assemblies "the zero tolerance" policy on

violence and bullying. Such measures are to be commended but we also call for this volition to be replicated and sustained at all levels of government.^{lxxxiv}

3.5.3.7 Cyberbullying.

Recognising that adults are often not present when young people use a mobile phone or access to the web it is important that our youths have been given the right grounding to explore the lure of social networking in a responsible manner before they encounter or are in fact supplied with these resources.

In addition youths can be assisted with social skills education aimed at the technology at their disposal. These principles are available from many government sites and police communication mediums. The messages do however need to be in the lingo that our youths can use in day to day communication. Messages drawn from Wired Safety.org such as, “Stop, Block and Tell”, “ThinkB4UClick” and “Take 5 ! Walk away fit this bill. Wired Safety also provides self help guides for under eighteens and parents on the sinister issue of “Cyber Stalking and Harassment”^{lxxxv lxxxvi}.

With the Matthew Stanley Foundation, our youths utilise social networking to help prevent violence and address feelings as may be witnessed on our Facebook pages and My Space site dedicated to Matthew Stanley.^{lxxxvii} This use and the associated sense of personal responsibility minimised the probability that these teens would use the web or mobile phone networks with harmful intent. Ask any change agent about the power of critical mass and perhaps by recruiting more and more youths to similar cause related organisations we may make a difference to the incidence of youth violence via technology.

We also see the Federal Government initiatives with the National Conversation,^{lxxxviii} The Prime Minister’s Australian Youth Forum^{lxxxix} and associated activities such as The Prime Minister’s Challenge^{xc} a new national competition designed to generate innovative ideas about how young people can mobilise and better connect with their local communities as having the potential to enhance the level of civic engagement of our youths across Australia as potentially delivering the additional benefit of streaming impressive technological IQ of young people into a positive domain, which enhance self concept will divert young people from negative uses of the technology. Perhaps somewhere in the contest we will find a unique approach to address the issues of cyberbullying.

Our Foundation is of course not alone in utilising the web and associated technology. We note The Brisbane Central Crime District July 09 edition provided excellent information on the issues and prevention of cyberbullying. The information circulated via email as a pdf document has subsequently been subsequently disseminated to a network of adults with adolescent children.^{xci}

As the uptake and accessibility of modern communications technology increases and the creativity of the young are brought to into the equation, parents cannot afford to be uninvolved bystanders. To move from that position parents and other adults including teachers must keep pace with the emerging technology. We urge parents not to simply throw up their hands if their technology IQ does not allow this possibility. There are numerous channels of assistance available. Perhaps governments need to do more to point to these resources.

“Smart Online Safe Offline” (SOSO) represents an impressive Australian non-profit social anti-cyberbullying initiative bringing together the community and the digital media industry as partners to deliver online campaigns, aimed at educating young internet users about the dangers in their online environment.^{xcii xciii} The SOSO initiative also targets online threats including predation, grooming, and identity theft. SOHO targets children and young people directly in their language delivering such messages as “Join in and your the bully too” and “Share it and you’re the bully too”.

A new cyberbullying educational campaign titled “Cyber Bullying Affects Real Lives” has now been launched as part of the SOHO initiative.^{xciv} The Mathew Stanley Foundations sees the support of there internet giant Google adds weight to potential market penetration of this initiative.^{xcv}

Where we embark on parent awareness programs we need to impress:

- The importance of knowing the programs and files that are on their child’s computers, how devices such as web cameras work,
- The need to have computers in a place that is not sequestered away form supervision,
- How to identify when their child is being cyberbullied and the appropriate steps to take, and
- How to identify if ones child is engaged in cyberbullying or a group with a sinister intent is at play.

For educators it is imperative that each school has policies to govern the use of mobile phone technology and web resources. This applies equally as well to public facilities such as libraries. There may however need for additional legislation to cover internet resources provided in other places such as web cafes and shopping centres.

There may also be the need to address legal issues on such matters as examining the contents of a child’s digital device and information storage devices. The point at which police involvement takes over from school based discipline also needs to be clear and how the contact with law enforcement officials is made.

Whist it is not possible to monitor all opportunities to access web based and mobile phone pathways where we can provide this supervision we can begin to inculcate the positive used of these resources. In the school based environment s this may be as simple as frequently and random examination of the browser history file of individual students.

Given the manoeuvrers that may be used to avoid detection it may be necessary to have at least one person whose role it is to maintain currency with new technology and software and forensic computer skills.

There will of course be those who scream that these measures invade civil liberties. The opportunity to live ones life naturally and free of intimidation over rides such arguments and it is our civic responsibility to ensure that this takes place.

4. Conclusion

The Matthew Stanley Foundation has drawn on the contribution of many good people and the unwavering commitment of Paul Stanley and his family in a quest to prevent the horrid events that violently stole Matthew Stanley's life from being repeated. The facts remain that even in the face of the efforts discussed in this document, lives are still being ripped away and people continue to be traumatised and disfigured.

Inroads are however being made and they are being made by truly engaging youths and entering into collaborative partnerships with others who care. The Foundation regards the challenge great enough to political leaders and influence groups to put aside traditional boundaries. We argue for a bipartisan approach to the issue of youth violence.

Where we have focussed on alcohol we have put forward an approach that does not demonise the liquor industry but demands that liquor related legislation ensures that any provision that supports commercial benefits first qualifies as not damaging the health of our children and youths – living until one's natural death is for us an important aspiration.

The Foundation favours a holistic approach that ensures that risk management in one part of the system does not engender unwanted consequences in another. Partnering can assist this ideal.

We can only ensure that Australia is safe for any one person to live if it is safe for all of us to live. Our encouragement to youths confronted with violence to stop, think and walk away can only be sound advice if we all stop think and act at a societal level.

We have spoken about the importance of a form of personal DNA involving respect, rights and responsibility and we seek to provide the flesh to our recommendations with the fundamentals that youth violence strategies need to be restorative, developmental, and preventative. Against these fundamentals we see the following areas as vital pathways each carrying well thought through action steps.

- Changing cultural and social norms that support violence
- Preventing violence by reducing the availability and harmful use of drugs and alcohol and reducing access to weapons such as knives and glasses
- Preventing violence through the development of safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and their parents and caregivers
- Preventing violence by developing life skills in children and adolescents
- Promoting equality to prevent violence based on discrimination

In addition we believe that there needs to be attention given to the care and support programmes of the victims of violence and a focus on the macro-level social factors that have a strong impact on violence in our world and live amongst the causes of youth violence. Unemployment, income inequality and poverty all reside in this category.

We unreservedly support the intent of the inquiry and will continue doing what we do to prevent youth violence and give Australian youths a fair go as we wait, ready to respond to the findings of the inquiry.

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