

Central Australian Youth Link-Up Service

CAYLUS

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Tuesday, 6 November 2012

Submission to House of Representatives House Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Terms of Reference

The Committee will inquire into and report on the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring, with a particular focus on:

- sporting bodies increasing opportunities for Indigenous participation, including opportunities for Indigenous women
- non-government organisations utilising sport as a vehicle to improve outcomes for Indigenous people, and
- the contribution of Indigenous sporting programs, as supplied by:
 - > the sporting codes
 - > the private and NGO sectors, and
 - > federal government assistance to Closing the Gap targets.

The Central Australian Youth Link Up Service has operated in the Central Australian region since 2002. We work to prevent substance abuse by improving the quality of life of young people in remote communities. We were formed when petrol sniffing was at epidemic proportions in the region and have implemented a supply reduction and demand reduction model which has seen a 94% reduction in inhalant abuse in our region¹. This reduction in inhalant abuse has given us more scope to develop community based diversionary activities to address the underlying causes of substance abuse, which has given us a “hands on” understanding of the operation of sport in remote communities. For more information about see the attachment 1 “about CAYLUS” or visit our website www.caylus.org.au

We would like to make two points for the committee these are in relation to the expenditure of sports related funding and philanthropic support in remote communities in Central Australia;

1. we suggest sports funding be targeted at the grass roots community based initiatives rather than at organisations that tour elite sportspeople into remote communities.
2. We suggest an audit of all the funds that go into remote Indigenous communities for sport be available for any potential grant giver, including a longitudinal study of what has been invested in each community, with any formal research findings on the outcomes, especially long term.

¹ Peter d’Abbs and Gillian Shaw 2008, Executive summary of the Evaluation of the Impact of Opal Fuel, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra

1. Targeting grass roots/ community based initiatives

The vast majority of government grants for the benefit of Indigenous people go to non-Indigenous NGOs.

“The Australian National Audit Office report on Indigenous specific expenditure noted that only 8% of the 7,000 grants made by FaHCSIA were to Indigenous organisations.”²

We are of the opinion that this tendency holds true in other departments and in contributions by the private sector. This concentration of resources in non-Indigenous organisations does not develop the capacity of Indigenous governed organisations and community agencies, which because of their ties to the community are often best placed to provide meaningful programs and local employment. The argument that Indigenous issues are not improving despite “money being thrown at the problem” is undermined by this information regarding where the funds are being spent. If more funding went to Indigenous governed organisations (in this we include local government bodies such as the NT remote shires and local councils), local capacity would be enhanced and longer-term goals of equity of opportunity would be one step closer.

This trend towards funding of non-local organisations has been the experience of CAYLUS staff, who have seen literally hundreds of elite sportspeople being toured through remote Indigenous communities. One of writers of this submission vividly remembers an attempted suicide one week after a group of such sportsmen visited a remote community. The young man had a history of strong engagement with youth programs when the local council could find the resources to run them, but at that time there was no program, and there had not been one for several months. At that stage CAYLUS and the Council were seeking \$20,000 to run a school holiday program during the “suicide season” that we knew was coming. We estimate the funding used to support the tour by the sportsmen would have paid for a year of youth activities.

These well-meaning athletes may not be aware of the context of their engagement, nor of the underlying truth that the odds are massively against the children and young people they are spending time with becoming elite athletes. As a rule Indigenous people in our region suffer very poor health, have a short life expectancy and live in poverty.

“Far too many Aboriginal youth do not benefit from the opportunities afforded most other Australian children—good health at birth, a healthy home to grow up in, access to high quality early childhood education and care, and support for families in times of need.”³-**NT Coordinator General 2011**

The message that is so expensively delivered by some external organisations (particularly those whose approach centres on touring elite athletes rather than investing in community managed projects) is based on elitism. The vast majority of people receiving these messages will, at some point in their growing understanding of the world, realise they will not be an Olympic athlete and not play for the AFL (especially given in the absence of basic, reliable youth sport and rec programs in many communities). What part of the elite sport message prepares this majority for their real lives?

² Office of the Northern Territory Coordinator-General for Remote Services Report June 2011 to August 2012,

³ Ibid p158

And what is the value of being an elite sportsperson? Dr James Connor argues that such people are actually exploited by the commercial forces of modern elite sport.

“The subject position of elite athletes has become increasingly clear as sport becomes more commercialized and spectacularised. Elite athletes are exploited and relatively power-less in their chosen fields of endeavour because of the reserve army of athletes attempting to play at the elite level. The exploitation continues with the burden of injury and medical intervention falling upon them as well as sole responsibility for their performance-enhancing drug status. I critique the figurationalist view of the elite athlete in this essay and demonstrate that an exploitation model, combined with aspects of subject-based research gives a better understanding of the athlete position. I posit that elite athletes are essentially interchangeable, a widget in the commercial machine that is modern sport.⁴”

Elite sport is an unrealistic goal of the vast majority of Indigenous people, but access to local sport and recreation are important elements of life. This is especially so in remote communities where there is almost no work or work culture, and where the education system has failed to meet the needs of the community, as evidenced by the poor attendance and results of national benchmark testing. The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results show that in more than half of NT schools, over 75% of NAPLAN test results are below national minimum standards.⁵

CAYLUS proposes that where possible funding be directed at community-based organisations. We have assisted a local group – the Macdonnell District Sporting and Social Club - to incorporate under ORIC, and we are assisting them in realising their local plans for a bush football league – see attachment 2 : extract from local Central Land Council newspaper. Their plan is to provide a football league based in remote communities, which would mean the majority of their young men and their families would not be going long distances into Alice Springs every week during football season. It would reduce contact with alcohol, intertribal violence and the criminal justice system.

There are a number of similar Indigenous NGOs in our region that are similarly well placed to realise the aspirations of Indigenous people and improve the quality of life in remote communities.

Another way that CAYLUS has been working to support the capacity of local programs and initiatives is by upgrading local youth /sport and rec infrastructure using mining royalties funds provided by the Aboriginals Benefit Account. We have completed the refurbishment of sport and rec facilities in Lake Nash, Nyirripi, Willowra, Ampilatwatja, Mt Liebig, Kintore, Hermannsburg, Titjikala, Laramba and Harts Range with many new projects now under way. Before and after photos of some of these works are attached see attachment 3

In summary, we propose that funds that are directed at Indigenous sporting projects in remote Central Australian communities, should be targeted to support Indigenous governed organisations and locally managed projects that meet identified local priorities. This would be a more sustainable use of funds and would lead to real progress towards the governments Closing the Gap targets.

⁴ Dr James Connor, “The athlete as widget: how exploitation explains elite sport” *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*, Volume 12, Issue 10, 2009, p1369

⁵ 12 ‘Improving School Enrolment and Attendance Through Welfare Reform Measures (SEAM) Evaluation Report for 2010, Social Policy Research and Evaluation Selection Research Branch, Social Policy and Economic Strategy Group, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, January 2012, <http://www.deewr.gov.au/schooling/programs/pages/seam.aspx#5>.

The question is how to provide information to potential funding agencies that could inform their decisions re what to fund. CAYLUS proposes the following to address this issue.

2. We suggest an audit of all the funds that go into remote Indigenous communities be available for any potential grant giver, including a longitudinal study, with any formal research findings on the effects and outcomes, especially long term.

This addresses the issue of how to support government and NGOs utilisation of sport as a vehicle to improve outcomes for Indigenous people. This issue would benefit from co-ordination, and from easy access to research in relation the benefits of any proposed sporting engagement.

Clearly, having information on hand about the existing funding going into sports based programs in each remote community would assist. The number of different organistaions that regularly tour Indigenous communities indicates the lack of any overview of activities. How many agencies are sending elite sportspeople to Hermannsburg? And how would anyone find out? CAYLUS works closely with the local youth workers, who are frequently asked by external organisations to organise events in the remote communities to facilitate their visit. This can include advertising, arranging translators, BBQs and facilities. This work is often expected to be undertaken by the youth workers for no fee, and at times disrupts the existing services. This happens in much of remote Central Australia

We propose that a central clearing point be established to coordinate such activities. At this site, information could also be provided regarding local agencies that exist in the communities that might be better recipients of funding for community based activities. This would reduce the need for a large number of external NGOs attempting to provide co-ordinated services in remote communities – a next to impossible task.

This site could also be a place where research could be accessed regarding the outcomes of such programs. This might encourage funding agencies to consider the long term consequences of any proposed activity.

We note that the Australian Sport Commission (ASC) may be well placed to operationalise this recommendation the commissions aims are as follows;

The ASC is focused on getting more Australians participating and excelling in sport, by:

- delivering key programs in line with the Australian Government's sport policy objectives;
- providing financial support and other assistance to national sporting organisations to deliver participation and high performance results and improve their capability, sustainability and effectiveness; and
- building collaboration, alignment and effectiveness within the Australian sport sector.

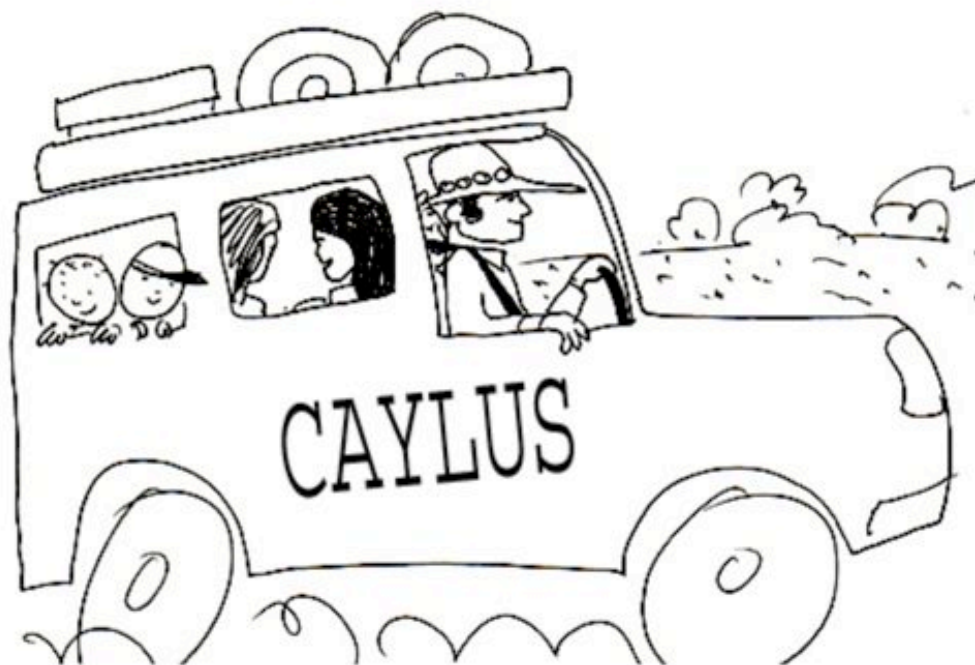
If the commission were to take on the proposed role it would clearly further these objectives in Central Australia.

The findings of this Committee could provide the basis of this overview of sports funding.

Yours sincerely,

Blair McFarland
CAYLUS Operations Manager

Tristan Ray
CAYLUS Policy and Projects Manager



About The Central Australian Youth Link Up Service

Mission

To support community initiatives that improve quality of life and address substance misuse affecting young people in Central Australian remote communities and town camps.

Background

CAYLUS started as a petrol sniffing prevention project in November 2002 from funding committed by the Howard government in response to a series of articles about petrol sniffing by the journalist Paul Toohey in *The Australian*. CAYLUS staff work on a mix of community development, policy/ advocacy and casework based approaches.

CAYLUS supported interventions have included rehabilitation projects, youth programs, a responsible retail of solvents program, night patrols, policing initiatives, football carnivals, video and radio projects, and more. Whilst many supply-reduction measures have specifically targeted inhalants, the demand-reduction measures such as development of community-based youth development programs have had a myriad of other health, substance misuse prevention and community safety outcomes.

CAYLUS staff worked closely with families to facilitate access to rehabilitation programs and worked with these services to varying degrees to help develop their programs and services.

Alpururulam Lake Nash

CAYLUS was first contacted by Lake Nash (Alpururulam) Council in response to outbreaks of petrol sniffing on the community. Some visitors to the community had been sniffing there and some local youth had also started experimenting. Families and workers in the community were concerned and got together on several occasions to move visitors back to Mt Isa and other communities. Mostly this slowed the sniffing for a while and local youth didn't sniff once this had happened. After several outbreaks, community members asked CAYLUS to assist them in getting Opal Fuel. They were also concerned that there were few meaningful activities and opportunities available to young people in the community. Since the introduction of Opal there has been only sporadic sniffing on the community.

There are nearly 250 young people and children in Lake Nash and CAYLUS has been working with government and the council to try and improve opportunities and supports for youth in the community through developing a youth program. There is a sport and recreation program and staff have recently changed over. Anna Flouris is the new worker, and Anna says that

despite limited program resources community members value and support activities for young people and actively engage in running activities for youth. One of the initiatives Anna is supporting is a community newsletter, and she has just finished the second edition.

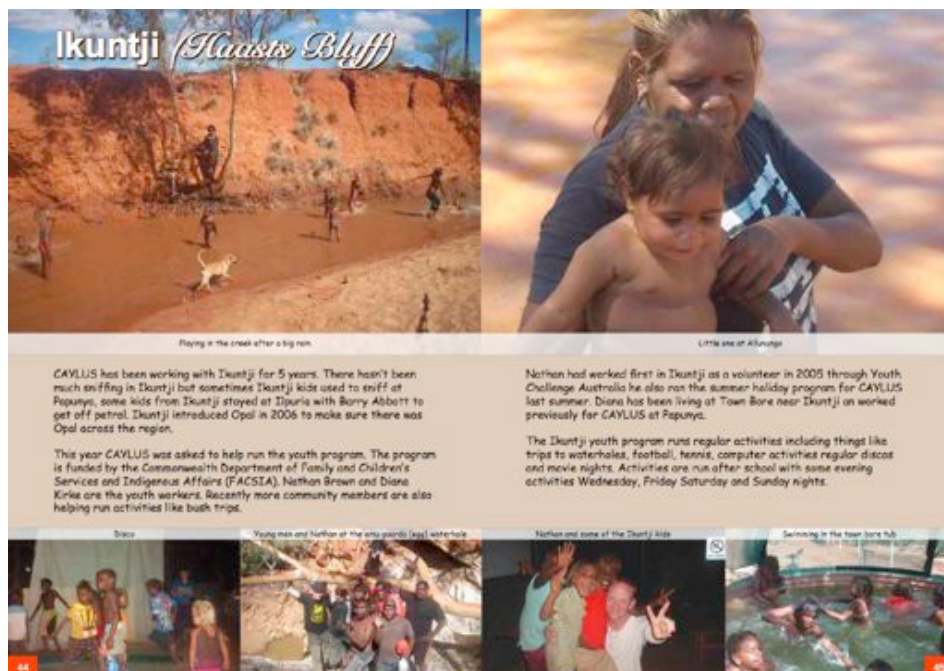
CAYLUS has been working with the Alpururulam community to try and pull together funds for a full time youth worker to work in the community. Our experience is that the minimum level of resources required for a youth program in a community like Alpururulam is 2 youth workers with suitable housing, 2 program vehicles and a youth program centre such as a Rec hall and money to employ local casual workers. CAYLUS will continue to support Alpururulam in working toward this model, which is the basic level of services needed to start addressing the underlying causes of sniffing.

CAYLUS also helped the community to secure funds through the Aboriginal Benefit Account (ABA) and NT Health and Commonwealth Health to run holiday programs in the community. We engaged Rahm and Melika from Multivision Media who ran a fantastic program with help from the Women's Centre, Council and store. The program ran for 4 weeks in the winter break and included daily activities for all ages and families.

To Contact Anna Flouris, Alpururulam community Sport and Rec worker phone 07 476483048.

Legislation

CAYLUS staff worked with other stakeholders to advocate to the Northern Territory government for a range of measures including better data collection, better policing around petrol sniffing and better rehabilitation options. This resulted in the introduction of the NT Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention Act 2005 and a complementary investment in support programs by the NT government. One of the most useful outcomes of this legislation is that it gives communities the ability to make possession of sniffable petrol illegal altogether within their bounds, thereby making petrol dealing far more difficult. At the moment the legislation applies only in the Northern Territory, but there is interest from other states with similar issues (e.g. Western Australia) in the VSAP legislation and CAYLUS inhalant abuse reduction strategies.



Opal/Low Aromatic Fuel

Staff initially promoted use of aviation gas as a non-sniffable fuel, along with promoting the use of the Misuse of Drugs Act (NT) to prevent dealing. At the request of community stakeholders workers offered a hotline service whereby community members were able to name dealers of petrol. Twelve dealers were reported to police in this way in the first few months of the service. With the advent of Opal fuel in 2005, it became feasible for the first time to implement a non-sniffable fuel across the region. CAYLUS staff worked with communities promoting the use of the fuel. They also advocated for a change in Commonwealth

Government policy, first to allow roadhouses to use the fuel and eventually to support a region wide rollout in Central Australia. The most current data on the roll out of Opal shows a 94% reduction in sniffing prevalence as a result of the Opal roll out. CAYLUS staff continue to work toward rolling out youth across our region in order to engage youth who were previously sniffing in positive activities and programs.

Governance

CAYLUS is overseen by a reference group of organizations and key stakeholders from the region:

- Central Australian Aboriginal Congress
- Papunya Community
- Drug and Alcohol Services Association (DASA)
- Mt Theo-Yuendumu Substance Misuse Aboriginal Corporation (MYSMAC)
- Alice Springs Youth Accommodation Support Service (ASYASS)
- Tangentyere Council
- NPY Women's Council
- Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi
- Pintubi Homelands Health Service
- Mt Liebig community

Communities serviced

CAYLUS services the following communities, which are spread geographically over more than 600,000 square kilometres:

- Alice Springs
- Ampilatwatja
- Aputula
- Areyonga
- Arlparra
- Bonya
- Docker River
- Harts Range
- Hermannsburg
- Ikuntji
- Imanpa
- Kintore
- Lake Nash
- Laramba
- Mt Liebig
- Mutitjulu
- Nyirripi

- Papunya
- Titjikala
- Willowra
- Yuelamu
- Yuendumu
- Mt Theo and Ilpurla and outstations

In addition CAYLUS has provided assistance to the communities of Ali Curung, Balgo, Ti Tree and Amoonguna, Engawala, Katherine Tennant Creek, Canteen Creek and Elliot.

Activities

For many years CAYLUS was the only service that provided support in relation to inhalant abuse to remote communities in the Central Australian region. In recent years some additional Commonwealth and NT funded treatment and diversionary services have started, partly as a result of CAYLUS work. CAYLUS now employs four community development workers, who work with remote Indigenous communities to create education and treatment strategies that address substance abuse particularly by young people. We also employ a caseworker, a supply reduction worker and a youth program support worker.

CAYLUS support includes:

- development of community plans to address the substance abuse,
- assistance in locating funding to support community actions,
- coordination and funding of training for youth workers and community members,
- work with retailers to support responsible sale of solvents and inhalants,
- education about the consequences of inhalant and other substance abuse,
- networking communities with existing service providers,
- production of indigenous language resources,
- a media strategy to complement other activities,
- advocacy to promote useful strategies to address substance misuse affecting youth, and
- casework to assist individual youth.

School holidays

The school holidays are widely recognised as a time of increased substance abuse, violence, self-harming behaviour and injury for young people in Central Australia. As a part of on-going activities CAYLUS has been coordinating resources, staff and money for summer and mid year school holiday programs since its inception.

Current Initiatives

Youth Infrastructure Upgrades

One of the biggest obstacles in terms of developing youth services is lack of essential infrastructure including houses for youth workers, recreation halls and facilities to work in and program vehicles.

In early 2008 we succeeded in gaining a \$3million contribution towards this need from the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA), a mining royalties fund set up under the NT Land Rights Act. We have subsequently completed these works and commenced a second \$7million tier of works across 10 sites with funding from a variety of sources.

As well as the infrastructure, there is a need for youth program resources, such as computers to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of participants, music and recording equipment to engage the older at risk youth cohorts in positive activities, sporting equipment to promote healthy activity, and a host of other operational needs. CAYLUS continues to work with government and other agencies towards addressing these needs.

Workforce development

A key challenge across all sectors in the region is the recruitment and retention of quality staff. In a cross language and culture environment skilling up new workers requires lots of resources. It is also a high stress environment and that means that the resources programs have invested in terms of developing staff skills and capacity can be lost with alarming regularity. Some additional challenges when working with children include ensuring all safety requirements in terms of criminal history checks and working with children screenings are met.

In order to address some of these issues CAYLUS is working with employer agencies across the region to support youth workforce development initiatives.

Some of our work in this area to date includes:

- Developing volunteer placement as a way of improving the pool of potential workers;
- Making links with universities and partner organisations to develop student placement schemes and encourage appropriate graduates to apply for work in the region;
- Providing a regional coordination point/knowledge base that employers and potential workers can both access; and

- Working with government and employers to improve conditions and support for workers, including provision of professional supervision, counselling and emergency support.

STAFF

Blair Mc Farland CAYLUS Operations Manager

Blair has worked with remote communities in Central Australia on community justice and community development for more than 20 years. He lived at Papunya for four years and has first-hand experience of life in traditional Aboriginal communities. He worked for eight years as a Probation and Parole Officer with the Western Desert as his field area. Following this, he worked for Tangentyere Council establishing the Remote Area Night Patrol (RANP) Project, which assisted remote communities to establish, support and resource Night Patrols. Due to this long association with communities across the region, and his continuing commitment to social justice, he is well known and respected. He received the Prime Ministers Award in 2008 for excellence in the drug and alcohol field.

Tristan Ray CAYLUS Policy and Project Manager- Based in Canberra

Tristan joined CAYLUS in 2003. Prior to this he worked with young people in Community Media Production for over 10 years. He lived in Yuendumu for 4 of these years working as a training coordinator at Warlpiri Media Association. In this time he worked to establish the Pintubi Anmatjerre Warlpiri (PAW) Radio Network; this service now spans 11 communities. Tristan holds a Masters of Applied Anthropology and Participatory Development which was completed through the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy and Research at ANU.

Phil Hassall CAYLUS Caseworker

Phil moved to the NT in 1987. In that time he worked for 8 years for NT FACS in the remote team, establishing the Adult Guardianship and Good Beginnings programs in Alice Springs and worked as a probation and parole officer for NT Community Corrections. Phil has a Law degree and a Degree in Social Work. He joined CAYLUS in 2004.

Yarran Cavalier Juvenile Diversion Unit Youth Program Support Worker

Yarran has lived in the NT since 1992 and has worked in a number of remote communities working in various capacities including; youth program provision, aged care, pre-school teaching and establishing a youth diversionary ranger program. He has lived with his partner and three girls at communities including Maningrida, Docker River, Yuelamu, Areyonga and Nyirripi. Yarran provides support services for remote community youth workers and programs in the region.

Dr Anna Flouris CAYLUS Community Development Worker

Anna joined CAYLUS in 2009; her role is to support remote communities to deal with sniffing, especially by developing youth programs and supply reduction. She lived in

Lake Nash for 2 years, first working as a youth worker and then the Regional Sport and Recreation Coordinator for the Barkly Shire Council. In the last 10 years Anna has worked in Indigenous health, international development and in training GPs/doctors.

Jennifer McFarland- CAYLUS Community Development worker

Jennifer joined CAYLUS in 2011 though had worked for CAYLUS on a number of short term contracted jobs prior to this. Jennifer has worked extensively in the region including supporting the development of night patrols, for the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority and on a range of legal rights and community support projects.

CAYLUS Supply Reduction Worker- Currently being recruited

WANGA WALTJA! The future of bush footy?

REMOTE community AFL competitions used to be held in remote communities, but for close to twenty years now they have been held in Alice Springs. Bush footy campaigners say the current setup might suit town based teams, but not the often struggling remote community teams.

During the football season, lots of remote community teams, their families and supporters do a lot of travelling to and from the games. The fuel and vehicle costs are expensive and place an extra burden on already stretched family resources. The traveling can also be risky as the roads are hard on cars and people, there is often nowhere to stay in town except in already overcrowded houses, there is more risk of people becoming involved in disputes or caught up in drinking which can lead to ending up in jail or hospital.

Luritja man and Papunya resident, Sid Anderson is attempt-

ing to resurrect a bush footy competition west of Alice Springs in the hope that it may stop young people from getting into trouble or finding themselves stuck when they come to Alice Springs for the footy.

"We just want to get away from all the substance abuse in town and keep our young fellas out in the community."

"In the 60's we used to go around to Ali Curung, Yuendumu, Arnyonga, Hermansburg and Papunya and it was really good."

Mr Anderson said the new football league would be called 'Wanga Waltja' which means 'family get together'.

Interest in the comp is high and Mr Anderson says everyone is asking when it's going to start.

"We are hoping to start next year but we do need to raise some money to get it going."

"There should be about eight teams from places like Haast's Bluff, Nyirripi, two from Papunya maybe and Kintore," Mr Anderson said.



From the past and into the future. Above: Yuendumu teams march in the 1963 Bangtail Muster.

Right: A poster design for the proposed bush footy league.

LOVE FOR FOOTY BUILDING NEW LEARNING CENTRE

A NEW boarding school to be built at Darwin's TIO stadium will offer a mix of educational and top-class sporting facilities to Aboriginal kids from the bush.

The Michael Long NT Thunder Learning and Leadership Centre will have 32 bedrooms, class-

rooms, lecture theatres and sporting and recovery facilities, including a swimming pool and gym.

The Federal Government is investing \$11 million in the centre—\$7.5 million through the Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF)

and \$3.5 million through the Aboriginal Benefit Account.

The AFL has also committed \$1.5 million into the project, which is expected to be finished by the end of 2013.

Indigenous Affairs minister, Jenny Macklin said the centre would

provide a caring and supportive environment for Aboriginal youngsters from the bush.

Right: You never know: Young footy stars from Ntaria (Hermansburg) may get to try out the facilities at the new academy.



AMPILATWATJA YOUTH CENTRE – CAYLUS UPGRADE PROJECT 2012



AYC before and after.doc

LARAMBA YOUTH CENTRE – CAYLUS UPGRADE PROJECT 2012



LYC before and after.doc

TITJIKALA YOUTH CENTRE – CAYLUS UPGRADE PROJECT 2012

