



AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL POLICY
ASSOCIATION



Tackling Joblessness

a 'family' sector perspective

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Context

- The Benevolent Society
- Locational disadvantage & role of NGOs
- Partnerships in South West Sydney
- Pathways to participation and employability

joblessness and children

- Australia - high proportion of children in jobless households
- AIFS/TBS research – living in jobless family estimated to increase probability of child behavioural/emotional probs by 13% (compared to where family is employed)

TBS clients snapshot

- Of 1300 – 13% in workforce
- 900 child and family clients majority on benefits
 - 50% of fathers in our 2 parent families employed
 - 50% families female headed
 - 13% of mums in paid work

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Making it work when no-one is in charge

10 year strategy to strengthen communities.
Engaging Bankstown communities at every level.

We're developing a new framework and tools for measuring social inclusion and social capital, building an Australian evidence-base.



Issues

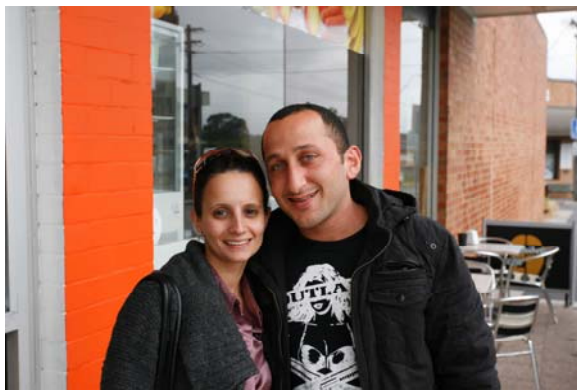
- High unemployment
- Low educational attainment
- Low racial tolerance
- Low internet connection
- High mortgage arrears

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Outcomes

- **Decrease in long-term social and economic disadvantage**
- **A strong and diverse local economy**
- Creation of strong networks – professional, cross-cultural and cross-generational
- **Increase in educational attainment**
- Improved community leadership and advocacy



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Network approach

- **Consultation** - residents, business owners, students, stakeholders
- **Connections** - encouraging older residents to have social connections and stay actively involved.
- **Community Brains Trust** - NGO relationship building, skills development, knowledge and resource sharing and advocacy
- **Website and Multimedia** - interactive, connect with all ages, medium for community to have their say, resource for community workers – www.strongcommunities.org.au
- **Wheel Works** -bike, skateboard and scooter rebuilding project for youth aged 9 to 17
- **Place Making** - Community Hub, Business Chambers, public art projects, activation of public spaces



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- SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PROJECT - focus on food to learn about culture
- Attracts visitors Sydney-wide. It's fun. People are excited to come
- Hands on learning: Try eating & making new things
- Meet the locals. Promotes Bankstown in a positive way
- Increases customers for local small business
- Creates jobs for Bankstown residents – brings money into community
- PT employment – local tour guides trained and certified through TAFE





Peppertree Cafe



- Sept 2009 - Jobs Fund Grant \$786,000
- November 2010 – opened with the assistance of 20+ volunteers
- More than 72 paid opportunities plus 8 volunteers
- Peppertree uses local suppliers and providores
- By June 2011 will have trained & provided work experience for 52 young people

Local Economy

- engaging big business
- evigorating the CBD and shopping strips
- chambers of commerce

Communities for Children



- C4C works with children and their families in disadvantaged communities to improve children's health, safety, and wellbeing
- NGOs new role – *Facilitating Partners*
- 50 locations – FaHCSIA funded

A program that targets family needs in disadvantaged areas has proved a surprising winner. It might even be a great Howard legacy

Problems

- transport
- safety
- dv, mental health and drug and alcohol
- poverty (\$434 weekly income)
- unemployment – 8.8%
- school attendance – yr 12 completed 37.7%

- ***Men shot, stabbed in Sydney brawl***
 - *Riot police and the dog squad had to be brought in to break-up the brawl.*
 - ***Elders called in to calm Sydney 'ghetto'***

Community Improvements

- Children living in CfC sites were **significantly more likely to be living in households where at least one parent was employed than non-CfC sites**
- Families and children were more likely to be participating in community service activities
- Low-income families living in CfC sites were significantly more likely to perceive higher levels of social cohesion in their community than low-income families living in non-CfC sites



Practice and program design

- assertive encouragement & building confidence
- providing real opportunities to participate – volunteering, education, work
- community members support each other
- long-haul support – backup when it gets tough
- services must work more effectively together than in the past

Policy implications – reducing unemployment

- build links and bridges with big and small business
- target vulnerable geographic areas with high numbers of children
- invigorate local economy
- policies that promote and encourage volunteering as a pathway to work
- new governance and network models



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Thank you



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