

# STRENGTHENING FOUNDATIONS



**COMMUNITY  
IMPACT  
REPORT 2015**  
YMCA NSW

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## SHAPING A FIT YMCA FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



The famous 1978 YMCA song asked the question “*What do you want to be?*” and then answered, “*At the YMCA you can make real your dreams.*”

Today, with a vision to create healthier, happier, connected communities the YMCA NSW builds environments where young people can develop a feeling of belonging, a sense of purpose and an understanding of how much they can achieve in life. We’re committed to strengthening communities by developing and running programs for healthy living and well-being.

We’re also committed to reviewing our services, listening to our members and developing new programs that can better serve the needs of our clients. In 2015 the Board has overseen a whole of organisation approach to strengthening our foundations, ensuring greater relevancy and sustainability now and into the future.

In 2015 our highest priority was reinforcing our commitment to the safety and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults and we’ve made “Safety” a new corporate value.

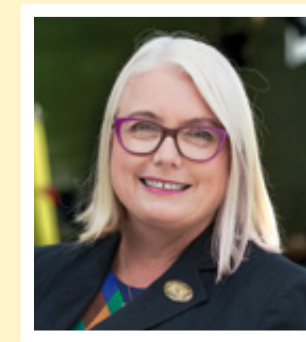
It’s not about saying we follow set rules and procedures, it’s about us actively viewing all our actions, thinking and services through a child safe lens.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to personally thank our staff, volunteers and supporters for their time and dedication to building a stronger and more sustainable YMCA.

2015 has been a year of considerable organisational change and I would particularly like to thank our front line staff - the public face of the YMCA, our support services and Leisa Hart and her executive leaders for the energy you are all putting into shaping our organisation to serve our clients and local communities now and for the future.

**Marg Lennon,**  
**Chair, YMCA NSW**

## A PEOPLE ORGANISATION



We’re a people operation, the clients we serve, our staff, volunteers and partners, and the communities where we work. We know humans enjoy social interaction and we know that physical activity is good for people. We are about bringing people together to engage in activities that support happier, healthier, connected communities.

2015 has been a year of strengthening foundations. We have a new leadership team and have restructured the way our organisation operates, launched a new Strategic Plan and added ‘Safety’ as a core organisational value.

At the Leadership Conference we introduced “Act Differently” as a catalyst to inspire a spirit of difference. We are energising our people to “Act Differently” and to be leaders in a change champion community.

In 2014 we reported on how we were engaging new processes and continuous training. In 2015 I am happy to say that Cross Organisation Safe-Guarding Training continues to be a priority in strengthening our foundations. We have run Safe Behaviours workshops, conducted Recruitment Training through a child safe lens and launched a new staff induction process.

In late 2015 we commissioned a Staff Culture Survey to see exactly where we were after a year of change. Key themes identified were:

1. Commitment to YMCA values
2. Perception that the YMCA takes child protection seriously
3. Belief that the YMCA has a strong culture that is positive, action oriented, relationship based and youthful

What we learnt was quite pleasing. The review confirmed that we’ve made considerable progress on our journey towards achieving a child-safe environment with zero tolerance for transgressions.

We still have some way to go on linking all staff into culture and confirming in them a renewed sense of responsibility evidenced through their actions. And, each time we simplify a process, improve a system or design a new program we seek to live our values and embed YMCA behaviours.

I am truly grateful for the trust the Board has given me and the faith and loyalty of the staff as together we strengthen the YMCA NSW for years to come.

**Leisa Hart**  
**CEO, YMCA NSW**





# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

“If you see something, say something”



For most children and young people, growing up in Australia is a journey experienced in safe, healthy and positive environments. For most it is about discovering life with the support of caring and protective families.

In 1990 Australia ratified the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world that confirms that children have the right to special protection because of their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.

At the YMCA NSW the safety and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults is our highest priority. The right to be able to enjoy a safe environment free from threats, abuse or mistreatment is first and foremost in our service commitment to our clients and communities.

In 2015, to reinforce this commitment, we added “Safety” to our organisational values and supported this within a framework of “Acting Differently”.

This emphasis on Safety as a value significantly increases its ongoing visibility within the YMCA and our staff is encouraged to act differently as the foundation of cultural accountability. This essentially means holding yourself and others accountable, being transparent and learning from mistakes.

## 2015 highlights

- Implementation of 19 Royal Commission Projects to support Safeguarding Children in 2015

## YMCA NSW Statement of Commitment

YMCA NSW, including its Board of Directors, commits to creating and maintaining an environment that ensures all people involved in YMCA NSW activities, programs or services act in the best interests of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and take all reasonable steps to ensure their safety, welfare and well-being.

There is a requirement for all YMCA NSW employees, volunteers (including its Board of Directors), student placements, consultants and contractors, affiliated associations, clients, parents, guardians, families and others associated with the YMCA NSW to understand the important responsibility they have to:

1. Protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation by our people
2. Be alert to incidents of child abuse and neglect occurring outside the scope of our operations and services that may have an impact on the children and young people to whom we provide a service
3. Create and maintain a child-safe culture that is understood, endorsed and put into action by all the individuals who work for, volunteer or access our programs and services



# OUR BOARD



## Marg Lennon

Masters, Organisational Coaching (University of Sydney)  
Graduate of Australian Institute of Company Directors

**Chair**  
**Director since 2009**

**Occupation:**  
Director, Unlimited People Potential Pty Ltd

Marg Lennon is an executive coach providing mentoring and leadership development services to clients in the health, finance, insurance, pharmaceutical, mining, telecommunications and education industries. Marg was previously Chairman of Aftercare, an NGO dedicated to helping the mentally disabled lead independent lives.



## Annalisa Haskell

Bachelor of Arts (Victoria University of Wellington), Post Graduate Business Diploma (University of Auckland), Graduate of Australian Institute of Company Directors

**Director since 2009**

**Occupation:**  
CEO, NSW Local Government Managers Association

Annalisa Haskell's extensive career in international strategic sales and marketing has spanned 25 years, and covers banking, telecommunications, energy and insurance, education and not for profit sectors.

Annalisa is currently Chief Executive Officer of Local Government Professionals Australia, NSW. She is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, an Associate Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management and a Member of Women on Boards.



## Richard Hughes

Bachelor of Building (University of NSW), Graduate of Australian Institute of Company Directors

**Director since 2014**

**Occupation:**  
Principal, Catylis Properties Pty Ltd

Richard Hughes has over 35 years experience in property development, investment and construction in Australia, Europe and Asia. He currently owns and operates Catylis Properties Pty Ltd in Sydney, and serves as Chairman of the Property Council of Australia's Property Development Committee.



## Warwick Jones

Bachelor of Arts (Royal Military College)

**Director since 2014**

**Occupation:**  
Executive Director, Australia Institute of Police Management

Warwick Jones was appointed Executive Director of the Australian Institute of Police Management in 2012. Previously, he was the Director, Programs at the Australian Institute of Police Management, and also served in the Australian Army. He is a graduate of the FBI's National Executive Institute program.



## Janise Mitchell

Bachelor of Social Work (University of Melbourne), Master of Social Work (Monash University)

**Director since 2014**

**Occupation:**  
Deputy CEO, Australian Childhood Foundation

With extensive experience in child protection, public policy analysis and program development, Janise Mitchell currently holds the position of Deputy CEO at the Australian Childhood Foundation. She has a Master's degree examining the policy and practice underpinning therapeutic care initiatives in Australia, and is also an Adjunct Research Fellow with Monash University.



## Jonathon Rea

Master of Law in Dispute Resolution (University of New South Wales), Bachelor of Business (Charles Sturt University), Graduate Certificate in Social Impact (University of New South Wales - Graduate School of Management), Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors

**Director since 2014**

**Occupation:**  
Consultant, Non-Executive Director

With 25 years experience in banking and finance, Jonathon Rea has held numerous senior executive positions, principally with Westpac Banking Group. He currently consults as a mediator in commercial and equity disputes, and serves on several other Boards and Committees, including the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and the Uniting Church of Australia Assembly Limited.





# OUR EXECUTIVE



**Leisa Hart**

**Chief Executive Officer**

Leisa has significant operational leadership experience in major commercial and not-for-profit organisations including IBM, Computer Associates, Storage Technology, EDS, Telstra, Mission Australia and MAX Solutions.

At Telstra she was Chief Operating Officer for an ICT acquisition with responsibility for integration, implementing cost saving operational controls and driving revenue growth.

In 2008, Leisa joined Mission Australia to lead the Employment Services Division and in 2010 was promoted to Chief Operating Officer with a mandate to consolidate the commercial, business support, brand, public affairs, advocacy and fundraising operations.

At MAX Solutions Leisa was Director of Operations for Employment Services, Training and Health Divisions.



**Carolynne Lepp**

Graduate Certificate of Change  
(Australian Graduate School of Management)

**Chief Risk Officer**

Carolynne has been involved in Risk Management for the past 20 years and has worked across legal, not-for-profit, hospitality, education, manufacturing, retail and professional service industries.

Carolynne also has extensive experience in the establishment of Enterprise Risk and Compliance programs, including Business Continuity and Crisis Management.

Since joining the YMCA NSW in September 2014, Carolynne has played a key role in establishing risk management processes and improving the overall risk profile of the organisation.



**Gayle Middleton**

Masters of Business  
Administration (University of Technology)

**General Manager,  
Business Operations**

Gayle has held senior leadership positions in National and Global organisations, including Qantas, IBM, KAZ, Telstra and NSW Health, working in Australia, the US, Belgium and Malaysia. She has led business, transformation, change governance and shared services teams and significant change programs.

Gayle's community commitment includes support with aged care services, representing Women's Sport for NSW, a not-for profit, as a Board Director for 8 years and personal ownership of a recreation and community services business on the Hawkesbury River for over 20 years.



**Cameron Lilburn**

**Business Secretary**

Cameron has been a part of the YMCA for almost 25 years having commenced his journey in 1992 as a casual in Victoria.

After 10 years operational experience where he was part of the senior management team at the successful Brunswick City Baths and helped establish the Goldfields Oasis Recreation Centre in Western Australia, Cameron moved into the Corporate Services team at YMCA Victoria to implement GST, the first centralised Payroll/HR system and the first centralised finance banking system.

Since joining the YMCA NSW in 2011, Cameron has worked in our business systems team and in 2013, he was appointed Governance Manager – Company Secretary.



**Craig Fisher**

Bachelor of Economics  
(Macquarie University)  
Chartered Accountant

**General Manager,  
Finance**

Craig has over 20 years Finance industry experience including overall financial management with major organisations. He has managed audits, cash flow, business restructures, process implementation and financial controls to grow earnings.

Since joining YMCA NSW in March 2015 as Financial Controller, Craig has played a pivotal role in ensuring the financial sustainability of YMCA NSW working with the business to reduce overheads and improve financial management tools and accountability. Craig was appointed General Manager of Finance in September 2015.



**Karen Twitchett**

**General Manager,  
Human Resources**

Karen brings 25 years experience spanning multiple sectors, in capacities ranging from general management to human resource leadership. She has worked for major organisations in Australia and Asia Pacific including Algamane Bank Nederland, News Corporation and Mission Australia.

Most recently Karen held an Asia Pacific role with an international duty free retailer and then ran the People and Culture function for QANTAS Domestic.

Karen is published in her field and in 2014 released a book called Sweet and Unsavoury: case stories for people managers.



**Jenni Hutchins**

Bachelor of Arts (Welfare Studies – Western Sydney University),  
Post Graduate (Child and Family – Western Sydney University),  
Registered Psychologist (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency)

**General Manager, Community  
and Children's Services**

Jenni's experience in Children and Community Services includes thought leadership, complex service delivery, child protection and out-of-home care, collective impact initiatives, social policy development and team leadership.

Most recently, Jenni headed up the National Strategy for Children, Youth and Family services at The Benevolent Society.

Since joining YMCA NSW in June 2015, Jenni has been driving the ongoing growth of our Community and Children's Services including building relationships with Government and key industry partners, the acquisition of two new Children's Services sites, development of our Community Services portfolio and ensuring compliance with licensing and state and federal regulations.



**Matt Phelan**

**General Manager,  
Recreation and Camping**

Matt has over 25 years in the sport and recreation industry with extensive senior executive experience managing major sporting venues, competitions and operations. He has worked for the Western Sydney Wanderers, Parramatta Eels, London 2012 Olympic Organising Committee and Football Federation Australia.

Since joining the YMCA NSW in June 2015, Matt has been instrumental in YMCA NSW gaining a greater presence in the ACT taking over the management of two additional centres – Canberra Olympic Pool and Lakeside Leisure Centre. He has also played a key role in ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of our recreation services.

# STRENGTHENING THE BUSINESS SUPPORT FOUNDATIONS

## BUSINESS OPERATIONS

The team supports business priorities, change management and performance reporting. We strengthen foundations by managing and improving business planning, licensing compliance, professional accreditations and ongoing infotechnology evolution. Business Operations has already achieved savings in operational expenditure of \$280,000.

### 2015 highlights

- Establishing the YMCA NSW ‘whole of business’ standard Planning and Performance Scorecard Operating Model
- Designing and deploying the YMCA NSW Project Management Office operating model and coaching business owners
- Achieving 88% Royal Commission Compliance and Y Australia Licensing approval in December 2015

### 2016 objectives

- Achieving Royal Commission 100% compliance by April 2016
- Having all 7 Standards of the Australian Children Foundation accreditation project approved by September 2016
- Improving Business Operations capability, business systems and infrastructure optimisation through effective business planning and implementation to support 100% of YMCA NSW services by December 2016

## RISK AND COMPLIANCE

Key to strengthening foundations has been the implementation of effective Risk Management practices into all parts of the organisation, ensuring the YMCA operates safely, maintains viability and improves sustainability.

### 2015 highlights

- Establishing a specialist Safeguarding Children & Young People unit that functions independently from operations and reports to the Chief Risk Officer
- Establishing a centralised oversight and immediate alert system of all child related incidents to the Safeguarding Children Unit
- Incidents reported within 24 hours across Recreation increased from 10% to 50%
- Putting into operation an independent Whistle blower service

### 2016 objectives

- An effective Safeguarding Children framework in place
- Incident Management & Crisis Response Procedures in operation
- The Risk Management compliance framework embedded in the organisation and the Key Risk Indicator Report presented to the Board regularly to assist with strategic decision-making

## HUMAN RESOURCES (HR)

We’ve strengthened the foundations of the HR function to optimise service delivery and support organisational alignment to purpose.

Key to this has been establishing a client advisory and business partner team, investing in our work health and safety resources and centralising the recruitment and onboarding function.

### 2015 highlights

- Formation of a Change Champion Community with committed managers informing and supporting change
- Adoption of ‘Act Differently’ behaviours to drive organisational outcomes in line with values
- Establishment of the Inaugural Camping Enterprise Agreement, a sector benchmark for terms and conditions of employment giving certainty to many of our seasonal workers and opportunities for permanent roles

### 2016 objectives

- Deploying a Human Resources System to strengthen capacity in recruitment, onboarding, learning management and essential qualifications.
- Continuing focus on Culture Projects including ongoing development of leadership safety behaviours and the introduction of an employee reward program

## FINANCE

In 2015 one of the key organisational challenges was to provide financial foundations for stability and sustainability.

### 2015 highlights

- Improving the transparency of our financial information to Board and Executive – this will continue through 2016

### 2016 objectives

- Transparent reporting enabling managers to make better decisions for planning and business evaluation
- System generated information to reduce administrative burden on front line staff
- Accurate and timely access to financial data – profit and loss statements, balance sheets and forecasts

## MARKETING

### 2015 highlights

- The production of the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults brochure
- Substantial social media growth from 2014 – 46% increase in Facebook likes and 22% increase in website users
- Securing the Google Adwords Grant for not-for-profit organisations; an “in-kind” grant worth US\$10k per month to help us boost reach into communities to support our fundraising activities

### 2016 objectives

- Developing new YMCA NSW website
- Updating digital presence in all directories (Google Maps), organic search (SEO), Social Media, Website optimisation and paid media (Search and display advertising)
- Lifting our media visibility and boosting our social media communications



## MARKETING CAMPAIGN

During the O-Week activities for 22,000 first year students the UNSW Fitness and Aquatic Centre offered a special ‘Join for \$1’ promotion. This was an initiative based on simplicity of message, ease of communication and previous success. It was promoted with a mix of traditional marketing formats, event activity, Facebook, Google AdWords and email – the campaign attracted 1,405 sign ups. This broke the previous record of 1,200 sign ups and resulted in a return on marketing investment of \$23.24 for each \$1 spent.





# RECREATION SERVICES: CREATING HAPPIER, HEALTHIER LIVES



## ► CASE STUDY

### YMCA Swimathon

The annual YMCA Swimathon is a national event that raises funds to support people with disabilities to learn to swim and enjoy water safety. The Swimathon continues to grow in popularity, this year raising \$206,803 across NSW, an increase of over 30%. The money is used to subsidise our program for Fee Assisted clients and to purchase equipment for swimming classes. We have set a target of \$220,000 for 2016.

Learning to swim as a child, playing in pools as a teen, participating in team sports as a young adult and keeping fit in the gym are all part of living in Australia.

The YMCA is the largest aquatic, leisure and recreation facilities manager in Australia. In NSW and the ACT we operate over 40 sites where clients enjoy being part of communities that value physical activity as a source of happiness and positivity. We also operate two camping sites at Yarramundi and "The Lodge" at Sydney Olympic Park.

In 2015 the recreation division employed 1,916 staff including full time, part time and casual. The business focus was on contract repositioning, improving financial sustainability and developing ways of deepening our community engagement.

### (2015 highlights)

- Further growth in the ACT region – securing Lakeside Leisure Centre and Canberra Olympic Pool
- Establishing the Inaugural Camping Enterprise Agreement, a sector benchmark of fit-for-purpose terms and conditions of employment that delivers seasonal permanent working arrangements and an increase in permanent working opportunities
- Implementing measures to strengthen financial sustainability in contract renegotiations leading to the exiting of arrangements with 8 Councils

### (2016 objectives)

- Continuing to improve financial stability and sustainability
- Achieving greater business consistency through uniformity of service and product delivery
- Investing in our people and their performance.
- Deepening community engagement by driving partnerships

## ► CASE STUDY

### YMCA Siblings Reconnect Camps

In Australia today, there are over 17,500 children<sup>(1)</sup> in foster care with 36%<sup>(2)</sup> of those brothers and sisters separated, through no fault of their own.

Siblings Reconnect is a program at Camp Yarramundi where we provide space for brothers and sisters who are living in separate foster care placements to get together, away from the formality of short visits supervised by case workers.

(1) <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/children-care> (Accessed 1/10/2015)

(2) Sibling Placement and Contact in Out-of-Home-Care [ebook] CREATE Foundation, p34. Available at: <http://create.org.au/publications/create-research-reports/> (Accessed 1/10/2015)



84 participants  
(2014: 80 participants)



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES: EMBRACING, ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING YOUNG AUSTRALIANS

“A safe, secure and nurturing family is the first and most important community we experience.”



Today many families are facing tough challenges controlling mortgages and rents, balancing the weekly budget, managing the school drop off, supervising homework requirements and organising extracurricular activities. These struggles are further compounded with Sydney now in the top 5 most expensive cities in the world.

With a greater number of families requiring both parents working to make ends meet the availability of Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) and Vacation Care is considered essential to many NSW households.

Formal care of children aged 6-11 grew from 2.8% of families in 1991 to 19.7% in 2011\* and Out of School Hours Care is one of the fastest growing services in the education and care sectors.

YMCA Children's Services believes that we are well positioned to support families with consistent care and support in an environment where children thrive by building resilience, engaging with peers and developing life skills for successful futures.

(Source – Australian Institute of Family Studies)

## 2015 highlights

- Embedding a new senior management team and organisational structure
- Employing a manager to focus on building quality and best practice approaches in all elements of our work
- Commencing the development of our first Demonstration Site to train new staff and illustrate a quality Out of School Hours Care environment

## 2016 objectives

- A stronger focus responding to the best practice literature on quality environments for children to flourish, thrive and have choice in what they can do
- Reviewing our marketing activities and improving our stakeholder engagement relationships

## ► CASE STUDY

### YMCA Breakfast Club

A good breakfast is the best way for children to start the day with the energy to make the most of the opportunities that arise. 10% of kids skip breakfast regularly and this impacts on their ability to concentrate at school. The YMCA Breakfast Club at Lake Haven, supported by the local business community, offers free meals to school aged children in a safe environment for social interaction.



7,600 breakfasts served  
(2014: 2,984 breakfasts)



# COMMUNITY SERVICES: OFFERING ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES TO OUR COMMUNITIES

At the YMCA we believe all individuals should be able to access and participate in physical activities. We create opportunities in a supportive and social environment to increase the well-being and self-esteem of people in our communities who may often be excluded by disability, family or social circumstances.

2015 was a year of change with new leadership, a new Strategic Plan and tighter controls around financial management.

## 2015 highlights

- Receiving accreditation to the National Disability Service Standards (Integrated & Flexible Respite Programs)
- The largest participation to date in the Youth Parliament Program
- Brightside participants becoming YMCA members increased by 14.2%

## 2016 objectives

- Community services consultation forums to review programs, develop action plans and implement initiatives
- Developing a Reconciliation Action Plan
- Implementing the Disability Action Plan

## SOME OF OUR PROGRAMS INCLUDE

### YMCA Brightside

Brightside is about creating opportunities for people who face challenges associated with mental health conditions. Participating in physical activity and having social contact can be vitally important in improving overall health well-being.

This program offers free and unlimited access to a YMCA facility for 60 days and a customised fitness program with one-on-one support. We introduce Brightside participants to the benefits of engaging in regular exercise and improved lifestyle choices, with the intention that this becomes embedded as a life-long habit.

631 participants. 85% of our clients agreed that the program increased their sense of well-being (2014: 708 participants)

## CASE STUDY

*"I would never have thought that all of this would have been possible – just because I decided to do an exercise program."*  
- Yasmin

Yasmin came to us with back pain and a feeling of having been 'tossed on the heap with no immediate or obvious future.' We worked to minimise her pain and provide reasons to get up and go out into the world each day. She was exemplary in attending, working hard in the gym and pool, and continued to work on her physical and mental motivation at home.

After the program, Yasmin became a YMCA Volunteer, where her great work ethic shone through leading to her being offered casual work.

In 2015 she undertook a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Support Work at TAFE.

### Community Visitor's Scheme

2015 was the twenty-second year of the YMCA NSW coordinating this program to bring friendship and companionship to elderly people. We coordinated approximately 60 volunteers who regularly visited 16 aged care facilities in Western Sydney. Over the years friendships have been forged and many elderly people have enjoyed a greater quality of life than they may otherwise have had.

100% of our clients living in aged care facilities strongly agreed that their well-being increased

### YMCA SwimAbility

Everyone should have the opportunity to have swimming lessons. This program enables people with disabilities to build a sense of water confidence, safety and swimming skills.

7,882 lessons conducted (2014: 1,768 lessons)



### The YMCA HUB Youth Centre (HUB)

The HUB is the only youth service and drop-in centre in the Cooma Monaro district where disadvantaged people aged 12 to 17 years can access a wide range of support services free of charge.

Young people are offered information and advice on topics including mental health issues, transitions, safety, relationships, education, training, employment, culture, and justice issues. They are also provided psychosocial support and life skills - social skills, financial management and budgeting, career advice and support, helping them focus on setting and achieving personal goals.

This service is a life line for young people and the broader community. The HUB is delivered in partnership with the local council, health, the NSW government and other locally based community organisations.

2014 to 2015: 234 people received support and advice and 425 people attended the centre during school holidays

## CASE STUDY

*"This year I had the opportunity to pilot an Aboriginal Dance program at Ashcroft High School. We wanted to gather people together to learn cultural practices, build self-confidence and pride in who they are."*

*When I shared the idea of expanding the program into a public forum the YMCA were very supportive and offered space at the Michael Wenden Aquatic Leisure Centre. This was extended to using the canteen facilities to provide meals for families and discounted swimming lessons for some of the children."*

*Without this assistance these children would not have the opportunity to learn the basic skill of swimming."*

*A Dance program initiative has become a community partnership offering greater assistance and opportunity for Aboriginal people."*

Rosheen Saunders –  
Liverpool Women's Resource Centre





# YOUNG PEOPLE: OUR FUTURE LEADERS

## Youth Parliament

Opening the 2015 YMCA NSW Youth Parliament, His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), Governor of New South Wales addressed the forum reinforcing the commitment to democracy and the strong desire to make a difference in people's lives in a real and meaningful way. He referred to our nation having young leaders and our society needing your energy, education, insights and unique perspectives to make change.

160 students in years 10 - 12, from 74 electorates participated in the 2015 Youth Parliament sitting in the NSW Legislative Assembly in July.

### (Key issues debated)

- Marginalisation of transgender people with a solution proposed to make it easier to legally change gender in government records
- Over-representation of Indigenous youth in prisons with a solution proposed allowing offenders to get in touch with their Aboriginality by having their actions judged by their local Indigenous community

160 people stood up for their views in YMCA Youth Parliament (2014: 140 people)

## Junior Parliament

In September 115 students in years 7 - 9 from 56 electorates met to learn the way our democratic system enables initiatives to be raised, debated and solutions proposed.

### (Key issues debated)

- The protection of the biodiversity of NSW State Forests with a solution proposed being restrictions on hunting
- Improving accessibility to public transport for elderly and people living with a disability
- Combating domestic violence with a solution proposed being the implementation of 'Respectful Relationships and Identity' classes in NSW Schools

115 people assembled for YMCA Junior Parliament (2014: 99 people)

## Parliament Primary School

The group debated issues important to their playground.

### (Key issues debated)

- Bullying
- Cleanliness of school facilities and environment
- Healthy canteen options

44 people attended YMCA Parliament Primary School (2014: 55 people)

## ► CASE STUDY

*"I've always been interested in public speaking and debating and when I was told about the YMCA NSW Youth Parliament I had no hesitation in applying. However when I arrived at the Training Camp in 2014 I realised the program was actually about hearing from like-minded youth groups from across the state. What I saw and heard was far more than I expected and the experience taught me the value in not only seeking out people with the same opinions but in also the exact opposite as well. Youth Parliament taught me to value the importance of all people's passions and ideas and it is this understanding that helps us to value individuals for who they truly are."*

*I returned in 2015 determined to hear issues from as many participants as possible. Yes it's powerful to stand before a room of people who are going to listen to what you have to say but unlike any other speaking competition, the YMCA Youth and Government programs taught me that you should never under estimate the power of spending those same 6 minutes listening to others."*

Jacqueline Willing,  
Youth Governor 2015/16

## THANK YOU:



ACT Government	Great Lakes Council
Autism Spectrum Australia	Greater Taree City Council
Bellingen Neighbourhood Centre	Hawkesbury City Council
Bellingen Shire Council	Hornsby Shire Council
Biripi Aboriginal Medical Services	Hunter New England Health
Broken Hill Shire Council	Ku-ring-gai Council
Camden Council	Liverpool City Council
Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta	Nambucca Early Childhood Intervention Centre
Catholic Education Office Sydney	Nambucca Shire Council
Catholic Schools Office Maitland – Newcastle	Northcott
Cooma-Monaro Shire Council	NSW Department of Education and Communities
City of Canterbury	NSW Parliament
Central Coast Mariners FC	Old Bar Beach Festival Committee
Cerebral Palsy Association	Richmond PRA
City of Ryde	Singleton Council
City of Sydney	Sunrise on Manning Rotary Club
Community of Catholic Schools – Diocese of Broken Bay	Sydney Olympic Park Authority
Department of Social Services, Australian Government	Taree North Rotary Club
Eurobodalla Shire Council	The Manning Net
Goulburn Mulwaree Council	University of New South Wales
	Wyong Shire Council
	Y's Men's Club of Broken Hill





## Our Values

### YMCA NSW

Level 5, 20 Smith St  
Parramatta NSW 2150

T 02 9687 6233

F 02 9687 6244

[ymcansw.org.au](http://ymcansw.org.au)

# CARING

I will be considerate and respectful of others  
– I will listen and help clients and colleagues  
wherever I can.

# HONESTY

I will be truthful, open and sincere in  
all matters – I will act with integrity and  
demonstrate reliability and trustworthiness.

# RESPECT

I will treat people the way I would like to be  
treated – I will value the worth of every person  
and support and celebrate their success.

# RESPONSIBILITY

I will be accountable for my behaviour, actions  
and obligations – In all situations I will do what  
is right and ought to be done.

# SAFETY

I am committed to ensuring the provision of safe environments  
for children, youth, vulnerable adults and families – through a  
child-safe lens I will always act in their best interests.