



## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-2008**



## Background

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The DOXA Youth Foundation (DOXA) is a philanthropic organisation formed in 1972 by Fr Joe Giacobbe with the support of a group of Melbourne business and professional people who shared a concern for disadvantaged young people.

DOXA is a Greek word meaning GREATNESS, which recognises each individual is important and the community has a responsibility to ensure that every young person is given an opportunity to develop their full potential. DOXA's programs are targeted at giving special attention to the needs of disadvantaged young people where they are denied the opportunity for full participation in the community.

DOXA receives no direct Government funding and funds its programs through:

- financial contributions from the DOXA Social Club; and
- donations, bequests and sponsorships from Trusts, organisations and individuals.

This Strategic Plan sets out the directions for DOXA from 2005-2008.



## Mission

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The mission of DOXA is:

***To create opportunities for disadvantaged young people***

***by***

***investing in programs that help them achieve their potential and meaningfully participate in the social and economic life of the community.***

Young people include those aged up to 24 years, although emphasis is given to young people aged 10-18 years.



## Objectives

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The objectives of DOXA are to:

1. fund programs and direct service provision which contribute to disadvantaged young people becoming independent, confident and active members of the community;
2. work in partnership with schools, community organisations, business and government to leverage positive changes for disadvantaged young people at a broad level across Victoria;
3. advocate for policy changes which will enable disadvantaged young people to more fully participate in the community; and
4. take a leadership role in the promotion of knowledge and practice that is known to improve the life chances of disadvantaged young people.



## Guiding Principles

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In working towards its mission, DOXA is guided by the following principles:

- appreciating the potential of all young people and respecting their **values, rights and dignity**;
- understanding and valuing the **contribution of young people** in the planning and implementation of programs;
- accepting that some young people will need **more assistance** than others;
- acknowledging that **education** is a key foundation to help young people reach their full potential;
- fostering a sense of belonging and strong and **meaningful connections** between young people and their family, school, peers and community;
- nurturing greater **resilience** in young people which will enable them to effectively deal with the issues that may confront them in different social settings and to respond well to a range of life events;
- focusing efforts on **critical transition points** in young people's pathways;



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- embracing **cultural, religious and social diversity** to contribute to a more tolerant and equitable society;
  - recognising the importance of **evidence based practice** and committing to the **evaluation** of funded programs; and
  - undertaking work in a **professional and transparent manner**, underpinned by good governance and ensuring a sustainable organisation to achieve its objectives.



## Conceptual Framework

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DOXA's work is underpinned by two seminal pieces of work - the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the Citizenship Model.

### **Universal Declaration on Human Rights**

The Universal Declaration on Human Rights was developed in 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Particularly relevant to DOXA are Article 25 (1) and Article 26 (1) which state:

*"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and wellbeing of [her or] himself and of [her or] his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood".*

*"Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit".*

These rights were reaffirmed for children in The Convention on the Rights of the Child (Articles 27-29) in 1989.



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## **Citizenship Model**

The Citizenship Model prioritises active participation by all members of the community, and recognizes that universal provision to meet basic needs in terms of health, education, housing, employment and standard of living is essential to enable and support such participation.

An important aspect of strengthening citizen participation is the principle of social justice which can be defined as the universal availability of opportunities and services which provide equitable outcomes for the diverse range of community needs, life situations and aspirations for all people. Four principles underpin social justice:

- Equity: meaning fairness in the distribution of social and economic resources
- Equality: meaning equal, effective and comprehensive civil, legal and industrial rights for all
- Access: meaning fair and equal access to services
- Participation: meaning the opportunity to participate fully in personal development, community life and decision-making

Also underpinning active citizenship is the notion of social inclusion; that is, providing the means and mechanisms for enhancing inclusion and thus participation by addressing those factors which impact on people's participation such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low income, poor housing, crime, ill health and family breakdown. These factors are often connected and mutually reinforcing, and the greatest risk of exclusion in mainstream society is among those with multiple disadvantages.



## Defining Disadvantage

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At DOXA we want to help ensure all young people have the same opportunity to flourish and live full and productive lives. Unfortunately many young people are subject to various forms of disadvantage that make them vulnerable to social problems, constrain their life choices, limit their potential and restrict their full participation in community life.

While disadvantage can take many shapes and there are no absolute definitions, DOXA is particularly concerned about young people who are themselves, or living in families or households, characterized by:

- Financial difficulties including unaffordability of some basic needs and consumer durables;
- Low educational attainment including illiteracy and early school leaving;
- Unemployment or underemployment;
- Stress on relationships;
- Poor health;
- Isolation including geographic and social;
- Disadvantageous housing conditions or homelessness; and
- Living in geographically disadvantaged areas.



## Government Policy Context

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No organisation operates in a vacuum and it is important to understand the policy context in which we work. There are both Commonwealth and State government policies which are relevant to DOXA including:

- ***Footprints to the future*** – which outlines the Commonwealth Government’s vision for young people’s transition from school to an independent livelihood, highlighting that investment in education, training and community support must be made to equip all young people with the capacity to participate in the social and economic life of their community.
- ***Respect. The Government’s vision for young people*** – which provides the State Government’s framework for policy and program development, and is centred around encouraging and enabling young people to participate in the fullest possible range of activities; creating the most effective pathways to employment and training; improving access to support services for young people; recognising the value of youth culture; and valuing and acknowledging the contributions of young people to our community.
- ***A Fairer Victoria. Creating opportunity and addressing disadvantage*** – which sets out action the State Government will take to improve access to services; reduce barriers to opportunities; strengthen assistance for disadvantaged groups and places; and improving ways of working with government.



## Profile of Young People

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Key statistics relating to young people include:

- At 30 June 2001 there were 3.5 million young people in Australia, accounting for 18% of the entire population. A total of 846,000 of these young people (24%) lived in Victoria.
- In May 2004 most (85%) of Australia's teenagers aged 15-19 years were actively engaged in either full-time study or full-time work. In Victoria, approximately 13% of young people aged 15-19 years are not in full-time education or full-time work.
- In 2003, 82% of Victorians aged 20-24 years had completed Year 12 or a post-school qualification.
- The unemployment rate for non-students without a completed upper secondary education was as high as 16% in 2001 compared with 7% for secondary school completers. In contrast, the unemployment rate for tertiary graduates was 2%.
- Between 1982 and 2002, the proportion of young people in full-time employment decreased from 40% to 16% for young people aged 15-19 years, and from 65% to 50% for young people aged 20-24 years. Over the same period, the proportion of young people employed part-time increased from 12% to 32% for 15-19 year olds, and from 8% to 23% for 20-24 years olds.



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- In 2002, the proportion of young people in Australia aged 15-19 years receiving the Youth Allowance was 23% of females and 19% of males.
  - In 2002 a little over 16,000 young people aged 15-17 years received the independent rate of the Youth Allowance. The most common reason for independence was serious family breakdown, with the majority (82%) of these being homeless.
  - The most common form of hardship for young people aged 15-24 years is not being able to pay their electricity, gas or telephone bills on time because of a shortage of money, with 19% of males and 24% of females having this type of experience. Approximately 8% of males and 9% of females aged 15-24 years had gone without meals because they were short of money.
  - While the precise number of homeless young people (i.e. if a person does not have access to safe, secure and stable housing) is difficult to ascertain, in 2001 26,000 young people aged 12-24 years were estimated to be homeless in Australia.
  - The detention rate for young people aged 10-17 years has tended to decline over the period 1981-2000 from a total of 1,351 detainees in 1981 to 671 detainees in 2000. Young males had rates of juvenile detention more than 8 times those of young women.
  - 50% of the Indigenous population is aged below 20 years reflective of high birth rates and the high mortality rates.



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- At 30 June 2001, the number of indigenous young people aged 12-24 years was estimated to be 117,000, about 3% of the total number of young people in Australia. A total of 7,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people live in Victoria.
  - Among indigenous persons aged 15-17 years and 18-24 years, the unemployment rate was around 15% higher than for non-indigenous persons of the same age – 32% and 27% respectively for indigenous young people compared to 16% and 13% for non-indigenous young people.
  - Indigenous students are less likely than all students to stay at school beyond the compulsory years. In 2001, the proportion of indigenous students continuing to Year 10 was 86% compared with 94% of all students, with only 36% of indigenous students continuing their studies to Year 12, compared with 73% for all students.
  - Completing Year 10 or 11 increases an indigenous person's chance of employment by 40%; completing Year 12 increases employment prospects by a further 13%; and having a post-secondary qualification increases employment prospects between 13-23%.
  - Indigenous students have a lower rate of literacy in comparison to the non-indigenous population, a lower level of attendance at each stage of schooling. Year 10 indigenous students are absent up to three times more often than non-indigenous students (22.5% compared with 7.5%).



## Key Activities 2005-2008

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Objective	Activities	Indicators
<p>To fund programs and direct service provision which contribute to disadvantaged young people becoming independent, confident and active members of the community</p>	<p>To provide an innovative, educational and enriching camp experience for young people whose life circumstances would otherwise preclude them from participating</p>	<p>Refurbishment and restructuring of the DOXA Malmsbury camp</p> <p>Marketing strategy implemented</p> <p>Achievement of industry benchmark occupancy rates (8,903 bednights per annum)</p> <p>Increase in DOXA urban camps to 25 per annum</p>
	<p>To provide a focused educational intervention in an alternative setting for young people aged 9-14 years who are experiencing difficulties in mainstream education</p>	<p>Full enrolment at DOXA West Melbourne</p> <p>Establishment and full enrolment at DOXA School Bendigo</p> <p>Increase in retention of participants in schooling to 15 years of age</p> <p>Bi-annual evaluation report</p> <p>Interest from alternative funding sources to support replication of model</p>



Objective	Activities	Indicators
<p>To fund programs and direct service provision which contribute to disadvantaged young people becoming independent, confident and active members of the community</p>	<p>To provide support, mentoring and work experience to disadvantaged young people during university studies</p>	<p>Successful graduation and employment of 20 cadets per annum</p> <p>Support of 60 corporate sponsors across a range of sectors per year</p> <p>Three well attended sponsor events held per annum</p> <p>Annual review of sponsor satisfaction</p> <p>Active involvement of HCP Alumni in DOXA activities</p>
	<p>To provide financial support to community based organisations undertaking projects which provide opportunities to disadvantaged young people</p>	<p>Establishment of a Community Small Grants Program</p> <p>Funding of up to 30 projects per year</p>
	<p>To support Rumbalara Football and Netball Club to operate as an effective organisation</p>	<p>Shift of RFNC to a more senior football league</p> <p>Continued funding of all key health and welfare programs</p> <p>Development of alternative revenue streams</p> <p>Positive example of an indigenous sporting club which can be replicated</p>



Objective	Activities	Indicators
To work in partnership with schools, community organisations, business and government to leverage positive changes for disadvantaged young people at a broad level across Victoria	To support the Back to School Program with the Sidney Myer Fund and the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal	Provision of 1,000 gift vouchers per year to disadvantaged young people across Victoria to assist their going back to school
	To support Victoria Police and the Department of Education and Training in providing alternative schooling to young people aged 14-18 who are at risk of becoming disengaged from mainstream schooling, through Operation Newstart Victoria	Increase in number of participants staying at school (or equivalent) for 12 months+ after program completion
	To work with the Victorian Business College and Southern Cross University to provide assistance to disadvantaged young people to undertake higher education studies and gain qualifications	100 disadvantaged students completing Certificate II in English and Career Presentation per annum 50 disadvantaged students completing a Diploma of Business (Marketing) per annum
	To provide support to Centacare to address the educational needs of refugee groups arriving from Horn of Africa	Increased attendance of Sudanese young people at the Western English Language School



Objective	Activities	Indicators
To work in partnership with schools, community organisations, business and government to leverage positive changes for disadvantaged young people at a broad level across Victoria	To establish a Community Mentoring Program with the Victorian Country Football League	<p>Training of mentors in 6 communities across Victoria per annum and active participation with mentees</p> <p>Increased education and sporting opportunities for disadvantaged young people who are mentored in the program</p> <p>Evaluation report on effectiveness of program</p>
	To pilot 'Earn to Learn' with Rumbalara Football and Netball Club	<p>Increased school retention of students participating in the program</p> <p>Development of an effective model which can be replicated by other interested indigenous communities</p>
	To identify other potential partners to jointly implement projects	Joint funding of one major initiative per annum
To advocate for policy changes which will enable disadvantaged young people to more fully participate in the community	To identify one key priority per year and actively advocate for positive changes	<p>Development and implementation of advocacy strategy</p> <p>Input into key committees and forums</p>



Objective	Activities	Indicators
To advocate for policy changes which will enable disadvantaged young people to more fully participate in the community	To raise awareness about young people's disadvantage and how these issues can be addressed	Input into key committees and forums Opinion pieces/comments published in media
To take a leadership role in the promotion of knowledge and practice that is known to improve the life chances of disadvantaged young people	To evaluate all major funded programs and promote findings	Publication of key findings reports Presentation of papers at conferences
	To build capacity to address the issues related to disadvantaged young people	Holding of annual 2 day summer school for the youth and philanthropic sectors on key themes related to disadvantaged young people Attendance at conferences
	To actively promote DOXA's programs	Development and implementation of communication strategy Re-development of website Dissemination of DOXA newsletters and other related materials Hosting of one major annual event showcasing DOXA Written history of DOXA completed and launched



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