

CHAPTER 23

JOB TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

You can't get a job if you got nowhere to sleep, you know... 'Cos if I got a job, you know, I could take pride in it. Turn up for work all neat and tidy:

They're good kids mostly. They really are. When you're 14 and 15, and you can't read or write very well, and have no place to live, and it's cold and you're hungry and you have no marketable skills, you market yourself:

INTRODUCTION

231 Young homeless people are not all unemployed. Some are still attending school while living in refuges, other accommodation services and boarding programs. The Inquiry was told of a young Timorese boy 'living under the bridge' near Darwin and going to school every day.' Some attend TAFE colleges and other training courses, while others have found employment.

232 Nevertheless, the majority are unemployed — at least in the sense that they do not have legitimate jobs. Of 273 homeless young people interviewed in the Illawarra region of New South Wales in 1985-86, only 6% were working and 1% were students.' A Perth survey of 210 young people likely to be at risk of homelessness found that one-quarter stated that they were then (1986) 'street kids' or had been in the past. About three-quarters of these 'street kids' (40) were early school leavers and the majority were unemployed. Almost one-third had left or lost jobs but 38% had never worked. They were mainly males aged 15 and 16.' A Brisbane youth accommodation service reported a substantial increase over the past two years in the proportion of referrals that was unemployed:

1979	61% unemployed
1980	66% unemployed
1981	68% unemployed
1982	75% unemployed
1983	67% unemployed
1984	66% unemployed
1985	68% unemployed
1986	80% unemployed
1987 (to Nov)	75% unemployed ^o

233 A Victorian survey of 60 youth services in the Barwon region over a five month period in 1986 found that, of 1,000 young people who made housing inquiries, 66% were unemployed.⁷ A similar proportion of young people seeking housing through welfare agencies in Ballarat, Victoria, were unemployed: 65%.⁸ A Hobart young women's shelter reported that 90% of residents were unemployed and most were probably unemployable.⁹

23.4 In O'Connor's study of 100 young homeless people, commissioned by the Inquiry, two-thirds (67) were unemployed. Ten were in full-time employment and one had part-time work.¹⁰ The Gold Coast Youth Service, Queensland, reported that most of the 1,500 young people assisted in 1987 were unemployed." Finally, in the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program national client data collection in 1987, 38% of all homeless people using SAAP services were receiving unemployment benefits while a further 32% were receiving no income whatsoever.¹²

235 The employment of children and young people illegally, however, should not be forgotten. Thus, for example, there are at least 8,500 homeless 12 to 15-year-olds, most of whom do not attend school and are not entitled to Federal income support, and who cannot legally be employed until they reach the age of 15. The Inquiry heard direct evidence of many 13 and 14-year-old children working as prostitutes

and/or strippers as their only means of survival. This matter of the exploitation of the labour of children is dealt with more fully in Chapter 5, The Experience of Homelessness.

23.6 Homelessness and unemployment are inextricably linked for most young people.

The problem of youth homelessness cannot be viewed in isolation but must be placed in the socio-economic crisis engulfing up to 25% of our young people, namely a restructuring economy unable to sustain full teenage employment...It is no coincidence that youth homelessness appeared simultaneously with the explosion in youth unemployment. Such is the paucity of income support that 16-20-year-olds out of home simply cannot afford accommodation."

23.7 While unemployed, there is little these young people can do about their homelessness. In Chapter 14, Income Support for Homeless Young People, we deal with the inadequacy of the income provided by the Job Search Allowance, even when supplemented by the Youth Homeless Allowance. Securing accommodation that is adequate and safe is virtually impossible for the majority of homeless young people. O'Conner found, in addition, that:

Loss of jobs precipitated incidents of homelessness for young people in all locations...When the young people had jobs and accommodation they coped and managed well. Without jobs they were propelled into homelessness due to poverty. The level of income support for unemployed youth who are homeless and the lack of cheap housing are central factors in the phenomenon of 'youth homelessness'."

While homeless, young people find it almost impossible to obtain employment. A number of the young people interviewed in O'Connor's study reported that they believed employers discriminate against young people who do not live at home.' Moreover:

The realities of the homeless lifestyle with its high mobility and the associated factors, such as lack of telephones, also works against the homeless obtaining employment."

23.8 In this chapter we consider the job training and employment strategies in place for young people and assess whether these strategies can be anticipated to have any significant impact on unemployment among young homeless people.

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS - FEDERAL

Policy

23.9 The following description of the Federal Government's education, employment and training package initiated in 1987 is taken from *Skills for Australia*, circulated by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training and the Minister for Employment Services and Youth Affairs:⁷ The policy focuses on the link between failure to complete secondary education and high unemployment' and that between lack of formal post-school qualifications and high unemployment' There is, therefore, an emphasis on improving school retention rates and the creation of additional tertiary places.'

23.10 More relevant to most homeless young people is the strengthened link between 'continuing income support and participation in work, training or job search assistance activities.'" The way in which this link was made was to halve the junior Unemployment Benefit (from \$50 per week to \$25 per week) so that it would become, both in name and in fact, a Job Search Allowance (JSA). The low level of benefit is intended 'to maximise the incentive for young people to either find work or undertake further education and training'.²² An additional incentive is the threat that JSA will be lost if the young recipient fails an 'activities test'. This test is additional, for JSA recipients only, to the 'work test' which all unemployment beneficiaries must satisfy. The work test is a test of attempts made to find work. The activities test obliges longer-term unemployed 16 and 17-year-olds to undertake training and education courses. Most satisfy the test by participating in CES courses as described below.

23.11 The Government's insistence that young job searchers either obtain employment or undertake training was complemented by the introduction of the Australian Traineeship System together with 'continuing support for the apprenticeship system'." In addition, JSA recipients were to be provided with 'job-search training' and 'more help to move into workforce training programs'.²⁴ The previously

applicable additional incentive of an extra \$15 per week payable to those undertaking short-term training courses was abolished, however, because it was considered 'anomalous'."

23.12 The focus of the Federal Government's response to youth unemployment, therefore, has been primarily on job training rather than job creation. As part of this new emphasis, the Community Employment Program (CEP) and Jobstart (a wage subsidy scheme) were cut back in 1987 and the CEP has now been phased out. The Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS) has been cut back (as described in para 23.25). The focus on training has two main thrusts: first, to encourage young people to stay at school longer and, second, to open up training schemes directed to specific labour market goals." 60.5% of 16 and 17-year-olds, for example, are now involved in full-time education. (A further 29.3% have full-time jobs)." Year 12 retention rates at Australian schools had already risen from 34.8% in 1981 to 53.1% in 1987." While 'studies have shown that the earlier a person leaves school, the higher their risk of becoming unemployed and remaining unemployed longer', it was submitted to the Inquiry that, 'for those students not intent on tertiary studies, and particularly those who do not stay until the end of year 12, longer schooling has dubious benefits'. In addition, research conducted by the Bureau of Labour Market Research between 1981 and 1984 revealed that 'employment-based forms of assistance for unemployed young people are superior to those that are education-based'."

23.13 It was submitted to the Inquiry, that 'both job creation and job training must be part of a co-ordinated response to youth unemployment'. However, it has also been argued that 'any solutions to youth's labour market problems are unlikely to be found in economic growth' because 'future economic growth...offers little prospect of creating additional full-time jobs for teenagers'."

More and more emphasis is being placed on shuffling the deck, trying to boost self-esteem, increase job search skills, job training, the introduction of activity tests and so on. Yet the reality is that our economy has changed...Those who are suffering the most in that, who have been shut out of the job market and career paths that have often been traditionally considered [theirs] are young people. They are the ones who have been scapegoated..."

Training Programs

23.14 **The Australian Traineeship System**, which targets 16 to 18-year-olds who have left secondary education, was initiated in 1985 and a target of 80,000 traineeships by 1988 was set. By August 1987, fewer than 11,500 traineeships had been created due, it was claimed, to resistance by key employers and unions? A traineeship is similar to an apprenticeship in that it 'involves a combination of structured on- and off-the-job training, and contracts between employers and trainees'."

23.15 Three-quarters of the trainees to August 1987 were 16 to 18-year-olds who had not completed secondary school." Only 15% were assessed as disadvantaged in the labour market by reason of Aboriginality, disability, long-term unemployment and the like." These disadvantaged people are offered additional 'assistance as follows:

- the assistance to employers for on-the-job training is doubled to \$2,000;
- pre-traineeship courses are provided to increase skill levels and enable applicants to be more competitive in seeking traineeship places."

23.16 **The Job Search Training Program** targets those unable to secure apprenticeships or traineeships and has two elements: Job Clubs and Job Search Training. 40 Job Clubs were piloted in Commonwealth Employment Service offices in 1987-88 and there will be 74 in operation by February 1989. 12,000 CES registrants participated in Job Clubs in 1987-88, 43% of whom were 15 to 19-year-olds and 65% of whom were unemployed for six months or more. The program is an intensive three-week training course with practical experience in job search skills. The Inquiry has been advised that initial evaluations of the Job Clubs indicate that they have been extremely successful with 60% of participants obtaining work."

23.17 Job Search Training also targets the young long-term unemployed but utilises community bodies, TAPE colleges and CYSS projects to offer shorter-term (17-20 hours) job search training." In 1987-88 10,000 people participated in Job Search Training, 90% of whom were 16 to 19-year-olds and 50% of whom had been unemployed for six months or more."

23.18 Until 1988, the above programs were supplemented by the Youth Training Program which offered short-term vocational training courses for unemployed young people. This program assisted 13,000 young people (16-20 years) in locally developed courses in 1987-88." In 1988 the Program was amalgamated with the Adult Training Program and the new initiative is called **Jobtrain**. The 1988-89 target for this program is 34,000 participants, 50% of whom are expected to be 16 to 20-year-olds.

Access by Homeless Young People

23.19 It was submitted to the Inquiry, however, that:

...in the current climate of economic 'efficiency', teenage labour market programs are increasingly targeting the 'cream' of the unemployed and leaving those most disadvantaged out in the cold.

...Moreover, existing labour market training [does] not offer the opportunities to overcome labour market disadvantages suffered by early school leavers."

Indeed, it has been argued that:

Most schemes operate on the supply side of the problem by attempting to create favourable changes in the characteristics of the unemployed. To the extent that they work at all, it is likely that they result in simply re-ordering the unemployment queue.'

23.20 The Inquiry was told that homeless young people are generally unable to access most such programs.

How can they get themselves back into the education system or pick up training opportunities if they have not even got an address to put on an application for a job or...a phone for people to ring them up to come to an interview or...a shower to be able to get themselves dressed to go to their training, education or employment anyway?"

...many young people have no basic housing and hence have no ability whatsoever to participate in those programs. When one potentially is moving every fortnight or more frequently, there is just no option whatsoever to undertake some sort of training which would improve the capacity to obtain a job."

For homeless young people, the main problem is that of the programs themselves:

Employment and training provide little access to transient or disturbed young people. Programs are structured in a manner which refuses to acknowledge the life-style and needs of homeless young people."

23.21 Another significant shortcoming of employment training programs developed by governments is that 15-year-olds, although entitled to leave school (except in Tasmania), are not eligible." As discussed in Chapter 6, The Incidence of Youth Homelessness, there is now a substantial number of homeless children in the 12 to 15 year age group.

Community based Training

23.22 The recent changes will retain the community-based youth employment and training schemes." It is the Inquiry's view, based on the evidence of many witnesses, that community-based schemes are most capable of being geared to the needs of young homeless people. CYSS, for example, 'aim[ed] to encourage communities to assist local unemployed people aged 15 to 24 years to develop their work and personal skills'.⁵⁰ In 1986-87, 353 CYSS projects were funded.

23.23 Possibly even more flexible is the Community Training Program under which grants are made to community organisations or local government authorities to provide structured training, work experience and related services to unemployed people who are most disadvantaged in the labour market. 63 organisations were funded in 1986-87.⁵¹

23.24 Part of the new policy launched in 1987 was to amalgamate these community-based programs into one: to be known as 'SkillShare'.⁵² The objective of SkillShare is:

...to enable long-term unemployed people, particularly those unemployed for 12 months or more, and other most disadvantaged unemployed people, to obtain and retain employment or to proceed to further education or training through the provision of skills training, employment-related assistance (including personal support and referral) and enterprise activities by groups in the community with demonstrated capacity to deliver such services."

Included in the SkillShare target group are people unemployed for 12 months or more and:

...young people who are 'at risk', such as the homeless, wards of State, offenders, ex-offenders, those from single parent families or families reliant on pensions or benefits, and those who have left school prior to the successful completion of Year 10."

23.25 One witness told the Inquiry that:

...CYSS has traditionally attracted transient youth to its service. It has had the capacity to deal with a variety of support issues that must be addressed before the employment and training options are deemed relevant."

The recent changes, however, make this program less relevant to homeless and transient young people:

The current governmental thrust...demand[s] measureable employment and training outcomes for all activities undertaken by CYSS centres. Previous guidelines stated one of the objectives was to develop self-reliance in participants during periods of unemployment. This was taken out of the CYSS guidelines in 1986. We are now encouraged not to undertake any welfare components in our programs, therefore not undertake long-term support of unemployed young people but short-term involvement with a strong emphasis on skills training and access to employment or education and training options."

Indeed, the Inquiry was told that two CYSS centres in Melbourne which had attracted mainly transient young people were closed during 1987 because they did not sufficiently emphasise a labour market orientation."

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS STATES

23.26 Some States, notably Victoria, South Australia and Queensland, have developed special programs for young unemployed people to supplement Federal programs. These efforts include a focus on the particularly disadvantaged young people largely neglected by Federal programs. They too, however, have had limited success.

Victoria

23.27 In 1985 the Victorian Government made a 'commitment [the 'Youth Guarantee] to provide by the end of its [then] current term of office an option of full-time work, training, education or some combination of the three for all Victorians aged 15 to 18." At the time (May 1985), 4.6% of Victorians aged 15-18 years were unemployed and not attending an educational institution — a significant reduction in the 1983 figure of 9.2%.⁵⁹ By September 1987, only 3.9% were in this category and the proportion attending an educational institution had risen from 74.2% to 77%.⁶⁰

23.28 One significant achievement of the 'Youth Guarantee' was the increase in the number of full-time jobs for teenagers from 102,300 in May 1983 to 115,700 in May 1987 — a period during which national full-time teenage jobs dropped by 21,300." The Youth Guarantee focused largely on private employers, directing an advertising campaign to this group to enhance the image of young people. In many other ways, the Victorian strategy is similar to that of the Federal Government (which it pre-dated by two years): expanded apprenticeship and traineeship places, emphasis on school retention and the creation of additional tertiary education places.' An additional aspect in Victoria, however, is the emphasis throughout on providing information to young people.

23.29 Long-term unemployed young people are the focus of the Youth Guarantee Employment Counsellor and Placement Service established in 1987. Each young person contacting the service (there were over 1,800 active participants in November 1987) is assigned to a counsellor who assists him or her with job training and/or education placement and post-placement support." The number of participants, however, was only about 30% of long-term unemployed teenage CES registrants and only about one-fifth of long-term unemployed in ABS figures. Of clients to November 1987, 60% had been placed — most of them in jobs, apprenticeships or traineeships." No research has been done on the extent to which these placements are retained. One commentator has expressed doubts about the efficacy of this Service, suggesting that it may 'mask the extent of long-term unemployment'."

23.30 Disturbingly, in the context of this Inquiry, it would appear that there have been limited benefits for young people who are at risk of becoming homeless or are actually homeless:

The majority of our placements...are achieved with people with healthy networks — either the schooling, the background, the transport or the housing. We certainly keep in mind to service the more difficult groups. It's very time-consuming and uses our resources to the limit."

After giving evidence to the Inquiry, however, this witness determined to target more homeless young people and has reported some success in placing such clients in employment.

23.31 Another target group in Victoria are young people subject to court orders. The Employment Access Program was established in 1985, within the Victorian Department of Community Services, to increase and maintain long-term employment and training opportunities and outcomes for these young people. The target group annually comprises about 4,900 young people subject to protective or corrective orders who are supervised by the Department. The unemployment rate among these young people is about 60%. Employment Access Officers work directly with young people referred, assisting them with employment and training preparation, placement and post-placement support. From its inception to the end of June 1988, the Program had dealt with 1,545 young people, almost one-half (46.5%) of whom were placed in long-term employment. Just over one-quarter (26.7%), however, were placed only in short-term work, training, or work experience/practice. Available figures indicate that almost 300 of those referred were not assisted at all."

23.32 Two of Victoria's programs, therefore, are specifically directed at two groups — long-term unemployed and welfare department clients — identified by the Inquiry as at risk of becoming homeless. As noted above, however, it is difficult to assess what impact these programs have had. Available figures indicate that they have incorporated only about one-quarter of the young people in the target groups and that fewer than 20% of target group members have been placed in employment or training. The proportion of those who have derived long-term benefits is unknown at this stage.

South Australia

23.33 South Australia established an Office of Employment and Training in 1986 with 'a major thrust towards increasing the job prospects of young people'." The program targeting those most disadvantaged in the labour market, particularly those aged 15 to 17 years, is the **Youth Employment Program**. Local government authorities and community groups apply to sponsor a project of community benefit. The project is then undertaken, usually, by a team of about 15 young people supervised by three adult workers and a project manager. Participants spend about 40% of the project time on vocational and life skills training." The Office provides the sponsor with salaries for all participants plus administration and training budgets. The sponsors provide all necessary work materials and organise the work and training program."

2334 The Office also runs the **TAFE Equity Program for Young People**, targeting disadvantaged 15 to 24-year-olds: those who are long-term unemployed, from isolated areas, Aboriginal, or who have a disability. Vocational orientation and preparation courses are offered as well as skill enhancement courses. However, there is no assistance offered in obtaining work at the conclusion of the nine-week course:¹¹

Queensland

23.35 Queensland established its **Commitment to Youth** program at the beginning of 1988, devoting to it \$11 million over the first two years. This program targets 15 to 18-year-olds unemployed for six months or more and involves 'creating additional training positions in the public service and private sector, together with extra training places in...TAFE colleges, private training organisations and community schemes'.⁷² The Inquiry received no evidence as to the success or otherwise of this program.

COMMUNITY-BASED TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR HOMELESS YOUNG PEOPLE

23.36 The submission to the Inquiry from Barnardo's Australia argued that being without a home is only one aspect of youth homelessness. Policy should address the provision of adequate counselling, social support and training to ensure eventual economic independence as well as job opportunities' in addition to accommodation." It was recommended to the Inquiry that programs will only be successful for homeless and at risk groups if:

...the particular needs of disadvantaged, low income, working class and homeless young people are taken into account...We have to think about the particular needs of homeless young people and we have to deal with those basics of the provision of adequate long-term housing that is secure and the provision of an adequate income that is actually a livable amount of money before those young people are ever going to be able to access other opportunities."

It was also suggested that accommodation, training and employment services need to be integrated if they are to serve the needs of homeless young people adequately. The Inquiry was told of a few services which take this approach.

23.37 Logan City: A community-based multi-faceted youth service in Logan City near Brisbane incorporates four training and employment projects for unemployed young residents of the area among its 16 accommodation support programs. Youth employment training courses run for six weeks with the aim of preparing young people for employment. A youth employment support group meets weekly offering graduates of the above courses, as well as others, an opportunity to gain support and discuss problems they may be having in the workforce. The service also runs a catering business, now nearly self-sufficient, providing lunch to staff of Logan City Council. Young staff are trained in catering and paid a small amount. Finally, there is a poster group which, it is hoped, will soon begin to generate money as well as training young people in the creation and production of posters." (The Logan City program is detailed in full in Chapter 18, Accommodation Services.)

2338 House of the Rock: An innovative South Australian community program was also described in evidence to the Inquiry. This program targets those young people who are homeless and unable to meet the criteria for apprenticeships and traineeships. The program avoids being 'institutionalised' and runs instead like a family situation:

Our farm is an ordinary farmhouse. We only take five youths in the program at one time and we try to work as a family would. They have a say in how the place is run; they have a say in the duties they have to do like the washing up, the making of beds and things like that and they have residents' meetings to tell us if things are going right or wrong or to air their views."

Referrals to the program are made by youth refuges, the Department of Community Welfare and other sources, although the young person is required to make a personal commitment before being accepted.

In each 12 months we run two courses, each lasting for a period of 20 weeks and additional time up to three to four weeks are given at the end of each course for residents to gain employment and move into alternative accommodation. The program objectives are to prepare youth to enter or re-enter the workforce...we use certain basic skills such as welding, carpentry, fencing, care of animals, use of tools and machinery and even driving. This is coupled with a living skills program which includes basic cookery, budgeting, living in the community, hygiene and other abilities to cope with living in society. We also do a sexual awareness seminar and drugs and alcohol."

23.39 An important part of the program is the assistance with job placement and post-placement support which follows.

At the end of the course arrangements we do help to place them in jobs according to their likes. Not everyone wants to go and work on a farm or a station. There are youth who want to return to the city environment and we make daily visits to the Commonwealth Employment Service who...have given us a lot of co-operation. We look at daily newspapers and we have got a network of people around the locality who keep their ears to the ground for jobs that might be suitable...

Once they have left us we still give a support program up to six months. We have at the moment a two-bedroom home in which we are able to place those who want to...work in the city until such time as they can find housing that is suitable to themselves."

23.40 Summerleas Farm: One successful community-based program, which the Inquiry inspected, operates on a farm near Hobart, Tasmania. Summerleas Farm is described as a 'holistic model' in that it is active and self-help in nature and is a co-operative venture. "The young people who live at the farm manage and control their own asset." The members receive Job Search Allowance or Unemployment Benefits which are supplemented by profits from four enterprise projects on the farm: wool, honey, wood fuel and horticulture products are produced and marketed."

The majority of members live on the property in three comfortable and modern log cabins. These are leased to members with normal tenancy conditions applying. Where necessary they are supported with assistance in life skills: budgeting, health and hygiene, house maintenance, literacy and inter-personal skills. ..A co-operative shop has also been set up which purchases bulk food and consumer items and sells to members on a daily basis.'

Although this program does not have the goal of job placement, members who do find jobs receive the support of the community in that they do not have to relinquish their lease and co-operative contract."

23.41 The goal of the project is to provide training in rural-based skills: to date bee keeping, chain saw safety and maintenance, tractor driving and maintenance, bushcraft, fencing, organic gardening, wool production, spinning and weaving, stone and berry fruit growing, and free range chicken farming have been covered. In the first three years of operation, to November 1987, more than 150 young people (15-25 years) had lived at Summerleas and shared in the co-operative. Upon leaving the farm:

- 29 obtained full-time employment;
- 32 obtained casual employment;
- 18 went into further education courses;
- 19 established their own enterprises, alone or with others;
- 14 remained unemployed;
- 12 returned to the farm;
- 6 entered mental health institutions; and
- 4 went to prison."

23.42 The Inquiry was surprised to hear evidence from the co-ordinator of this program that no government funding support is received because the operation is considered to be outside the SAAP guidelines and, indeed, that there had been attempts to close the farm down." In the Inquiry's view (based not only on the evidence presented but also on an on-site inspection), this indicates an urgent need to reassess the funding guidelines in force to ensure that they are administered flexibly, intelligently and in a way which meets the best interests of the young people intended to be served.

23.43 Crossroads: The Inquiry also visited the Salvation Army's Crossroads Youth Network in Melbourne and was most impressed by their two training and employment programs — 'Western Suburbs Employment 2000' and the 'Youth Industries Program'. Western Suburbs Employment 2000 was originally funded under the Federal Community Training Program and is now funded under SkillShare. The program has been successful in assisting long-term unemployed young people, with about half of

those attending being also homeless. The training courses include secretarial and office skills, computer skills, furniture restoration and polishing, and catering. Crossroads considers its 70% success rate with this program to be excellent, taking into account the high proportion of disadvantaged young people among the participants. A Crossroads worker told the Inquiry that only the more motivated homeless young people were attracted to the program and that the provision of a financial inducement, such as a training subsidy, would probably be necessary in order to attract a greater proportion of homeless young people.

23.44 The Youth Industries Program was designed by Crossroads as a training and employment program for chronically homeless young people. This program was originally under Community Employment Program auspices, which provided funding for supervisors and award wages for employees. The Salvation Army also funded a teacher whose task was to pick up education issues such as literacy and numeracy and to use the work environment to provide motivation for the learning process. Participants could also be enrolled in TAFE and Adult Education courses. The Youth Industries Program runs a number of second-hand goods stores which provide homeless young people with both full-time and part-time employment as cleaners, sales assistants and truck drivers. A young person working, for example, as a cleaner might decide to do sales work and in the process be motivated to improve his or her numeracy skills with help from the teacher. Unfortunately, the Youth Industries Program has been scaled down substantially since the abandonment of the CEP program."

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

23.45 The Federal Government's Youth Social Justice Policy recognises that disadvantaged youth are not able to benefit fully from government programs, particularly job training and employment programs."

...there are still too many decent young Australians who face hardships, poverty and struggle and feel powerless about their futures."

The Government's commitment to social justice for Australian youth is particularly aimed at securing socially useful employment for all those who wish to work."

23.46 The Inquiry found that homelessness and unemployment are inextricably linked for most young people and that, while they are homeless, young people find it almost impossible to obtain and maintain employment. There is a need, therefore, for an integrated approach to the provision of accommodation and job training and employment. (This is a matter we discuss further in Chapter 24, A Youth Accommodation and Support Services Program.)

23.47 The primary focus of the Federal Government's response to youth unemployment has been on job training — with the twin objectives of increasing school retention rates and augmenting training schemes directed to specific labour market goals.

RECOMMENDATION 23.1

- **The Inquiry recommends that both job creation and job training should be part of a co-ordinated response to assisting homeless youth.**

23.48 Moreover, evidence to the Inquiry strongly suggested that current labour market programs are assisting the 'cream' of unemployed young people and largely bypassing those who are most disadvantaged. The Inquiry recognises that young homeless people are *included* in the SkillShare target group. Evidence to the Inquiry established, however, that most homeless young people are so disadvantaged that they are unable to benefit from this program. Homeless children are also not being adequately included in other Federal and State employment training programs. Even pre-traineeship schemes are unlikely to incorporate them. Several current community-based schemes are innovative and effective. However, the numbers assisted are small compared to the need.

RECOMMENDATION 23.2

- **The Inquiry recommends that a special assistance program for 'particularly disadvantaged' unemployed young people be implemented in accordance with the following guidelines:**

- the 'particularly disadvantaged' should be defined to include young people who are or have been homeless, or are at serious risk of becoming homeless;
- community-based organisations providing services to homeless youth and representatives of the business community should be actively involved in the development of the program;
- local advisory groups to oversee the implementation of this program should be established by Commonwealth Employment Service zone offices and should include representatives of relevant government agencies, local agencies working with homeless youth and the local business sector;
- individual community-based organisations should be funded under this program both to undertake specific employment and training programs and to provide support services, counselling and referral services to participants and potential participants; and
- teachers should be seconded to this program from State and Territory Education Departments to provide educational support services, such as numeracy and literacy training, and to assess the suitability of TAFE and other complementary courses.

23.49 While this program could be a component part of SkillShare, the Inquiry is strongly of the view that special mechanisms are needed to assist homeless young people. It is vital that these mechanisms utilise the experience, sensitivity and commitment of community-based organisations and non-government welfare agencies which have won the trust and confidence of homeless children and young people. There is also a central role for the local business sector, which should be strongly encouraged to become involved.

RECOMMENDATION 23.3

- The Inquiry recommends that this intensive program incorporate a commitment to continuity — so that services are provided for each participant through all stages of training readiness, training and employment readiness programs. Ultimately, a job should be provided for each participant. To facilitate this, a quota should be set for homeless/formerly homeless children and young people in all pre-traineeship programs commissioned..

RECOMMENDATION 23.4

- To enhance the chances of success for each participant, the following must be observed:
 - secure, affordable accommodation must be provided for each participant; and
 - wages paid should be sufficient to enable participants to live independently.

Notes

1. Richard, I. O'Connor, *Most of us have got a lot to say and we know what we are talking about: Children's and Young People's Experiences of Homelessness* (1988) at 82.
2. Father Bruce Ritter, founder of 'Covenant House' for homeless children in the United States, writing in *Sometimes God has a kid's face* (Covenant House, 1988). Covenant House currently cares for 25,000 homeless children each year. Father Ritter started the program almost 20 years ago.
3. Anon., *Transcript* at 1690.
4. S.146, Coalition on Employment (NSW), at 1.
5. S. Gokhale, *Streetkids in Perth Inner City: Main Features and Comparisons* (1986) at 3-4.
6. S.11, Teen Challenge Brisbane, at 11.
7. J. Cooke, Barwon Youth Accommodation Committee (Vic), *Transcript* at 1195, 1202.
8. S.97, *Youth Housing Needs in the Ballarat Area*, at 30.
9. K. Robinson, Annie Kenney Young Women's Shelter Hobart, *Transcript* at 1506.
10. O'Connor, *op cit*, at 25.
11. G. King, Gold Coast Youth Service (Qld), *Transcript* at 366.
12. R. Moss, Red Cross Society Adelaide, *Transcript* at 1282.
13. T. Moore, Developmental Youth Services Association (NSW), *Transcript* at 60.
14. O'Connor, *op cit*. at 89.
15. *Id*, at 158.
16. *Ibid*.
17. (AGPS, 1987).
18. *Skills for Australia*, at 27,40.
19. */d*, at 15.
20. *Id*, at 44.
21. *Id*, at 17.
22. *Id*, at 44.
23. *Ibid*.
24. *Id*, at 45.
25. *Id*, at 46.
26. S.146, Coalition on Employment (NSW), at 14.
27. S.147, Brotherhood of St Laurence (Vic), at 1.
28. R. Eckersley, *Casualties of Change* (Commission for the Future, 1988) at 25.
29. S.146, Coalition on Employment (NSW), at 14.
30. S. Rimmer, 'Long-Term Youth Unemployment, Training Programs, and the "Youth Guarantee" (1988) 7(2) *Bulletin of the National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies* 7, at 9.
31. S.146, Coalition on Employment (NSW), at 16.
32. Eckersley, *op cit*, at 30, citing R. Sweet 'Unemployment and Adolescent Health', Paper presented at Seminar on Health in Adolescence (Sydney, April 1985).
33. K. Ferdinand, Fusion Australia Launceston (Tas), *Transcript* at 1529 (emphasis added).
34. *Skills for Australia, op cit*. at 48.
35. *Ibid*.
36. *Id*, at 50.
37. *Id*, at 52.
38. *Id*, at 50, 52.
39. Information provided by Department of Employment, Education and Training.
40. *Skills for Australia, op cit*, at 53-54.
41. *Id*, at 54.

42. *Id.*, at 54-55.
43. S.146, Coalition on Employment (NSW), at 15-16.
44. Rimmer, *op cit.* at 11.
45. M. O'Neil, National Youth Coalition for Housing, *Transcript* at 20-21.
46. R. Johnston, National Shelter, *Transcript* at 577.
47. G. McLimont, Homeless Persons' Council (Vic), *Transcript* at 957.
48. K. Walker, Streetwork Project (Vic), *Transcript* at 982.
49. *Skills for Australia, op cit.*, at 55.
50. *Id.*, at 89.
51. *Ibid.*
52. *Id.*, at 90.
53. Cwth Department of Employment, Education and Training, *Towards One Program* (1988) at 12.
54. *Id.*, at 15.
55. J. Slater, Doveton Community Youth Support Scheme (Vic), *Transcript* at 1164.
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*
58. *The Youth Guarantee - A Progress Report, 1987*, at 1.
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Summary of Youth Guarantee Achievements-May 1988*, at 1.
62. *Id.*, at 1-2.
63. *The Youth Guarantee -A Progress Report, 1987, op cit.* at 5.
64. Rimmer, *op cit.*, at 10.
65. *Id.*, at 11.
66. C. Jennings, Victorian Youth Employment Development Office, *Transcript* at 1247.
67. *Employment Access Program (EAP)- Overview* (nd) at 2.
68. SA Office of Employment and Training, *Training for Employment* (1988) at 3..
69. *Id.*, at 41-42.
70. *Id.*, at 42.
71. SA Office of Employment and Training, *From Learning to Earning.*
72. Qld Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training, *Project 'Pay Packet'* (nd) at 1.
73. S.64, Barnardo's Australia, at I.
74. M. O'Neil, National Youth Coalition for Housing, *Transcript* at 21.
75. P. Searle, Youth and Family Service Centre (Old), *Transcript* at 311.
76. N. Scrimshaw, House of the Rock Inc. (SA), *Transcript* at 1380.
77. *Id.*, at 1381-1382.
78. *Id.*, at 1382.
79. J. Punch, 'Summerleas Farm: An Alternative Labour Market Model for the Young Unemployed' (1987) 6(4) *Bulletin of the National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies* 12, at 13.
80. *Ibid.*
81. *Ibid.*
82. *Ibid.*
83. *Id.*, at 14.
84. J. Punch, *Transcript* at 1477.
85. Salvation Army Crossroads Youth Project, *Youth Services Documentation and Promotion Project* (nd).

86. The Hon Peter Duncan MP, 'Social Justice for Australian Youth', Paper presented to Youth Affairs Council of Australia Congress (Canberra, October 1988) at 10.
87. *Ibid.*
88. *Id.*, at 2.

