



Projections
Issue No 3, November 2001

Projections is the quarterly newsletter of **Project i**.
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/projecti>

Project i is one of the first, long-term studies ever conducted in Australia with homeless young people. It will be tracking the path of 240 newly homeless young people, aged between 12 and 20, over three years. **We are interested in finding out how their pathways** into and out of homelessness **are affected by service delivery**, and will interview them up to eight times over three years. One-off interviews will also be conducted with 600 longer-term homeless young people. We hope that this research will inform policy and provide valuable information on the best way to deliver services to young people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness. It is funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, and conducted by the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society at La Trobe University, in partnership with the Center for Community Health at the University of California, Los Angeles. **Project i** is also conducting surveys with service providers and workers within the homeless sector. It will review local, state and federal government policies that impact upon homeless young people. Ultimately, the Melbourne and Los Angeles studies will make comparisons between different models of service delivery in the two cities.

Project i Community Reports and Papers

Our first minor report, ***Project i Broadsheet # 1 – Service Provision***, was released in September and was widely distributed around Melbourne (over 400 copies sent out) and was included as an insert in the national mail out of *Parity* (Council to Homeless Persons). The *Broadsheet*, which has created a lot of interest, may also be downloaded free of charge from our web site.

Our second report, ***Project i Broadsheet # 2 - Pathways into Youth Homelessness*** will be released in late November. This *Broadsheet* will examine the reasons why homeless young people leave home and will compare the reasons given by homeless young people with those of people working with them.

Project i Broadsheet # 3, to be released in January 2002, will report further on issues of service provision to homeless young people, including the types of services provided to homeless young people, barriers to service provision, issues facing young people using the services and networking.

The first academic paper on the Service Providers Survey (conducted in June 2000) has been accepted for publication. The paper entitled 'Providing services to homeless young people in Melbourne' will be published in *Youth Studies Australia*. The second paper on the reasons why homeless young people leave home will be submitted for publication in late November, 2001.

Update on interviews with homeless young people

As of the 20th of November, **Project i** has conducted 367 interviews—275 with experienced homeless young people (HYP) and 92 with newly HYP. The research has also conducted 37—3month, 29— 6month and 3 —12month follow up interviews with NHYP.

Project i is still trying to interview as many newly homeless young people as possible and continues to request assistance from workers within services to refer young people to the research (**free call 1800 676 100**).

Project i's criteria for 'newly' homeless young people is out of home from 2 days to 6 months.

If service providers and workers have a NHYP who is interested in being interviewed we have found that the greatest chance we have of interviewing them is if they telephone us while they are still with the worker (NHYP rarely phone at a later date). Our recruitment of newly homeless young people will soon stop so **please makes sure that young people from your area and service type are represented in this important research.**

Interviews with Service Providers

Project i recently began conducting 1-2 hour open ended, semi structured interviews with a mix of workers, managers and coordinators from a variety of services in the Housing, Mental Health, Juvenile Justice, and Child Protection sectors. We will also interview some people working in preventative and family mediation programs and some Centrelink workers. A total of 50 workers will be interviewed before February 2002. Service Providers will be invited to share their knowledge and understanding of the issues confronting homeless young people and the factors affecting optimal service provision. They will also be asked about their work experience with homeless young people and their ideas about home, homelessness and belonging.

Web Site

The **Project i** web site, that went live in 2000, is being further developed. It was initially designed to provide background information on **Project i**, the research team, and to provide research updates. In that we see the research as a collaborative undertaking between **Project i**, homeless young people, service providers, and other interested stakeholders, it is important that our findings are freely accessible. For this reason, all research reports will be also posted on the site and may be downloaded free of charge. If permission is given from the publishers, academic papers on the research will also be posted on the site. We welcome any feedback on the web site.

We are presently slowly developing a 'youth access page' to encourage young people to use the site as a source of information and as a way of keeping contact with the young people we want to interview again. At the moment the page lists some free meals services, food van sites and places around Melbourne where young people can access material aid. If anyone knows any services that could be added to the list, please let us know. The next information we will post on the page will be places where young people can access the internet free of charge and it would be a great help to us if you could also let us know of the services in your area that provide free access so we can pass it on to young people (over 70% of young people we have interviewed have used the internet and 40% have an email address).

Staff news

In October, **Project i** trained three new interviewers to join the team to replace Jen (who has moved interstate) and Annie (who is now working at Frontyard). Vickie, Liz and Tracey started interviewing in the first week of November and all have valuable experience working in the sector. Shelley Mallet, Project i Manager, is on maternity leave until January 2002 after the birth of her second child (Lilly) in September.

Further information:

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