

Queensland Families: Future Directions

**Queensland the Smart State: Education and Training
Reforms for the Future**

**Additional Support Services for Young People –
Youth Support Coordinators**

**Background Information Paper for the
Youth Support Coordinator Initiative
2004/2005**



**Additional Support Services for Young People –
Youth Support Coordinators**

**Background Information Paper for Funding Applicants,
Schools and Training Providers
2004/2005**

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this information paper is to inform key personnel working in State schools, non-Government schools, TAFE Institutes and other training providers of the new Youth Support Coordinator initiative. The paper also provides background information to funding applicants.

2. Overview of the New Funding for Additional Support Services for Young People – Youth Support Coordinator Initiative

The Queensland Government is creating one of the most flexible education and training systems in Australia to ensure that young people are equipped to lead the way into the future. The Government's *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* White Paper released in 2002 established the Government's commitment to ensuring that all young people complete Year 10 and then go onto the new Senior Phase of Learning. At the completion of the Senior Phase of Learning each young person will gain at least a Senior Certificate or a Certificate III vocational qualification (a competency based vocational qualification issued through TAFE or registered training providers).

In addition, the vision statement for the Department of Communities *Queensland Families: Future Directions* highlights this Government's commitment to supporting young people and families at risk. The Government has identified targeted prevention and early intervention as priority activities for the Department of Communities.

The Government recognises that some young people at risk of disengaging from learning require additional personal support to assist them to complete their education and training. In response the Department of Communities, in collaboration with Education Queensland, has allocated up to \$18.6M over three years to employ 100 Youth Support Coordinators. A further \$21.7M will be provided to:

- support State and non-State schooling sectors and TAFE Institutes for the coordination of vocational education and training (VET) and enhancement of career guidance and counselling;
- establish a grants program to support trials of local initiatives to improve opportunities in the Senior Phase of Learning for all young people; and
- support the Queensland Studies Authority to implement reforms to the Senior Certificate and design a new systems to support and monitor the progress of young people.

The Youth Support Coordinators are employed by eligible community organisations to provide prevention and early intervention services to a network of local State schools, non-Government schools, TAFE Institutes and training providers. The Youth Support Coordinators work directly with young people and their families as well as with the broader school and training sector and local community to increase the support available to young people so that they can move successfully through the Senior Phase of Learning.

3. Background to the Youth Support Coordinator Initiative

3.1 *Education and Training Reforms for the Future*

The Queensland Government's *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* (ETRF) White Paper released in 2002 established the Government's commitment to ensuring that all young people aged 15-17 complete the Senior Phase of Learning.

National and international research shows that completing Year 12 or its equivalent gives young people greater opportunities in further education and employment well into their adult lives. Today, approximately 10,000 Queenslanders aged 15-17 years are not in school, training or any kind of substantial work. The Government is responding to this challenge by establishing a more flexible and supportive education and training system that will assist young people to remain engaged or to

re-engage with worthwhile learning or work (for more details about the complete reform package go to: <http://www.education.qld.gov.au/etrf/whitepaper/pdfs/whitepaper.pdf>).

3.2 Overview of the current Youth Support Coordinator Service Network

The Youth Support Coordinators Initiative builds on the existing network of 34 Youth Support Coordinators around the State who currently work with young people at risk in high schools. The existing Youth Support Coordinators' capacity will be expanded and they will become key members of the new Youth Support Coordinator Hubs.

The current Youth Support Coordinator initiative commenced as an early intervention and prevention program aimed at preventing student homelessness and early school leaving. The Youth Support Coordinator service network was established in July 1997 as a collaborative effort between the Department of Communities and Education Queensland. The Youth Support Coordinators are currently employed by community organisations throughout the State to work with participating schools in ETRF trial areas.

All Youth Support Coordinators are employed by community-based organisations funded by the Department of Communities. The position of Youth Support Coordinator requires tertiary-training and workers possess a wide range of professional, social welfare experience. The program has aimed to establish collaborative relationships between schools and community organisations to enable better responses to the needs of young people experiencing personal or family problems.

Depending on local need, Youth Support Coordinators provide a range of services to school communities. Youth Support Coordinators work directly with individual young people and their families, providing needs assessment, case management and coordination, advocacy, referral, supportive non-therapeutic counselling, information provision and skills development.

Youth Support Coordinators also work developmentally with school and local communities to enhance their ability to respond to the needs of young people at risk. Activities vary, but may include:

- developmental activities with young people, community groups, parents and caregivers;
- participation in school and community agency capacity building processes including the creation of school/agency partnerships and protocols, strategic planning, policy and procedure design, inter-agency network development and professional development activities with teachers and service providers; and
- promotion of structures and activities that enhance young people's participation in the school community.

Key elements of the current Youth Support Coordinator service model include:

- Youth Support Coordinators are employed and managed by the funded agency, to which they are accountable.
- Each Youth Support Coordinator works in a number of schools and/or TAFEs.
- Youth Support Coordinators work collaboratively with the school system and in many cases are 'visiting' members of the school's student support services unit. It is best practice that Youth Support Coordinators have a local advisory body with representatives from school personnel and other community representatives.
- Youth Support Coordinator services are provided within the context of a set of *Operational Protocols* which have been negotiated between Education Queensland, the Department of Communities and funded organisations. The protocols outline the general principles guiding service provision and the management of issues such as information sharing, accountability, confidentiality, grievance procedures and resource allocation by agencies and schools to support the Youth Support Coordinator service.

The expansion of the Youth Support Coordinator services under the *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* initiative has been heavily influenced by the learnings of the Youth Support Coordinator evaluation, which was released in 1999. The evaluation identified a number of key components that contributed to the effectiveness of the Youth Support Coordinator services. The key success factors included:

- being based outside schools allows Youth Support Coordinators to be viewed as safe sources of support by young people and their families because they are not seen to be 'authority figures' within school disciplinary structures;
- the capacity of Youth Support Coordinators to work with families, particularly outside of the school grounds and outside school hours;
- the Youth Support Coordinators' ability to pro-actively link the needs of students and schools to the resources within community-based organisations and to identify appropriate external service providers; and
- the flexibility and diversity of Youth Support Coordinator skills to provide a range of services including individual and family counselling, family mediation, group work, information dissemination, peer support programs and community development.

The current data collection system provides high quality information to Youth Support Coordinator services and departmental planners to assist in service management, evaluation and improved statewide service delivery.

3.3 Issues Presented by Young People to Youth Support Coordinators

Following intake and the establishment of the support relationship, Youth Support Coordinators are required to record the problems that they and the young person have identified as impacting on them. The following problems have been prevalent among young people using the services:

- A constellation of school problems predominated – in particular the risk of early school leaving / suspension or exclusion which was linked with challenging behaviour at school and conflict with school personnel, as well as difficulties with learning and coping with school. A significant number of cases involved bullying, harassment and conflict with peers, with the client as either the perpetrator or victim.
- Conflict with family was a common problem (47.5% of all contacts with the Youth Support Coordinator) – in particular conflicts with parents or guardians and other difficulties with family relationships, some of which were related to changes in family structure.
- Homelessness and the risk of homelessness were significant in about 40% of cases.
- About one third of the young people were identified as experiencing abuse (either emotional, physical, verbal) with approximately 4.5% experiencing sexual abuse or assault.
- Misuse of drugs and alcohol and being at risk of self-harm or suicide were identified as issues for 18% of young people.
- Low self-esteem, difficulties in personal relationships, sexuality issues, pregnancy and parenting and anger management constitute some of the other issues presented by young people.

3.4 Brief Overview of National and International Research

A strong association exists between early school leaving, lack of competitiveness in the labour market, unemployment and diminished life chances as well as an increased likelihood of involvement in the criminal justice system (*Why Australia Needs a National Youth Commitment: A Discussion Paper, Sydney, Dusseldorp Skills Forum, 1999*).

The research literature agrees that risk factors for early school leaving may be usefully grouped into those relating to attributes of the individual, the family, the school and to broader societal circumstances (*Innovation and Best Practice in Schools: Review of Literature and Practice, Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 2001, 15*). Responding to early school leaving requires responses that can address these multiple areas of risk.

There is also a considerable body of national and international research that provides compelling evidence for the efficacy of prevention and early intervention with young people at risk of disengaging early from learning. Young people's experience of school has been identified as either a protective or contributory factor for early school leaving and youth homelessness, dependent upon the presence or absence of school support for the diverse range of young people accessing them.

Homelessness and the underlying disconnection from supportive family structures are a known major risk factor linked closely with early school leaving. Most teenagers have their first experience of homelessness while they are still at school and approximately two thirds to three quarters of young people who experience homelessness do not complete the school year (*Youth Support Coordinator Initiative Evaluation Report, 1999, 6*). The second national census of homeless school students conducted in 2001 estimated that approximately 2,886 secondary students were homeless or recently homeless in Queensland at the time of the census (*Youth Homelessness 2001, Chamberlain and Mackenzie, RMIT, 2002, 14*). The underlying issues for early school leaving and homelessness are comparable requiring a similar range of resources and responses.

Issues specifically impacting on young Indigenous people and their communities need to be recognised within a community and cultural context and need to be considered along with the support needs of any individual young person. Preventing Indigenous young people from prematurely disengaging from the education and training system will assist in reducing over representation of Indigenous young people in statutory intervention systems. Research indicates suggests there is a significant need to ensure Indigenous young people are supported in a culturally relevant learning and training environment in order to maximise their individual and community potential (*The Senior Certificate: A New Deal, Pitman et al, Queensland Government, 2002, 147*). Services provided by Indigenous Youth Support Coordinators have been very successful in engaging and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Young people from culturally and linguistically diverse background, especially former refugees, face specific issues which impact on their ability to remain engaged with learning. Youth Support Coordinators and others have specifically identified intergenerational conflict as a major issue impacting education and training retention.

The causes of youth homelessness and early school leaving, because they are clearly linked to family, school and socio-economic factors, are complex and multi-faceted requiring a multi-dimensional response. The findings in national and international research correlate with the experience and data gained from the Queensland Youth Support Coordinator initiative since its inception.

4. Key Aspects of the new Youth Support Coordinator Initiative

4.1 Youth Support Coordinator Interface with School and Training Providers

A major strategy of the *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* initiative is to allow young people greater flexibility to achieve qualifications beyond Year 10 (the new Senior Phase of Learning). This could be in school, in TAFE or through other forms of training. As result young people aged 15-17 will be learning in diverse educational and training environments.

Consequently, schools and training providers will be required to play a critical role in the identification of students at risk of disengaging from learning and in providing an integrated continuum of services ranging through prevention, early intervention and support.

Youth Support Coordinators work collaboratively within the school community and with training providers to respond to issues presented by young people which might prevent them from successfully transiting into or completing their Senior Phase of Learning.

The Youth Support Coordinators support a collaborative approach with other school and training provider support staff in addressing individual student problems. The Youth Support Coordinator informs school and training provider personnel about emerging issues or trends both within the school and wider community to assist in the planning and development of relevant responses and activities.

The Youth Support Coordinators is familiar with school and training provider processes, support personnel and existing student support teams and networks. To assist with the coordination and integration of available support they participate in schools and training provider multi-disciplinary student welfare or pastoral care teams to address the needs of individual students where relevant. They also assist school and training provider support staff in establishing and maintaining links with community networks and support agencies.

4.2 Youth Support Coordinator Deliverables

Youth Support Coordinators provide a mix of the following services depending on the requirements of each local community and as outlined in the District Youth Achievement Plan:

1. assistance and appropriate referrals to individual young people and their families to resolve issues contributing to the risk of disengaging prematurely from learning or training;
2. assistance to young people to develop social and personal skills for successful community living; and
3. information dissemination strategies about services available to support young people and their families.

Youth Support Coordinators also contribute to:

4. establishing collaborative structures, linking mechanisms and referral networks (including the District Youth Achievement Plans) between schools, training providers and the relevant youth services, Government, business and community services to enhance access by young people and their families to support and assistance; and
5. increasing the capacity of families, communities, schools and training providers to support young people to maintain their connectedness to education and training.

4.3 District Youth Achievement Plans

Youth Support Coordinators are an integral component in the implementation of the *Education and Training Reforms for the Future*. The *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* will be grounded at the local level through the development of District Youth Achievement Plans. Education Queensland and Department of Employment and Training regional officers will facilitate the development of District Youth Achievement Plans with input from non-Government schools, industry representatives, community organisations and Youth Support Coordinators. The Plans set local targets for participation, retention and attainment for young people and identify strategies to achieve these targets.

Youth Support Coordinator's activities will be negotiated as part of the District Youth Achievement Plans to provide a key linkage between schools/training sector and the community sector to meet these targets. These strategies aim to build a community infrastructure of schools, community agencies, Government and business to meet the needs of all young people including those most at risk.

4.4 Operational Protocols

Standard Operational Protocols between the Department of Communities and Education Queensland have been negotiated in respect to the existing youth Support Coordinators initiative. These establish a cooperative framework for delivering Youth Support Coordinator services within Queensland State schools. The protocols outline the principles guiding service provision and the management of issues such as confidentiality and grievance procedures. A copy of the Operational Protocols is available from www.communities.qld.gov.au.

Organisations applying for funding for a Youth Support Coordinator will be required to comply with the standard Operational Protocols which provide a framework for the provision of Youth Support Coordinator services within State schools.

With the broadening of the Youth Support Coordinator initiative to include non-Government schools and TAFE colleges the Operational Protocols are being revised and amended to reflect these changes. The Youth Support Coordinator Reference Group, made up of representatives of many stakeholders, which is assisting to implement the Youth Support Coordinator Initiative, is currently reviewing operational protocols.

4.5 Accountability and Reporting

The Youth Support Coordinator, as an employee, will be directly accountable to his or her funded agency, and will be required to conform to its policies, practice principles and standards. Practice principles will be expected to include regular liaison with principals and other members of the school/training establishment to ensure a collaborative approach to the creation of a caring, productive and safe environment for students. In turn, principals are responsible for promoting the development of a working environment conducive to the integration of the Youth Support Coordinator into the school/training establishment.

The Operational Protocols require Youth Support Coordinators to establish and implement a regular accountability and reporting process that will keep schools and training providers abreast of service delivery, program development activities, and emerging issues.

Youth Support Coordinator will be expected to provide information to their Youth Support Coordinator Hub Facilitator and to district reference/steering groups to indicate their progress in meeting their responsibilities under their District Youth Achievement Plan.

4.6 Youth Support Coordinators – Qualifications and Selection Process

Because of the extent of knowledge and expertise required, it is a requirement that Youth Support Coordinators have tertiary qualifications or other appropriate qualifications with substantial relevant experience.

The funded organisation is responsible for the selection of Youth Support Coordinators. However, according to the current Operational Protocols regarding recruitment and selection of Youth Support Coordinators, it is required that an Education Queensland officer, able to represent the relevant State schools, will be invited by the funded organisation to participate in the recruitment process. It would be expected that agencies would consider extending this participation to representatives from non-Government schools or training providers where relevant.

4.7 Youth Support Coordinator Induction and Practice Development

Induction and professional development of the Youth Support Coordinator is primarily the responsibility of the funded organisation.

In addition to the support provided by funded agencies, three Youth Support Coordinator Hubs are established across the State to support the practice development of Youth Support Coordinators. Each Youth Support Coordinator Hub will consist of a network of Youth Support Coordinators resourced by a Hub Facilitator.

The Youth Support Coordinator Hubs will allow for a more dynamic and supportive relationship between service providers, will build partnerships across the State and foster best practice in service delivery through the provision of web-based resources and developmental opportunities. The Youth Support Coordinator Hubs will work in partnership with Youth Support Coordinators, Department of Communities, Education Queensland, Department of Employment and Training and non-Government participants.

The purpose of the Youth Support Coordinator Hub Facilitator will be to contribute to the continuous improvement in the delivery of high quality youth support services that are effective, culturally appropriate and consistent with identified local need.

A new interactive Youth Support Coordinator website maintained by the Hub Facilitators will provide access to a range of information and resources including an induction resource kit. Hub Facilitators will assist the Department of Communities to implement a Youth Support Coordinator Statewide induction and training conference in 2005.

Principals and training providers are also encouraged to provide appropriate opportunities for YSCs to participate in in-house training and information sessions on areas relevant to their role, such as child protection policy and other emerging areas of work. Principals and training providers are also encouraged to provide opportunities for their employees to participate in Youth Support Coordinator training and information sessions.

4.8 Resource Allocation

Funded organisations will be responsible for the payment of the Youth Support Coordinator salary, on-costs, vehicle costs and general operating costs. Funding has been provided for a level 5 SACS industry award. This salary level reflects the skills required of a Youth Support Coordinator and is consistent with the salary level provided to the majority of Youth Support Coordinators already operational.

Funded organisations will be required to apportion \$10,000 of the funds provided to allow for program activities with young people. These program funds can only be acquitted against Youth Support Coordinator expenses that are directly related to planned activities, projects and initiatives for clients. The funds can not be used for organisational operational or infrastructure purposes. The program funds are provided as seed funds for innovative and creative responses that meet the local needs of the target clients.

Participating schools and training establishments will be required to provide the Youth Support Coordinator with adequate facilities on their premises. These include access to an office, desk, telephone and appropriate storage facilities in a suitable private location.

4.9 Evaluation and monitoring

A specific data collection system for Youth Support Coordinators is already in place and administered by the Department of Communities in order to monitor performance and assist in evaluation of this initiative. The current data collection is being reviewed as part of the implementation of the new Youth Support Coordinator Initiative.

The Department of Communities will undertake an evaluation of the new Youth Support Coordinator initiative. It is expected that participating schools, education and training providers will provide input into evaluation processes.

Youth Support Coordinator will be expected to provide information to their Youth Support Coordinator Hub Facilitator and to district reference/steering groups to indicate their progress in meeting their responsibilities under their District Youth Achievement Plan.

Department of Communities regional staff will liaise with Youth Support Coordinators and their funded organisation to provide support and to monitor the progress of the initiative.

5. Implementation of the Youth Support Coordinator Initiative 2003-06

5.1 Locations

Education and Training Reforms for the Future commenced in seven trial locations in 2003-04. The seven trial areas are to be serviced by 47 new Youth Support Coordinator positions. In 2003-04, 21 of these positions commenced. The remaining positions will be released in 2005.

For the purpose of defining a geographical area to be serviced by a given number of Youth Support Coordinators, the areas have been divided into 'clusters'. Applicants are required to apply for funding to supply Youth Support Coordinator services for a 'cluster as a whole' and **not** for individual positions. Applicants are required to apply for each cluster separately.

The only exception is the Cairns and Cape district. Due to its unique geography applicants have the option to apply for 1 to a maximum of 5.5 Youth Support Coordinators. Applicants must clearly outline the proposed geographic coverage of service delivery in their submission.

Applicants are encouraged to explore forming cooperative relationships with other agencies in order to provide appropriate locally based services to serve the needs of particular schools due to geographical location or to meet the needs of specific schools eg those with large numbers of Indigenous or refugee young people etc.

Allocations of new Youth Support Coordinator positions for trial area and their clusters are as follows:

Bayside District

- Bayside cluster – 3 new positions

Bundaberg District

- Bundaberg cluster – 1 new position

Cairns and Cape District ****

- Cairns and Cape cluster – 5.5 new positions

Chinchilla District

- Chinchilla cluster – 1 new positions

Coopers Plains District

- Coopers Plains Brisbane cluster – 4 new positions
(Cluster is the Brisbane City Council area of the Coopers Plains Education District)
- Coopers Plains Springwood/Browns Plains cluster – 2.5 new positions

Darling Downs District

- Darling Downs cluster – 1 new position

Geebung District

- Geebung Eastern cluster, Hendra through to Bracken Ridge – 2 new positions
- Geebung Western cluster, Stafford out to Albany Creek – 3 new positions

Gladstone District

- Gladstone cluster – 2.5 new positions

Gold Coast South District

- Gold Coast cluster – 5 new positions

Longreach District

- Longreach cluster – 1 new position

Mt Gravatt District

- Mt Gravatt cluster – 3 new position

Mackay District

- Mackay cluster – 3.5 new positions

Nambour District

- Nambour cluster – 2.5 new position

Rockhampton District

- Woorabinda cluster – 1 new position

South Burnett District

- South Burnett cluster – 2 new positions

Stafford District

- Stafford cluster – 2 new positions *** one position is provided specifically for working with the Albert Park Flexi School in recognition of the needs of the target group.

Tablelands Johnstone District

- Tablelands Johnstone cluster – 3 new positions

Torres Strait District

- Torres Strait cluster – 1 new position

Warwick District

- Warwick cluster – 2 new positions

West Moreton District

- West Moreton cluster – 2.5 new positions

**** In the Cairns and Cape district due to its unique geography applicants have the option to apply for 1 to a maximum of 5.5 Youth Support Coordinators. Applicants must clearly outline the proposed geographic coverage of service delivery in their submission.

Appendix 1 provides information about which Department of Families' regions these clusters fall within.

5.2 Organisations Eligible to Apply for Funding

Organisations eligible to receive funding for Youth Support Coordinators are described in Section 4 of the Department of Communities *Standard Conditions of Funding (updated August 2002)*. Copies of the *Standard Conditions of Funding* can be found at www.communities.qld.gov.au.

Preference will be given to funding community organisations other than schools or school based associations for Youth Support Coordinator positions. The policy intent of the initiative is to provide an interface of support and partnership between auspicing community-based organisations and a number of schools and training providers.

5.3 Funding Timeframe

August 2004 Call for funding submissions advertised

September 2004	Funding submissions close
November 2004	Funding approved and announced
January 2005	First Youth Support Coordinator services commence

5.4 Providing Statements of Support for a Youth Support Coordinator Service

Organisations applying for funding for a Youth Support Coordinator service will be expected to supply evidence of their ability to work in partnership with relevant local organisations including:

- schools, education and training providers;
- local Indigenous communities and agencies; and
- other culturally and linguistically diverse communities and agencies and other service providers.

It is anticipated that community organisations will approach schools, education and training providers for 'statements of support' as they develop Youth Support Coordinator funding submissions. These statements for support will form part of the evidence on which submissions will be assessed.

Schools, education and training providers are encouraged to critically assess the merits of each request for a statement of support for a Youth Support Coordinator service and only support those with the requisite merit. It is recommended that statements should only be provided after careful consideration of the following issues:

- What previously successful partnerships with school/education/training provider and/or other community organisations can the organisation highlight?
- What are the common values, philosophies, aims and objectives in respect to working with the target group? If there are differences, how will they be addressed?
- How will the needs of the target group and the school/education/training provider be determined and prioritised?
- Does the proposal display flexibility to tailor its service delivery to meet the needs of the target group and school/education/training provider?
- Did the organisation utilise a partnership framework by actively engaging with the school/education/training provider in the development of the proposal?

5.5 Assessment of Submissions from Community Agencies

All applicants will be required to complete a written submission which will form the basis of the assessment.

A regional funding panel coordinated by the Department of Communities with representation from Education Queensland, Department of Employment and Training and non-Government schools will conduct the first assessment of all submissions. A central funding panel established with the same representation will conduct the final assessment. Funding panel recommendations will be forwarded to the Minister for Communities for consideration.

All applicants must agree to comply with the standard Operational Protocols which provide a framework for the provision of Youth Support Coordinator services within Queensland State schools, non-government schools and TAFEs.

5.6 Assessment Criteria

All submissions will be assessed against the key assessment criteria outlined below. Organisations may be asked to submit further detail during the selection process.

Key Assessment Criteria

1. Demonstrated understanding and sourced evidence of the needs of the target group in the local area.
2. Demonstrated organisational capacity to develop and deliver innovative casework and community development services to meet the needs of the target group in the local area.
3. Demonstrated ability to provide an integrated response to client needs in the local area working in partnership with relevant local organisations including:
 - education and training providers;
 - local Indigenous communities and agencies;
 - other culturally and linguistically diverse communities and agencies; and
 - other service providers.
4. Detailed explanation, including budget, outlining how the proposed service will meet the outcomes and deliverables outlined in Section 3 of this Information Paper.
5. Organisational capacity to maintain program integrity and flexibility to provide a service across different locations.
6. Demonstrated ability and capacity to commence the service quickly and provide deliverables according to stated timeframes.

6. Frequently Asked Questions (and Answers)

1. *What coverage will this initiative provide to Queensland schools and training providers?*
 - 113 Youth Support Coordinators will be able to provide significant coverage across the State. The Department of Communities will work with other stakeholders to contribute to the development of District Youth Achievement Plans that ensure Youth Support Coordinators are used most efficiently and effectively.
 - The Department of Communities in consultation with Education Queensland and representatives of non-Government schools and TAFE Institutes undertook the allocation of Youth Support Coordinator positions across the State.

2. *How often will Youth Support Coordinators attend a particular school or training provider?*
 - The operational structure will need to be negotiated on an individual basis between the funded agency and the schools, TAFEs and training providers, which the Youth Support Coordinator services.
 - District Youth Achievement Plans will establish district priorities.

3. *How will information sharing and privacy/confidentiality issues and the different reporting protocols be resolved?*
 - The Operational Protocols for working in State schools clearly outline confidentiality procedures. These include setting contextual limitations around confidentiality and the circumstances allowing disclosure to other persons internal or external to the school or TAFE.
 - Reporting and supervision requirements for Youth Support Coordinators will be guided by principles within the Operational Protocols and by negotiations between schools, training providers and the Youth Support Coordinator funded organisation.

4. *What are the Operational Protocols and how were they developed?*
 - The current Operational Protocols form an agreement between Education Queensland, the Department of Communities and funded organisations and provide a cooperative framework for providing Youth Support Coordinator services within Queensland schools and TAFEs
 - The Protocols were signed in 2002 following extensive consultation with key stakeholders including the Queensland Secondary Principal's Association, other education stakeholders, the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland and funded organisations. The protocols outline the general principles guiding service provision and the management of issues such as confidentiality, accountability and reporting, grievance procedures and resource allocation.
 - The current Operational Protocols will be reviewed and new protocols developed with training providers and non-Government schools as the new initiative commences. A new committee, to be established with representatives from all the key stakeholders to overview the implementation of the Youth Support Coordinator Initiative, will develop the new protocols.

5. *How can we resolve any misunderstanding and ensure clarity around the role and purpose of Youth Support Coordinators (as well as other support staff) in relation to Guidance Officers?*
 - Youth Support Coordinators will be funded to provide a range of activities and roles; it is intended that these roles will complement existing student support services such as career guidance / employment pathways advice.
 - A mutual understanding of the differing operational frameworks, practices and roles will be encouraged to develop between Education Queensland officers, Youth Support Coordinators and their funded organisations and Department of Communities.
 - The induction process for Youth Support Coordinators will aim to increase the understanding of the roles of Guidance Officers and promote the need for close working relationships within individual schools.
 - District Youth Achievement Plans will establish district priorities and may be a tool for clarifying the responsibilities of a range of support positions in specific localities.
 - Any role conflict will be addressed within the framework of the Operational Protocols using open communication between the Youth Support Coordinator funded organisation, schools and training providers.

6. *How can we be assured that new Youth Support Coordinators will have an understanding of the educational context and individual school cultures?*
 - The Statewide induction process, including a conference and resource kit for Youth Support Coordinators, will aim to increase understanding of educational contexts and school cultures.
 - Schools and training providers will need to provide induction and training on the unique character of their establishment.

7. *How can schools and training providers be sure the Youth Support Coordinators will have the level of training and qualification necessary to work effectively in the school or training setting?*
- The extent of knowledge and expertise required for the position necessitates that in most instances Youth Support Coordinators possess tertiary qualifications or other appropriate qualifications with substantial relevant experience. It is expected that most Youth Support Coordinators will have qualifications in human service delivery and social sciences eg psychology, social work, youth and community welfare etc.
 - In some districts, Youth Support Coordinators may also need to be able to demonstrate particular attributes or specific knowledge or skills in order to meet the needs of the target group in the local area.
8. *How can Principals and Guidance Officers have input into the selection process for Youth Support Coordinators?*
- The funded organisation is responsible for the selection of Youth Support Coordinators. Current Operational Protocols regarding recruitment and selection of Youth Support Coordinators require that an Education Queensland officer, able to represent the relevant State schools, be invited by the funded organisation to participate in the recruitment process. It would be expected that agencies would consider extending this participation to representatives from non-Government schools or training providers where relevant.
9. *What line management and supervision mechanisms are put in place?*
- As per the Operational Protocols, funded organisations are responsible for providing line management for the position. Youth Support Coordinators are encouraged to explore options for local advisory structures that include school personnel and other community representatives. Local advisory structures enhance linkages between the Youth Support Coordinator and school and community stakeholders but have no management function.
 - The Youth Support Coordinator, as an employee, is directly accountable to his or her funded organisation, and is required to conform to its values and philosophy, policies, practice principles and standards.
 - Youth Support Coordinator Hub Coordinators will provide guidance in developing and implementing best practice service delivery frameworks, provide assistance and direction for program development.

7. Further Information about the Youth Support Coordinator Initiative

Further information about the Youth Support Coordinator Initiative may be obtained from the Department of Communities web site at www.communities.qld.gov.au or by contacting the Department's Regional Offices, listed below -

Brisbane City Regional Office Department of Communities GPO Box 806 BRISBANE Q 4001 Ph. 3405 6373	Gold Coast Regional Office Department of Communities PO Box 1170 BEENLEIGH Q 4207 Ph. 3804 9133	Ipswich and Logan Regional Office Department of Communities PO Box 516 BOOVAL Q 4304 Ph. 3280 1777
Mackay and Whitsundays Regional Office Department of Communities Level 1, Post Office Square 71-73 Sydney Street Mackay QLD 4740 Ph: 4944 8600	Sunshine Coast Regional Office Department of Communities PO Box 213 MAROOCHYDORE Q 4558 Ph. 4938 4100	Toowoomba and South West Regional Office Department of Communities PO Box 2427 TOOWOOMBA Q 4350 Ph. 4688 4060
Wide Bay Burnett Regional Office Department of Communities PO Box 1490 HERVEY BAY Q 4655 Ph. 4197 7900	Central Queensland Regional Office Department of Communities PO Box 738 ROCKHAMPTON Q 4700 Ph. 4938 4100	Far North Queensland Regional Office Department of Communities PO Box 8054 Cairns QLD 4870 Ph. 4039 8354

Appendix 1 – YSC Clusters and Department of Communities Regional Offices

Cluster groupings are informed by Education Queensland district boundaries and geographic and demographic factors. Education Queensland district maps with details of Government and non-Government schools can be found at <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools>. Details of TAFE Institutes and training providers can be found at <http://www.det.qld.gov.au/>. **The Cairns and Cape cluster, due to its unique geography applicants have the option to apply for 1 to a maximum of 5.5 Youth Support Coordinators. Applicants must clearly outline the proposed geographic coverage of their submission.

Cluster	Department of Communities Regional Offices
Bayside cluster – 3 new positions	Brisbane City Regional Office
Bundaberg cluster – 1 new position	Wide Bay and Burnett Regional Office
Cairns and Cape cluster ** – 5.5 positions	Far North Queensland Regional Office
Chinchilla cluster – 1 new position	Toowoomba and South West Regional Office
Coopers Plains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coopers Plains Brisbane cluster – 4 new positions (Cluster is the Brisbane City Council area of the Coopers Plains Education District) • Coopers Plains Springwood/Browns Plains cluster – 2.5 new positions 	Brisbane City Regional Office Ipswich and Logan Regional Office
Darling Downs – 1 new position	Toowoomba and South West Regional Office
Geebung cluster – 5 new positions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geebung Eastern cluster, Hendra through to Bracken Ridge – 2 new positions • Geebung Western cluster, Stafford out to Albany Creek – 3 new positions 	Brisbane City Regional Office
Gladstone cluster -- 2.5 new positions	Central Queensland Regional Office
Gold Coast South cluster - 5 new positions	Gold Coast Regional Office
Longreach cluster – 1 new position	Central Queensland Regional Office
Mt Gravatt cluster – 3 new positions	Brisbane City Regional Office
Mackay cluster – 3.5 new positions	Mackay and Whitsundays Regional Office
Nambour cluster – 2.5 new positions	Sunshine Coast Regional Office
Rockhampton cluster – 1 new position	Central Queensland Regional Office
South Burnett cluster – 2 new positions	Wide Bay Burnett Regional Office
Stafford cluster – 2 new positions	Brisbane City Regional Office
Tablelands Johnstone cluster – 3 new positions	Far North Queensland Regional Office
Torres Strait cluster – 1 new position	Far North Queensland Regional Office
Warwick cluster – 2 new positions	Toowoomba and South West Regional Office
West Moreton – 2.5 new positions	Ipswich and Logan Regional Office