



Anti Racism Action Band

Stage 1 - 2006

**Evaluation Research and Report
funded by *beyondblue: the
national depression initiative***

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An A.R.A.B story

I was interested in belly dance already so when I heard an announcement over the loud speaker at school that we were having belly dance I jumped straight in. Then when I realised it was with a message about racism I thought that's even better, they have an idea they believe in. Mind you, at the start I really had no idea about all the ideas involved. I was mostly in it to dance but in the second year, the ideas of A.R.A.B. really clicked. Like belly dance may not be part of everyone's culture but even if it's not yours, don't "dis" it - it may not be your thing but it's not bad or wrong.

The questions I got asked on the [A.R.A.B. documentary] video made me think about what you call family, what you call culture, what it means to me. Even if some of the audience just relate to a small part of the video, one thing might just unlock an idea for them, wake them up.

When I joined the project and we were working with other performers from say Broady, I'd be thinking there's gangs in those parts of Melbourne but then you get to know people and find out about people then you realise that people really do break stereotypes.

My family and friends encourage me in doing the project. My sister thinks I'm weird and that the project is just one more weird thing that I do but everyone thinks it's great that I'm doing something I believe in. That I'm learning skills and using them to say something worth while.

Personally since doing the project I'm a lot more confident. Being on stage and everyone watching you...I mean I knew I could dance but you're not sure and it really helps you out, especially the applause and it helps you out with everything else, like giving speeches in class. I've been on stage and successful in doing that so it makes other things easier. I'm not as nervous when I have to speak in class, like I'm not thinking I'm going be run off the platform.

A lot of us in our A.R.A.B. belly dance crew are close friends, there's two close groups in our crew. We're close and tight knit, so we're not fighting and avoiding rehearsal. Those in our crew with a Lebanese background are used to it, but for us it's a new experience.

When we are in the big combined rehearsals for the main show it's really interesting to finally see what everyone else has been working on because we all get to see each other's work. And now there are different friendships across the schools. Like one of the girls in my crew has a few close friends in Broady (we're from Reservoir). They met through the project.

Lakeside are the only belly dance crew and that's fun 'cause we stand out. I like working with all the artists on the A.R.A.B. team. It's a different relationship to teacher/student. The artists make mistakes too and don't mind

saying, 'cause they are trying things out. That's kind of reassuring. We manage to relate well, they aren't chasing us around yelling. They kind of treat us like adults, like they see our potential and our limits but the expectation is high. In A.R.A.B. we get to test ourselves and see what we're capable of.

The performances are important. There would be a lot less kids show up if our work didn't lead to a performance. There'd be no outlet for all the work we do. You need something to work towards.

It's really good to get out there to different people, to a lot more adults to show your skills. You have to adapt and perform differently at different gigs. Like at ARACY [gig], we had to freestyle out in the audience rather than do our set routine. It's a different challenge.

In A.R.A.B. we get a performance fee for the extra gigs and it's a bonus. Performing in A.R.A.B. is different to flipping hamburgers at "Maccas". You don't do it for the cash, you go out, you perform, have fun and then if you get some money as well, well you've really scored, because that's just a bonus on top. Doing belly dance is something I never mind giving up my time for.

In the project I'm gaining skills, getting a message out, people are walking away maybe with a different attitude Our project's good because it's not just a bunch of Lebanese people talking about racism...all of us are and we're saying not to be racist against anyone - Arabic or otherwise. If we're working together and an Oz says to a Lebo "good job" and vice versa cause you're working together then maybe it'll be less likely that there's punch ons.

I definitely want to continue with A.R.A.B. and am going to be the "gigmiester" (gig organiser) for my belly dance crew.

A.R.A.B. Performer



1. Introduction

The Stage One A.R.A.B. Research and Evaluation Report (the Report) is the first stage of an evaluation of the *Anti-Racism Action Band (A.R.A.B.)* youth performing arts and community development project, run by Victorian Arabic Social Services.

While the A.R.A.B. project has been running for three years, the need and opportunity to formally evaluate the project only emerged at the end of 2005, whereby increasing demands on the project staff and participants to perform and to take on new school partners, suggested the success of this relatively new and highly innovative project.

Funding to produce the Report was granted by *beyondblue* in 2006. Evaluation research and design was undertaken by Julie Hallifax throughout 2006 with the final report written by Julie Hallifax and Florencia Rodriguez in late 2006 and early 2007. Consultations with Mandy Bathgate on the final stages and structure of the report were conducted in 2007.

Information for the evaluation was collated over a six-month period from a range of stakeholders including:

- Youth participants
- School teachers and facilitators
- School principals
- Family members
- A.R.A.B. audiences
- Community organisations
- Local government
- A.R.A.B. Artistic Directors and artists/tutors.

The Report presents the findings from these consultations and provides the foundation for an evaluation model to be developed further throughout 2007 and 2008.

It provides recommendations for the future success of the A.R.A.B project subject to funding and is designed as a practical framework for use as a community development performing arts tool.

In addition to *beyondblue* funded components of the project, the Report looks more broadly at the A.R.A.B. project in its entirety to accurately reflect the integrated and interrelated nature of the project model in evaluation findings and recommendations.

The Report examines the application of a performing arts company model within a community development framework on three levels:

- 1) Evaluation of the performer's experience of being a part of the A.R.A.B. project: *How have the young people involved in A.R.A.B. changed or*

benefited from their experience? What have they learnt about themselves or others by participating in A.R.A.B.?

- 2) Evaluation of the A.R.A.B. project as a performing arts project: *How successful is A.R.A.B. as an arts project and how do the audience respond to it? What is the artist's experience of working on the project?*
- 3) Evaluation of the project as a community development project engaging young people and collaborating with schools: *How has A.R.A.B. impacted on the communities it works with and the wider community?*

It is important to note that these areas can often overlap and do not stand in isolation from one another. For example, a group of young people from a school participating in A.R.A.B. may not only experience personal change, but have a subsequent impact on the life of the school as a whole, their families and the broader community in which they live. The development of a young person's artistic skills may impact on other life areas such as improved confidence levels and ability to present in front of a classroom.

Finally, the Report will serve to analyse the project thus far but also to inform future research and expansion of the A.R.A.B. working model.

The authors hope that this Stage One A.R.A.B. Research and Evaluation Report will serve to highlight the achievements and successes of this innovative project for the benefit of future work using performing arts as a vehicle for change.



Assisting young people to search for their own identity and improve their sense of well being not only benefits the individual but strengthens the well being and fabric of the schools, families and broader community. A.R.A.B. is proud of its achievements in this respect and celebrates the commitment, creativity and vision of all those involved.

2. Project context and background

2.1 Victorian Arabic Social Services

Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS) is a peak state-wide, not-for-profit community based organisation that represents the welfare issues and concerns of Arabic speaking background (ASB) communities. It is non-religious, non-political and non-sectarian organisation, inclusive of all ASB communities.

VASS provides and promotes social, cultural, educational, recreational and support services to ASB communities across Victoria. As a peak advocacy body, it identifies gaps in services and undertakes research around issues faced by ASB communities in order to respond effectively.

Established in 1981, VASS started as a network of community and welfare workers who serviced the needs of the ASB communities of Victoria. VASS has since expanded its role, with a membership of 140 individuals and organisations in fields such as psychology, law, media, health, arts and employment. VASS has offices in Broadmeadows, Newport and Dandenong, areas where much of the VASS work with local communities is focussed.

VASS has a substantial youth focus and has recently increased it's delivery of youth programs to meet the needs of ASB young people in the community. These include youth employment programs, leadership courses in partnership with emergency services and a soccer program.

For further information see the VASS website: www.vass.org.au.

2.2 Participating schools

During 2006, five northern region secondary schools and one South-East region school have participated in A.R.A.B.

These schools include:

- Box Forest Secondary College
- Broadmeadows Secondary College
- Hillcrest Secondary College
- Lakeside Secondary College
- Lalor North Secondary College
- Lyndale Secondary College

2.3 Local government area

Over the past 3 years, the majority of the project activity has taken place in the Northern Metropolitan region and particularly in the local government area of Hume. A.R.A.B.'s two major productions in 2006 and many rehearsals, gigs and other activities, took place in Hume City, with some work also in the bordering municipalities of Darebin, Moreland and Whittlesea, and some brief work with a school in Greater Dandenong. A.R.A.B.'s office is located in the

Hume City suburb of Broadmeadows at Hillcrest Secondary College and the VASS head office is also in Broadmeadows.

The Hume City is characterised by a high youth population with 31 per cent of local youth under the age of eighteen and 49 per cent under 24 years of age – which happens to be the A.R.A.B. target group.

It also has a culturally diverse population with nearly 29 per cent of the population born overseas. Migrants come from a range of countries, including Turkey, Italy and the United Kingdom. More recently there has been an increase in communities from Iraq and Lebanon. Almost 35 per cent of households speak a language other than English at home.

Unemployment is much higher than the Melbourne Statistical Division (MSD) sitting at 8.4 per cent. Within the Broadmeadows area, where VASS office and two of A.R.A.B. partner schools are located, unemployment is 18.7 per cent - more than twice that of the rest of Hume and more than three times that of the MSD.

For 45.2 per cent of the Broadmeadows population the highest level of education is Year 10.

The median weekly individual income for Broadmeadows is \$243 and in Hume \$355. This is significantly lower than the MSD median weekly individual income of \$405.

In Hume 4 per cent of residents live in public housing. Within Broadmeadows this number is far higher with 17.3 per cent of residents living in public housing. (*Data source: City of Hume website, retrieved 12th January 2007, www.hume.vic.gov.au*)

2.4 A.R.A.B team composition

The core A.R.A.B. artistic team and management is made up of over nine people with additional tutors and artists engaged for special projects.

They include:

- Artistic Directors - Kate Gillick and Jeremy Angerson
- Project Worker - Julie Hallifax (until Jan 07)
- Project Worker - Florencia Rodriguez (from Jan 07)
- Finance Officer – John Haddad
- Main Dance Artist/Choreographer/Tutor - Michael Farah
- Tutors/Choreographers - Audi Younnes, John Gray and Melissa Christina
- Additional Tutors - Ianessa Fraser, Re-Arna Constantine, Deon Nuku, Mack Thillalem and Minerva Draeger
- VASS Manager - Leila Alloush

A key to the projects success is having a team as culturally diverse as the communities within which they work. The A.R.A.B. team is made up of Anglo-Celtic Australian, Sri Lankan, Swiss, Javanese, Lebanese, New Zealand

Maori and Argentinean with a mix of Christian, Muslim and non-religious backgrounds.

Further background data is contained in *Section Four: Evaluation findings*.

2.5 Promoting youth mental health and wellbeing through the Arts

One of A.R.A.B.'s main objectives is to tackle mental health and well-being issues faced by young people in the region. The project is centred on five key themes which provide a platform for engagement. These are:

- Identity
- The celebration of diversity
- Acceptance
- Self-determination
- Respect for ones self and those around, including other youth, family, tutors and audience

Drawing on cultural traditions, contemporary art forms and themes effecting youth in the region, the project has been successful in addressing some of the key determinants of mental health including 'social inclusion, freedom from discrimination and violence and access to economic resources'.¹

2.5.1 Social inclusion

A.R.A.B. tackles the issue of social inclusion by opening the project to all youth age 13-25, regardless of cultural background, religion, gender or skill level. This includes youth who may have dropped out of school or who may have moved on to TAFE or University. The project creates a supportive environment where youth are encouraged to participate, collaborate and invent new forms of expression without being judged. The resultant feeling of acceptance and inclusion experienced by the youth has had an impact beyond the project's borders as observed in the following comments:

By involving so many different schools and students, the project draws more parent community involvement. *Teacher and A.R.A.B. Facilitator, Broadmeadows Secondary College*

The project has definitely developed their self-esteem, their levels of responsibility and their connection to School. *Principal, Broadmeadows Secondary College*

Because the project is open to all youth, it attracts those who get involved in everything and those that have trouble getting involved. You get both spectrums. The project is inclusive and doesn't exclude kids on the basis of their talent. *Performing Arts Coordinator and A.R.A.B. facilitator, Hillcrest Secondary College*

¹ VicHealth, 'A Plan of Action 2005-2007: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing', Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Carlton, 2005, pg. 13.

2.5.2 Freedom from discrimination and violence

Issues of racism, violence and gang culture continue to play a role in the region and impact directly on the lives of youth living in the area.

The *Isma* or *Listen* Report issued in 2004 by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), has been able to detail the extent to which Arab and Muslim Australians have experienced an increase in varying forms of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim prejudice, discrimination and vilification, particularly after the events of September 11 and the October 2002 Bali bombings.²

According to the Report, such forms of discrimination have been exacerbated by national and local events such as public debates over asylum seekers, immigration policies and, more recently, the Cronulla riots.³ Arab and Muslim youth felt much of the harassment and reported feeling frustration, alienation and a loss of confidence in themselves and trust in authority.⁴

The story of racism, discrimination and isolation (factors that impact significantly on mental and physical well being), is one shared by many of the A.R.A.B. participants, with the project having a positive impact on personal experience and addressing issues of racism and discrimination by raising awareness about difference and tradition:

I have learnt not to be so judgemental of other people and just accept them for who they are. Not everyone is the same colour or the same

nationality - but that's what makes me ME.

A.R.A.B. performer, Broadmeadows Secondary College

I have learnt many things about different nationalities and I am more confident. I really like A.R.A.B because all the nationalities perform together as one. *A.R.A.B. performer*

I have learnt more about racism and other cultures.

A.R.A.B. performer

I have learnt that everyone should be respected the same way as you want to be treated no matter what nationality you are. *A.R.A.B. performer*

By working in a team with people from different cultures it makes a show more productive. *A.R.A.B. performer*

As detailed in the following sections, shows such as *Yallah Shabiba!* (meaning *Come on Young Ones – Boys and Girls!* in Arabic) and *Yallah Hayat!* (meaning *Come on with life!* in Arabic) together with subsequent productions have successfully brought together students from a range of

² HREOC, 'Isma` - Listen: National Consultations on Eliminating Prejudice Against Arab and Muslim Australians', Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Sydney, 2004, pg.2

³ Ibid, pg. 3.

⁴ Ibid, pg. 3

culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds giving them a common focus on which to build self-esteem, respect for difference and pride in their own cultural traditions.

2.5.3 Access to economic resources

Recognising that access to economic resources is a key determinate in supporting mental health and well being, the project aims to assist young people who are disengaged from school, a risk of leaving school early or may not have the confidence and skills to participate within the broader community.

The project develops self-esteem and confidence to assist participants in the work place, further education and everyday life. Skills developed relate not only to performing arts but also to other spin-off areas such as leadership, teamwork, public speaking and in some cases self-employment.

By way of example, several of the A.R.A.B. youth have been performing on an ongoing basis at local and international events such as the *Hume Winter Music Festival*, the *Commonwealth Games Festival* and the *Annual Arab American Comedy Festival*. During this process they have accumulated a long list of gigs that would stand out on any resume. They have also been receiving a fee for their work and learning aspects of event management and small business operations such as how to invoice for work, how to book performances, set up sound equipment liaise with other people and represent themselves.

2.5.4 Access and equity

The project has been able to address a major service gap in access to services for young people and their families in the region, providing an alternative outlet for young people and their families wishing to participate in wider community activities outside school, home life and existing youth groups. Youth are not expected to contribute anything more than their time,



taking a significant burden off parents to provide financial resources and coordinate extra-curricular activities for their children.

Accessibility is also a factor in the success of this project, with locally based activities taking the transport burden off students and their families.

For this reason the project has been widely supported by parents and families in the region. As one mother reported:

I am a single mother with two daughters and the fact that the A.R.A.B. project is free, that transport is provided and that it is organised and run with the school makes a huge difference to me. I don't think I would have been able to sustain her dance rehearsals and performances over the last two years if I had to transport her myself and pay for it all. It just gets too hard to organise when you're working yourself

Mother of A.R.A.B. performer Lakeside Secondary College.

3. The Project

3.1 The Anti-Racism Action Band

The Anti-Racism Action Band (A.R.A.B.) project is a youth performing arts project that aims to raise the self-confidence and self-esteem in young people and challenge racism and discrimination through a collaborative performing arts framework.

The project incorporates a range of performing arts disciplines including traditional and hip hop dance, comic monologue, rap, beat box, singing and multimedia into programs and major productions. A.R.A.B. is a large-scale initiative and currently has around 120 young people involved in a range of projects.

Major productions are based around a theme chosen by the young people such as identity, cultural background or family traditions. This then forms the underpinning narrative of the production.

The project is staffed by a team of professional artists that work within a community development model. The team is based at VASS and works closely with the VASS Youth Services Team. Bi-lingual artists from a range of cultural backgrounds are also employed, bringing both contemporary and traditional art forms to the project.

A.R.A.B. has an extremely active “gigging” program titled *Tawasa!* (meaning communication and connectedness in Arabic) in which young performers can hone their skills, perform for a range of audiences and receive a modest fee for their work. This serves as a type of apprenticeship in the performing arts. The major productions and *Tawasa!* have led to a large number of active and productive relationships with community organisations, government departments and philanthropic foundations.

Importantly, the project seeks to treat a young person’s interest in performance seriously as an artistic, physical and emotional outlet that may or may not go any further than their initial involvement in the project.

When making the commitment to join the project, young people also commit to regularly attending rehearsals and working towards a major production at the end of the year. Young people have the opportunity to continue their involvement in the project on an ongoing basis. Some of the senior youth, for example, have been involved since 2004.

A.R.A.B. sees itself as is an organisation in step with youth and the experience of contemporary Australia. This is one of the major strengths of our work and the heart and soul of what we do.

Within A.R.A.B., VASS has developed a truly unique project - opening its doors to *all* youth whatever their cultural background and engaging with wider audiences to tackle the issue of racism within in the community.

3.2 A.R.A.B. Mission Statement

To develop and maintain a large, permanent, high energy, socially challenging, artistically innovative, collaborative community development performing arts project for youth of any cultural background in the Northern region of Melbourne.

Why?

To tap into the vast energy, talent and hunger for artistic and self expression that exists amongst youth in the region who would otherwise have limited outlets and to challenge and tackle the reality of low self-esteem and limited notion of 'self', that can lead to narrow and destructive social behaviours and relationships.

The project provides a solid, accessible vehicle for broadening and strengthening of ideas, collaborative artistic practices and social relationships, around notions and themes of race, culture, difference and identity.



How?

By offering ongoing performing arts skills, opportunities, role models, inspirations, performances, audiences and collaborations to a large number of youth who would otherwise miss out due to geographic, cultural, racial, developmental or socio economic disadvantage.

3.3 Project aims and objectives

3.3.1 Broad objectives

The A.R.A.B. project has a range of overriding objectives. These include:

- Challenging racism and gang culture in the North and North-West of Melbourne
- Increasing self-confidence, self-esteem and self-image amongst the youth
- Tackling the issues of depression, isolation and anti-social behaviour through a performing arts framework
- Promoting inclusion - VASS realises that in order to tackle the issue of racism, it has to engage and reach a wider audience and not just those from Arabic speaking backgrounds
- Securing A.R.A.B. as an ongoing youth performing arts project
- Developing performing arts skills and life skills

3.3.2 Participant aims

Within each project activity, there are specific outcomes and individual goals set out for participants. These include:

- Increasing team building and leadership skills
- Developing new connections and friendships
- Developing a sense of achievement, renewal and inspiration about their own lives and the contribution and difference their efforts are making to others
- Developing confidence to take on new projects
- Having a sense of being included, breaking of isolation
- Making connections with new communities
- Opening the door to new career opportunities, training pathways and expanding job horizons
- Developing confidence in knowing A.R.A.B. is a steady platform for any future participation
- Having respect amongst their peers, teachers and family
- Developing a sense of meaning and validation to their own cultural and social mores
- Inspiring others

3.3.3 Actions planned for 2007 and beyond

A.R.A.B. is a project with a strong forward vision. As such, a number of key actions and goals have been mapped out. These include:

- To keep working with the 120-plus A.R.A.B. ensemble as well as new youth joining the project.
- To expand the *TAWASUL* section of A.R.A.B. by creating new performance pieces and inviting and structuring participation of a wider range of performers within the project, providing more youth with higher skills training, performance opportunities and exposure to a complex range of communities, audiences and dialogue.
- To increase other training opportunities such as event management, production, sound, video, work experience attachments to A.R.A.B. and other projects and companies.
- To secure a permanent and dedicated A.R.A.B. VASS office, meeting and rehearsal space thereby centralizing the artistic, administrative and community development aspects of the project and garnering local support in the Hume City area for this initiative.
- To further expand and strengthen the A.R.A.B. funding base, achieving fixed partnerships with commitments of up to five years.
- To create a high profile out door/indoor performance event that draws a large Northern region network of family and community organisations as well as a wider performance going audience.

- To collaborate with other performance based companies working in similar arenas.
- To continue shooting and editing of documentary material.
- To continue to seize overseas touring opportunities and expose the A.R.A.B. youth performers to international audiences and new ways of working i.e. Maysa Abouzeid at the *Fourth Arab American Comedy Festival*, New York in 2006.
- To increase collaborations including community development and artistic collaborations.
- To strengthen and expand an already healthy model of A.R.A.B. working as part of the VASS youth team, sharing resources, staff time and supervision, information, training opportunities, event support, mentorships and media training such as radio.
- For A.R.A.B. to continually question and push boundaries of identity in contemporary Australia and to put the performance work of A.R.A.B. youth into a wide public sphere.

3.4 Project target group

The A.R.A.B. project has chosen to work in the Northern region of Melbourne- a low socio-economic area dominated by public housing. The VASS Dallas office is also located in this region and has a particularly close link to and understanding of local community needs and priorities. See Section 2.3 for further demographic information.

The participating schools are characterised by an extremely high level of cultural diversity. The current group comprises students from 30 different cultural backgrounds, with more than 60 per cent of these, from a language other than English.

I have been asked many times if A.R.A.B. will do some work in some of the private schools. We're not really interested in this. The work is in the public schools with the least economically and socially advantaged population of youth. *Kate Gillick, A.R.A.B. Artistic Director*

In the experience of the VASS staff and the partner schools, while there may not be any overt acts of racism, there is often an undercurrent of potential conflict, especially with regard to the newly arrived communities. Significantly, many of the students are from refugee backgrounds and still suffer from the effects of trauma that they and their families have experienced.

As one school partner states:

A.R.A.B.'s target group is young people, particularly of CALD background, at all the partner secondary colleges. They are deemed to be at risk because they demonstrate behaviours often associated with low self-esteem or they may have poor school attendance or they may be involved in incidents of misbehaviour at school that are indicative of disengagement.

Clearly the issues of racism, low-self esteem and student disengagement are central issues for the schools involved in the A.R.A.B. project. Considerable resources are devoted to efforts to improve student engagement and to raise their levels of self-confidence and esteem so that the students can achieve the outcomes they and their families aspire to.

The experience of the schools that have already worked with VASS on the A.R.A.B. project is that projects such as this provide a genuine and practical forum through which the school can focus and assist the students involved. It is hoped that the project - in imparting life skills of self-understanding, self-respect and respect for others despite racial, cultural, religious or gender differences, through a creative collaboration - will contribute to the student's sense of social cohesion and responsibility.

Principal, School Partner

As well as its work in the Northern region, the project has reached audiences in:

- Inner Melbourne
- North-east region of Melbourne
- Port Augusta in South Australia
- Kempsey and Moree in New South Wales
- Swanhill and Malmsbury in Victoria
- ABC TV viewing audience
- Triple J National Youth radio Audience
- New York Comedy Festival Audience

3.5 Breakdown of A.R.A.B. performers

This information is based on performer numbers as at the beginning of 2006. Confidential information was collected via questionnaires and discussions from a total of sixty-nine performers through the participating schools.

Cultural background

Somali	2
Argentinean	1
Australian-Anglo-Celtic	14
El Salvadorian	1
Filipino	1

Samoan	12
Samoan-Chinese	1
Cook Islander	1
Tongan	1
Sri Lankan-Anglo	1
Assyrian	9
Turkish	1
Moroccan	1
Aboriginal/Italian	1
Anglo-Portuguese	1
Croatian	1
Anglo-Mauritian	1
Lebanese	13
Scottish	1
New Zealander	1
Greek	1
Italian-Anglo	1
Italian-Egyptian	1
Aboriginal	1

Religious affiliation

Muslim	16
Christian	40
Baptist	1
Mormon	4
Non-religious	20

3.6 Project strategies, innovations and methodologies

A.R.A.B.'s artistic directors describe their working model as "a performance company working ethos within a not-for-profit organisation". Both artistic directors work at creating a collaborative ensemble within a highly structured rehearsal process that has clear, high-standard performance outcomes. The project has an emphasis on long-term work collaborative work that can sustain and support solid creative and personal connections for participants. From this foundation issues around self-esteem, racism, confidence and more can be addressed.

So far, A.R.A.B. has created two main productions, *Yallah Shabiba* and *Yallah Hayat!*, both involving large numbers of youth working with professional performers. The two artistic directors direct on the floor and structure the narrative of the show. They also coordinate all the combined (all schools) rehearsals. Major productions were performed several times at fixed or roving venues.

3.6.1 Rehearsal not workshop

From the outset youth are made aware that they are at a rehearsal and not simply a one off workshop. This puts in place a clear goal and structure with a performance end in mind. The artistic directors believe this creates a different expectation of the young people and generates a higher level of performance.

There can be nothing more vague than developing skills that have no airing to an audience. We can all do that in the lounge room...[it] does not challenge you to the same degree as performing your piece in front of 500 youth from a neighbouring school. The performer/audience relationship can be electric and transformative for the individual. *Kate Gillick, A.R.A.B. Artistic Director*

Rehearsals are held a regular time (lunchtime or after school) and the young people are expected to turn up consistently and to inform project staff if they are unable to attend. There is a rule that if you come to rehearsal “you come, you do” – there is no sitting on the sidelines and watching, and students from outside the project are not permitted to simply watch rehearsals. If a young person misses rehearsal they are expected to “get up to speed” from a fellow performer. Working with such large numbers can sometimes be chaotic and lack focus, but artistic director Kate Gillick says, “We have worked hard to develop a sense of pride in the ensemble and this has brought focus and greater discipline...there is generally a more serious approach to the weekly rehearsal [when leading up to a major performance]”.

A huge highlight and challenge is the organisation of the combined (all schools/performers) rehearsals.

The scheduling of one hundred youth performers, half a dozen artists, two directors, sound technicians, project worker, school partners, transport and rehearsal space is always daunting but once we are there at our first rehearsal space the atmosphere is incredibly exciting, the energy is always bouncing off the walls. This part of the work stretches us to our limit but it is the working of the large ensemble, in all its difference and wild energy that is the heart of what we are doing. *Kate Gillick, A.R.A.B. Artistic Director*

The A.R.A.B. project is successful in getting individuals and groups of youth who wouldn't necessarily mix in everyday day life together through the vehicle of artistic collaboration. Often working together for long periods of time, this collaboration allows for different relationships to emerge and supports the development of high level artistic product in a hardworking, yet fun, environment.

3.6.2 Videoing/writing/editing/structuring phase

A theme is set early on for the major productions (for example for the 2006 show *Yallah Hayat!* the theme of friendship and the idiosyncrasies of culture was explored). Filming happens on and off throughout the rehearsal process. Artistic Directors sift through this material and use it as a tool to write scenes or scenarios and to devise the overall tone and structure of the show. Some

selected sections of film are edited and incorporated into the documentary section of the final production.



3.6.3 Confidence dance circle

At the end of most performances the youth assist in running and participating in a *Confidence Dance Circle* with their audience. This is a strategy devised and run predominantly by key dance artist Michael Farah. *Confidence Dance Circles* or “circles” consist of performers and audience forming a large circle while music is playing.

The person or persons running the circle makes a point that the circle of people is now the ‘group’ or the ‘gang’ and everyone is encouraged to have a go at dancing in the middle on their own and ‘to just shake their thing’ any old way they like. People are encouraged to break out of the peer pressure cycle, to be confident, try something different such as a slick new move or a completely daggy one and share it with everyone. The circle is a way of people inspiring one another, and giving support to whoever is in the middle.



in

The dance circles sometimes take a little while to crank up and for the youth to be brave enough to throw themselves - but they soon gain momentum and no-one usually wants it to end. The circle requires the youth to be both vulnerable and brave at the same time. The circles are a successful way the Project has been able to use an aspect of ‘street culture’ to subvert and challenge gang culture.

3.6.4 Weaving traditional with contemporary

A.R.A.B. youth bring with them an untapped plethora of traditional and contemporary performance skills, which they are only too willing to extend, bend and twist in the performance context - be it Samoan floor clapping underscoring a video piece, beat boxing accompanying comic monologue or belly dancing morphing to Hip-Hop and back again. The edge in the projects large rehearsals and what makes the show so unique, is the ‘cross over’ of skills and the ‘lets try this’ mode of attack. The youths own natural curiosity and innate abilities are at the heart of an ethos that nurtures exploration, innovation and team building.

In the 2005 show *Yallah Shabiba!* a duet of free form belly dance was the perfect vehicle for *Spark*, which explored and celebrated the ignition of friendship. A Samoan hymn about the love of the Lord was used to express the emotion in friendships suffering from conflict. A fusion of Spanish guitar, rap and beat-box came out of an improvisation late in rehearsal between four boys, all from different schools. Allowing for, listening and learning from each other, being surprised, mixing it up, breaking the rules and offering the unexpected lies at the heart of A.R.A.B.'s approach.



4. The Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation was conducted over a six month period and covered a range of activities such as the *beyondblue* program, *TAWASAL* and the final October 2006 performance of *Yallah Hayat!* held at the Broadmeadows Town Hall.

4.1 Methodology

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data. Quantitative data included number of participants, audience records and number of performances and rehearsals. This data is taken from attendance records of participants and audiences at events and performances and detailed performance records kept by A.R.A.B. staff.

Qualitative data was collected through a range of tools including in-depth interviews, (via phone or in-person), in-depth written responses obtained from senior participants, questionnaires (participants and audience), photographs and documentary video footage.

The questionnaires were completed by audience and participants at various performances over the last year. In-depth written responses were completed by four senior participants who have been involved with the project for over two years. In-depth interviews with relevant people at partner schools, young people and their families were conducted between October 2006 and January 2007, by Julie Hallifax.

Notes were taken during interviews and the transcribed responses and research notes written up and either read back to the interviewee or emailed to ensure accuracy.

Video footage, including both interviews and performance material, was taken at various rehearsals and performances throughout 2005 and 2006 and photography was taken at all major performances, events and most rehearsals.

The evaluation processes included the following stages:

1. Literature and A.R.A.B. documents review
2. Determining evaluation indicators and developing evaluation surveys
3. Gathering data and in-depth interviews with youth participants
4. Gathering data and in-depth interviews with school partners
5. In-depth interviews with participants families
6. Gathering data from audiences/community organisations and local government
7. In-depth interviews with A.R.A.B. tutors and staff
8. Data analysis and reporting on the findings
9. Completion of the Final Evaluation Report

Note: Video material is intended for a documentary film which will serve to tell the story of the project and to act as yet another form of evaluation. It is not included in this written evaluation as it is still a work in progress and is intended to form part of a final, multimedia evaluation to be completed in 2008.



5. Key Findings

5.1 Participant, audience and performance numbers

VASS and A.R.A.B. management have reported major in-roads in the expansion of the project with respect to both the number of people who were engaged in the project and level of development by participants.

The project has also seen a marked increase in the number of performances that were achieved during 2006 and the number of audiences they were able to reach during this period. In 2006 the project's gigging section *TAWASL* doubled 2004 and 2005 figures, with audience figures doubling as a result. In 2004, A.R.A.B. performed 30 shows of varying duration and size, reaching an audience of 6,100 people. In 2005 A.R.A.B. performed 35 shows to audiences of 7,300 people. In 2006 this increased to 70 shows with an audience nearing 14,000 people.

It is evident that the project has exceeded expectations with respect to reaching a wider audience and with its aim to increase the amount of performances. Please see Attachment One for a more detailed look at the performance record.

Number of participants:

	2004	2005	2006
Core participants	70	100	120
Casual	20	30	50

Of the original 70 from 2004, approximately 50 continued in the project for the following two years. In 2005, approximately 50 new participants joined along with the 50 who had been participants in 2004. Of these 100, 80 continued with the project in 2006. The project, therefore, has had very good retention rates and aims to work with participants throughout their secondary schooling and beyond. A few senior members who have completed secondary schooling continue to work with the project as senior performers, often with added responsibilities such as MCing events and facilitating audience participation. A core group of senior performers regularly participate in *Tawasal*.

Number of performances:

2004	2005	2006
30	35	68

Total audience numbers:

2004	2005	2006
6100	7300	14,000

Audience numbers and performance numbers have dramatically increased over the three years particularly in 2006, as illustrated by the tables above. In 2006 A.R.A.B. almost doubled performances (68) performing to twice as many people (approximately 14,000). The young people and especially senior performers involved many of the gigs have been able to even more fully develop their performance skills in rap, beat box, drumming and dance because of having so many opportunities to use and demonstrate their skills.



Audience numbers and youth participating in workshops at major productions:

	Audience
Big Top Hop	3400
Listen Up! with <i>beyondblue</i>	2000
Hurriya!	700
Yallah Hayat!	1200

5.2 *Tawasal*

Tawasal is A.R.A.B.'s active "gigging" stream. Performers who have developed a piece of a high standard and are ready to perform outside of the major productions can participate in *Tawasal*. Some of the *Tawasal* performances have included rap, beat box, krumping and stand-up comedy. *Tawasal* also conducts workshops in various dance styles and can combine workshops and performances at one event. The *Tawasal* stream had 68 performances in 2006 – aside from the two major productions. Below is a sample of just some of the events at which the *Tawasal* team participated:

- Kangan TAFE Orientation Day
- Department of Human Services Head Office: Performance with a live feed to offices throughout Victoria
- YWCA Harmony Day Celebrations
- Youth Mental Health: *Listen Up! With Beyond Blue*, Federation Square
- Commonwealth Games Festival: *Big Top Hop*
- Northern Migrant & Refugee Youth Council
- Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission: *Unlocking Doors*
- Department of Human Services: International Food and Music Festival
- Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth Conference

- Juvenile Justice Centre, Parkville: Anti-Racism Workshops

The 2006 Performance Record list is attached as Appendix One. The enormous range and diversity of performance experiences gives the young people not only a chance to adapt their skills to a variety of settings but also to actively participate in and gain exposure to issues and ideas within their own community. Performers also are paid a modest fee for their gigging work and the Tawasal stream thereby gives them an opportunity for casual, skilled employment.

5.3 Awards

A.R.A.B. has received a number of awards, highlighting the success of this project. These include:

- A.R.A.B. performer, Kevin Nugara took out the *Kool Skools Best Rapper Award*, 2005
- A.R.A.B. performer, Pen Augaafapae received a nomination for best beat box, *Kool Skools Awards*, 2005
- The A.R.A.B. project came runner up in Vic Health Awards, in the *Community Arts Participation* section, 2005

5.4 Participant evaluations

Questionnaires were completed by 31 participants from a range of schools. The results are summarized and analysed below.

Participants were asked to rate A.R.A.B. weekly rehearsals. The results were as follows:

Excellent	13
Good	15
Fair	3
Poor	0

Participants were asked to use three words to describe the Combined Rehearsals (all schools' rehearsals) they had just completed for the Yallah Hayat show. Common responses included:

Fun (23)
Exciting (9)
Enjoyable (4)
Friendly/Friendship (3)
Hard work (3)
Awesome (2)
Amazing (2)
Messy (2)
Loud (2)
Excellent (2)
Great (2)
Challenging (2)

Other responses included:

- *Rewarding*
- *Cool*
- *Alive*
- *“Best in the World”*
- *Fantastic*
- *Connectedness*
- *Community*
- *Social*
- *Interesting*
- *Educational*
- *Funny*

In response to the question “Do you feel that you learnt anything about yourself or others through the A.R.A.B. project?” people recorded:

- *I have learnt many things about different nationalities and I am more confident*
- *The people were really nice*
- *It was fun working together to dance*
- *Other people’s cultures*
- *I’ve become a more movable person*
- *I can do more than what I thought*
- *How to interact with others and be more confident*
- *School is more than just academic subjects*
- *I have a lot more confidence in me than I thought*
- *I’ve learnt that everyone should be respected the same way as you want to be treated no matter what nationality you are [sic]*
- *To believe in yourself*

Participants said they had learnt the following skills or ideas in working with the A.R.A.B. project. These included:

- *Working as a team (2)*
- *How to dance (6)*
- *Belly dancing (3)*
- *Hip-Hop dancing (3)*
- *Not to be shy*
- *Put all your effort into it*
- *Being patient*
- *To get along with others*
- *Made me happy to see new students joining A.R.A.B. and enjoying it*
- *If you lesen it’s amazing what u can ocamplesh [sic]*

Other comments about performing and being a part of A.R.A.B. included:

- *It made me feel confident and happy, everyone cheering us on and supporting us*
- *It made me build up courage*
- *I really enjoyed dancing with my friends which is the best way to socialise [sic]*
- *It's great meeting friends*
- *It made me feel really happy to show kids and parents what we are able to do*
- *I felt good and embarrassed and scared in case I did something wrong but apart from that it's perfect*
- *More confident and nervous but proud*
- *It made me feel welcome*
- *I remember dancing hard*
- *I have overcome my stage fright [sic]*
- *Made me feel united with everyone*
- *It made me feel important knowing that I was a part of an important team*
- *I felt really really good about myself*
- *Meeting new people*
- *The thing I like about A.R.A.B. is working with different people*
- *It made me feel special...it was the most amazing day of my life!*
- *I love ARAB*
- *Performing made me feel good and happy to show people all of our skills and talents*
- *The thing I really liked was being able to show everyone our skills and meeting new people*

5.4.1 Analysis of findings

Of the 31 participants who returned completed forms, almost all had an excellent or good experience. Even the three participants who responded “fair” in their rating of the rehearsal process still had many other positive comments on the rest of their evaluation questionnaire. Just like audience members’ evaluations of performances, the majority of participants found rehearsals fun and exciting.

The words “friendship”, “community”, “social” and “connectedness” were often used, indicating that participants were able to form positive relationships as part of the rehearsal and performing process. This is further supported by the fact that a large number of the participants highlighted meeting new people as an important and memorable part of the A.R.A.B. experience for them (See also in-depth responses section below).

Being in the shows was not only about building confidence and skills but also about creating new friendships, working together for a common goal and having a sense of belonging and participation.

In terms of skills development, participants highlighted specific dance skills together with emotional skills such as confidence, patience and overcoming fear or shyness. Many participants remarked about a sense of increased confidence and of simply “feeling good” about performing and being part of



something – indicating that a sense of belonging has been generated throughout the A.R.A.B. project.

Participants were also pleased at the opportunity to show friends, family and other audiences their skills. Sometimes even they themselves were surprised at what they had been able to accomplish.

Finally, many respondents felt they had learnt about other backgrounds and cultures. Many participants highlighted the need to respect one another's cultural background with shows such as *Yallah Hayat* showcasing artistic forms from a number of different cultural groups.

5.5 Senior participant evaluations

In-depth written evaluation responses were completed by four senior performers, all of whom have been with the project for at least two years.

The following summary looks at the main themes and comments with responses being obtained from specific questions posed in a questionnaire and through their open feedback.

Many of the themes that emerged in the general participant questionnaires above also emerged in these senior participant responses. For example, senior respondents also noticed improved confidence in themselves and in other A.R.A.B. participants. One participant said her increased confidence had helped her with other things such as giving speeches in class. Another participant expressed his increased confidence in terms of “conquering his fears” of performance. A third felt not only increased confidence, but general well-being: “It makes me feel better about myself. I mean to do what you love doing, it's pretty awesome”.

A fourth said she “learnt to enjoy herself, to be more open with people when they have curiosity about my disability and how to negotiate and communicate my needs”. Not only did this participant's confidence improve, but also her communication skills and capacity to enjoy herself.

Again, like the general participant respondents, the senior performers also pointed to “meeting new people” and forming friendships and productive relationships as a highlight of participation in the A.R.A.B. project.

One respondent said they were all “close friends in the dance group” and were “tight knit”. This group is so comfortable with each other and committed to the project that they practice in their own time and can “laugh at our

mistakes". The respondent also observed inter-school friendships forming during the combined rehearsals. This helped to "break down the stereotypes" of what students from other schools are like. Two of the interviewees, when asked to list their major achievements in the project, both stated "friendship".

One male participant said: "I have certainly created a lot of friendships during the time I have been in the project. I have got some professional advice from others."

Interviewees noticed other changes in their life since joining A.R.A.B. as outlined in the following comments:

Times were always rough for me at home and at school, but after meeting the A.R.A.B. crew I have been really focussed on what I want to do in the future. *Senior performer*

I was always out with the boys getting drunk, making trouble. I was just "hanging out" a lot with my friends....At the time there were no activities in the community or school where I could perform like I do with ARAB so they've definitely given me the opportunity to do that. *Senior participant*

School: Evil place. At home my family had too much expectations [sic] of my school studies. I wasn't doing as well as they would've hoped. I was struggling with my perseverance in being at school...in the end I proved them wrong and passed the V.C.E. and got into uni... *Senior participant*

I was more frustrated then [when first joined A.R.A.B.] and had low self-esteem. I was frustrated with my disability, frustrated with my education because I couldn't read and write. I was frustrated with my classmates coz [sic] I was too fat by their standards. *Senior participant*

Interviewees were also asked about skills they had developed in being involved with A.R.A.B. As detailed below, in addition increasing confidence, they were able to develop concrete artistic skills such as rap, beat box, dance or comic monologue.

Definitely the art of freestyle rap and getting the crowd involved. I wasn't used to that but now do it regularly during gigs...I write a lot more now than I used to. *Senior participant*

A.R.A.B. has given me more opportunities to speak in front of an audience so I'm getting more experienced in that aspect. MCing is another skill A.R.A.B. has appointed me to do as well. *Senior participant*

Everyone thinks it's great that I am doing something I believe in. That I'm learning skills and using them to say something worthwhile Performance and writing. Writing without fear! Connecting with the audience. *Senior participant*

Significantly, respondent experiences often exceeded their own expectations. One wrote: "It's way better than I thought it would be" and another, "A.R.A.B. is the funnest ever!" A third noted that they had performed much more than he ever expected:

[It is different to what I expected]...how much we've done in terms of gigs and challenges such as working un-miked, performing in front of suits and ties(!), rapping on a megaphone...it's such a major part of my life right now that I just want to keep getting better each time. *Senior participant*

One participant wrote that the experience of receiving encouragement from other younger students when performing had made her consider a future career in teaching. She also had not expected to get so much attention and "Find a talent! I wasn't just ignored like most of my school life".

One interviewee also wanted to comment on the work with the artists and directors including the expectations and methods used in the A.R.A.B. working model. She said: "The artists treat us like adults, like they see our potential and our limits but the expectation is high". The respondent also said that "It's not easy doing what we do" and "It's pressure but it's not bad pressure".

Like the general participants, there was a sense amongst these senior participants that sometimes preparing for performances is hard work – but that's it's worthwhile and there is a sense of unity in working together on a project. "The performances are important. There would be a lot less kids turning up if our work didn't lead to a performance".

Another respondent also highlighted the importance of their relationship to artistic director Kate Gillick and her role as "writing coach".

5.6 Individual case studies

During the course of this evaluation school partners, including principals, teachers and A.R.A.B. facilitators, completed survey's to obtain feedback about their involvement and experience of the project. The majority reported that overall, the project had been a major factor in changing attitude and behaviour, levels of self esteem and school involvement amongst the youth.

From these initial surveys in-depth interviews were then undertaken revealing several outstanding examples of individual youth development.

These youth were then researched further, with interviews undertaken with a family member, principal or teacher and the youth to measure the development of the individual from different perspectives. The following case studies highlight the positive outcomes and experience felt by all involved.

A is a 16 year old Australian/Polish female. She has been with the A.R.A.B. project for two years and is a belly dancer. (See her story at the beginning of this Report)

The Principal reported:

I have noticed increased confidence in the students, particularly students such as A, who might be considered a misfit or odd. The project has given them an outlet to connect with their peers and allows them to come out of their shells.

Mother of A reported:

On a scale of one to ten in self confidence and self esteem, I'd say A was around four or five in 2004, when she first started with the A.R.A.B. project, since she has been learning and performing belly dance, I'd say she is now more like an eight to ten. A was quite an introverted girl. She has a high IQ but found it hard to make friends and socialise. I really feel like she's come out of her shell in the last couple of years. I was surprised when she started doing belly dance.

When I saw her first performance I thought, my god, I didn't know my daughter could move like that. It was a surprise to see her so free with the moves, she looked confident doing them.

She's also become more socially aware around the issues of racism and we are able to have conversations about issues that come up. Let's say she has more social awareness than she used to. It was good to see her perform in The Big Top Hop in the Commonwealth Games Festival as it got out to a large and different audience. She really loves it. She comes out of her room doing her moves and I have to say she's pretty good at them. They are not easy!

B is a 16 year old Anglo Celtic Australian. She has been with the project for two years and is a hip hop dancer.

Performing Arts Coordinator/Teacher and A.R.A.B. facilitator reported:

The project gives the students the opportunity to be successful in a different setting, a performance setting. It has broadened their network of peers, allowed them to make friends from different backgrounds and year levels. Because the project is open to all youth, it attracts those who get involved in everything and those that have trouble getting involved, for example students such as B. The project is inclusive, doesn't exclude kids on the basis of their talent

Great Aunty of B reported:

B does not leave the house generally, or even her bedroom at times, even when it comes to things like shopping for clothes, she will tell me “you know what I like and what size I am, you buy them”. She is not social at school and doesn’t have many friends. On a scale of one to ten her self-confidence prior to the project would be about a two, after her involvement in the project for the past two years her self-confidence would be at about a six. Before the project there is no way she would have got up in front of people and performed for example at the Commonwealth Games Festival, where as now she is full of it and cant’ get enough. B does not socialise at school and has been bullied by the other girls. In the beginning I think the project allowed her to get out of the school yard and away from the isolation and bullying, but now she loves it, she nearly cried when the performance ended because she wouldn’t be able to continue through the holidays. I guess the main thing she is getting out of the project is being able to socialise with other kids, she now talks to some of them online, she will not leave the house but she will leave the house for the project.

One of the major successes of the project is the noticeable difference in levels of self-esteem and confidence within the participants along with a new understanding and tolerance of difference as reported by the staff, tutors, school partners and the students themselves.

The school partners have been able to shed light from a relatively objective point of view on the benefits they have observed throughout the process. The following extracts are taken from interviews and written comments from the partner schools:

C is a 15 old Australian/Assyrian who has been in the project for three years as a hip hop and breakdancer.

Principal of C reported

C has been involved in the project from the beginning, it is only speculative as it’s difficult to say what he would have been like without the project, but the project has put C in a position of leadership and responsibility. He wasn’t a spokes person before but has taken on a leadership and organisational role within the project. He wasn’t a big troublemaker before the project, but given his negative attitude towards school, he could have gone the other way, the project has enabled him to be recognised and acknowledged for the talent that he has. The turning point that I have observed in C came when he was chosen to do some individual performances in last years *Yallah Hayat!* at Broadmeadows Town Hall, it dawned on me that he was really showing something.

Teacher of C. reported:

I have observed an increase in communication and interaction skills, self-esteem and a sense of belonging amongst the youth. C who has been with the project since the beginning has gone from showing aggressive behaviour to being able to communicate more as well as showing a real development towards respecting his peers and staff. The feedback from other staff members also suggests that he has made real improvements in his behaviour and academics.

5.7 Audience evaluations

The following section summarizes the results from a range of evaluation questionnaires completed at various A.R.A.B. events, including the major production *Yallah Hayat*, workshops at *Croc Fest* and a number of smaller gigs.

5.7.1 *Yallah Hayat!* audience evaluation

Each year A.R.A.B. explores a new theme. A.R.A.B's 2005 show *Yallah Shabiba!*, probed the arena of race, by exploring the universality of friendship. In 2006 *Yallah Hayat!* built on this theme by also involving the parents of the your participants, their schools and their community leaders.

The result was a potent, electric, multi media narrative that explored the myths, truths, idiosyncrasies, contradictions and hallmarks of culture. Youth were able to ask themselves, their families and their audience, "What is race?" In this way the voices of the many were represented and heard in turn becoming part of a much larger picture.



The main objective of *Yallah Hayat!* and A.R.A.B. in general is to infuse a culture of youth with an enjoyable, creative alternative that has an impact on current racial tensions and negative self-perceptions that for many youth remain the status quo.

From a total audience of 1200 over three *Yalla Havat!* shows, 91 completed evaluation forms were returned.

Questionnaires asked audience members to rate the show as excellent, good, fair or poor. The results were as follows:

Excellent	53
Good	29
Fair	8
Poor	-
Form incomplete:	1

Audience members were asked to use three words to describe the show. Some of the common answers were:

Fun (30)
Exciting (15)
Energetic (7)
Fantastic (5)
Entertaining (5)
Enjoyable (4)
Educating (4)
Well-organised (4)
Multicultural (4)
Cool (3)
Vibrant (2)

As well as:

Passionate
Diverse
Life-affirming
Motivating
Crazy
Amazing
Up-lifting

Some of the comments made by young people and adults (including teachers) at performances were:

- *I liked the performance because you can clearly see how dedicated and proud the performers are*
- *What a wonderful concept*
- *I enjoyed the performance as there were many cultures which participated in it [sic] and brought a great vibe throughout the hall*
- *I really loved it because I got to see lots of different stuff*
- *Great to see the kids working together and having a great time*
- *Very fun to watch*
- *A wonderful positive confidence booster for the kids*
- *An awesome way to fuse culture, age and gender*
- *Enthusiasm of the kids was exceptional*
- *Each time I have seen this group I have been amazed at what the kids are capable of achieving*
- *I would like to see more involvement by [students from another school]*

5.7.2 Maysa Abouzeid

Maysa Abouzeid's performance at the Islamic Women's Welfare Council in November 2006 and Iftar Dinner, University of Melbourne in October 2006.

Maysa is a self-declared “legally blind, Italian-Egyptian, Muslim, Female Comedian” who has been with the A.R.A.B. project for two and a half years.



The following comments were recorded as part of performance evaluation:

- *What a talented and inspiring young woman*
- *I liked it because it takes courage to do something out of your comfort zone*
- *The performance was very funny*
- *Excellent. Keep up the good work*
- *Maysa is very inspiring to everyone*
- *Maysa is captivating, confident but modest. Great show sister!*
- *I WANT TO SEE HER GO HUGE!*
- *Maysa was so funny I couldn't stop laughing*

5.7.3 Tawasal evaluation

Various comments and feedback were received from the *Tawasal* stream of A.R.A.B. Sixty-six performances were conducted in 2006, not including the two major productions *Yallah Hayat* and *Hurriya!*.

The following comments were made:

- *What a brilliant example of working together with young people*
- *Inspirational*
- *Moving*
- *Big Impact*
- *Keep it up!*
- *Spectacular*
- *Positive*
- *Fabulous to see young people demonstrating that diversity is an absolute enhancement to our community*
- *The variety of performance was exceptional*
- *Energetic*
- *Talented*
- *Dynamic*
- *Raw*
- *Predictable*
- *Wish my kid could've seen this!*

5.7.4 Croc Fest evaluations

In October 2006, *beyondblue* supported A.R.A.B. to participate in *Croc Fest*, a youth festival for indigenous and non-indigenous Australians that includes education, health-expos, performing arts, inspirational activities and more. It is held annually at a number of locations around Australia. A.R.A.B. conducted 20 workshops over two days in Swanhill for groups of between eight and 45, with the average number in each group being about 25.

Eighteen completed evaluation forms were returned by young people who participated in workshops over the two days.

All 18 rated the workshops as “excellent” on a scale of excellent, good, fair and poor.

Some of the comments from teachers and youth group leaders were:

- *That was great! They really liked the routine.*
- *110% better than what we expected. It's hard to tackle the subject of depression with kids, but your approach was great and effective.*
- *Fantastic!*
- *I didn't expect the students to participate as well as they did. It would easily be their favourite activity of the day.*
- *It was brilliant. Exactly what they needed.*
- *Very effective way of delivering the message to raise awareness about depression*
- *The message sent across to the kids was fantastic.*
- *Awesome fun and I liked the angle you took with the kids because the message was put across through dance. It was amazing and I'll be back again tomorrow to join in again.*
- *Thank you!*
- *It was fantastic and it's the highest number of students we've had participate out of all of the workshops.*
- *It was great! Our kids had smiles on their faces the whole time. I can't believe they all joined in. They don't usually react like that.*



5.7.5 Analysis of findings

These findings span across a range of performances and workshops. Whether it is a big show like *Yallah Hayat*, dance workshops at *Croc Fest*, comic monologue by a solo performer or smaller “gigs” with a handful of performers, the overwhelming response of audiences is extremely positive. These findings show that A.R.A.B. is able to produce various types of performances, large and small, in a variety of styles as well delivering

workshops to teach young people in a whole range of settings. The positive and enthusiastic response of audiences and workshop participants in a range of settings demonstrates A.R.A.B.'s adaptability, versatility, energy and extraordinary level of organisation at being able to "pull off" performances and workshops wherever they go.

Findings confirm that as a performing arts project, A.R.A.B. has been highly successful. It has reached, satisfied and inspired a range of audiences, young and old, in extremely diverse settings across Victoria.

The "theatre company" model and structure created by the artistic directors has created a strong work ethic amongst participants and produced a high level of performance and skill in the participants. It has also allowed the project to go beyond the scope of simply "workshops" at schools to develop a committed rehearsal structure with performance goals in mind. The young people commit to participating in the large productions and they must take the leap of having to perform for audiences, large or small.

A.R.A.B. is now highly sought after to perform at many events in Melbourne, across Victoria, interstate and overseas.

5.8 Partnerships

During 2006, the project has reached larger and more diverse audiences and developed new networks and links that have been highly beneficial in supporting the projects profile. These links have also opened the way for future opportunities and possible funding from a number of interested groups and organisations.

A.R.A.B. increased links with schools and organisations in the region by over 80 per cent with over 80 new schools and organisations being contacted to participate in *Hurriya!* and *Yallah Hayat!*

Previously A.R.A.B.'s major shows had been predominately attended by their partner schools, however in 2006 the number and diversity of schools and organisations increased substantially with around 22 new schools and organisations attending mayor shows.

The following comments highlight some of the positive feedback:

I thought the *Hurriya!* event was fantastic and had such a positive vibe. it was a great opportunity for them [our students] to watch other young people giving things a go and overcoming the fear of putting themselves out of their comfort zone and being 'individuals' in front of their peers. It was also an opportunity for them to see young people supporting each other as opposed to 'putting down' each other. The students we have at our program have been out of mainstream school for some time and therefore have some pretty high barriers to actually be able to take these sorts of risks and give things a go, however, I think they enjoyed the event and hopefully it challenged some of their thinking! Since then a few of the girls have decided that they would like to practice their hip-hop dancing in the hope of maybe being involved next

year. Thanks for putting it on. What a great message to send to young people and all people in general. I think I may have got as much out of it as our students! *Youth Programs Coordinator, Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education*

I'd like to personally thank you and the teachers who worked with you and the other six schools on your performance at the Broadmeadows Town Hall. It was one of the best shows I've seen which showcased so much for so many. I write this without any reservation and would have loved to have seen this show performed to an even bigger audience. Your information is important because of the involvement of so many people and students and it illustrates without a doubt the desire to work and collaborate with minimal budgets and tons of talent. I look forward to receiving from you the write up and really wish you well. Please send this to the schools and let them know how much I appreciated their work and that the students really impressed me with the energy and vibe that they created. *NMR Music Coordinator*

Other organisations including Hume Youth Services, Dallas Neighbourhood Centre, Darebin Youth Services and Juvenile Justice have all expressed interested in using A.R.A.B. to conduct workshops and performances. They have also indicated interest in future partnerships.

5.8.1 School partners

Since 2004, the A.R.A.B. project has worked in partnership with Broadmeadows Secondary College, Hillcrest Secondary College, Box Forest Secondary College and Lakeside Secondary. As outlined in the chart below, Broadmeadows has been involved in the project from the start, with Hillcrest, Boxhill and Lakeside commencing in 2005. Shorter term partners (one year or less) include Lyndale Secondary College and Laylor Secondary College.

2004	2005	2006	2007
Broadmeadows S.C.	Broadmeadows S.C.	Broadmeadows S.C.	Broadmeadows S.C.
Moreland City College	Hillcrest S.C.	Hillcrest S.C.	Hillcrest S.C.
Preston Girls	Box Forest S.C.	Box Forest S.C.	Box Forest S.C.
	Lakeside S.C.	Lakeside S.C.	Lakeside S.C.
		Lalor North S.C.	Lalor North S.C.
		Lyndale S.C. (2 terms only)	
		Erinbank S.C. (one term only)	

Despite their support and interest in such a project, the partnership with Lyndale did not continue past six months due to travel and funding constraints.

The new partnership with Lalor North Secondary School (one of the largest groups with over 25 participants) has proven to be a success with their ongoing commitment.

A.R.A.B. was also approached by Erinbank Secondary College to conduct workshops for eight weeks, in order to deal with issues of racism within the school and with the hope of creating interest amongst the youth for a future partnership.

5.8.2 School partner findings

In 2006 A.R.A.B. worked with seven school partners. Within each school a teacher or other worker (such as a Cultural Diversity Worker) was the main point of contact for the A.R.A.B. project and acted as an A.R.A.B. facilitator/team member. Often other staff, such as school principals, are closely involved. As part of the evaluation process, some of teachers, principals or other workers who had worked closely with the A.R.A.B project completed questionnaires (either written or through an interview process) about their experience with the A.R.A.B. project. The following section looks at their responses.

In total six questionnaires were completed. The school partner representatives were asked to use three words to describe the project. Some of the answers were:

- *Connecting*
- *Exhilarating*
- *Challenging*
- *Supportive*
- *Caring*
- *Regular*
- *Available*
- *Welcoming*
- *Involving*
- *Encouraging*
- *Discipline*
- *Engaging*
- *Entertaining*
- *Active*

Many of these responses indicate the inclusive and supportive nature of the project (caring, welcoming, connecting, regular, available, involving, encouraging and so on) as well as the challenge and hard work (discipline) required in being involved.

School partners team members were also asked to describe any changes they had observed in the young people involved in the project. Interestingly, just as the young people had themselves frequently reported increased confidence and development of positive relationships (see Participant Evaluations section above), so too did school partners.

One teacher, for example, wrote that the students achieved the following skills: “commitment, reliability, team work, courage and confidence”.

According to the teacher they also “were able to develop lasting relationships with people outside of school”.

Another noted increased “self-esteem, levels of responsibility and connection to the school.” Two others also mentioned increased self-esteem and “a sense of belonging”. One noted improved communication skills and better interaction between students. Almost all of the school partner workers specifically mentioned increased confidence and “sense of belonging”, feeling part of something and a greater connection to the school or their peers.

One teacher described this sense of community and support in the following way:

P was a new student to the school and from a refugee background. Being part of the group gave him acceptance into the school. A lot of the kids had personal traumas in their lives but no matter what, they turned up to rehearsals. H, for example, turned up with a big black eye and she knew I would have to make a DHS report [Department of Human Services child protection notification], but she still turned up to rehearsal and the group supported her at this time. One of the families involved in the project had a family member [seriously injured] in a car accident...and again everyone closed around each other and offered support.
School Partner Team Member

Another school partner team member referred to the positive effects of working with other groups and the sense of community generated by the project:

Meeting and working with their peers from neighbouring schools and community members has also benefited our students; it has helped to break down barriers and forged new friendships and greater understanding within the community. *School Partner Team Member*

Relationships with the artists and teachers on the project were also important:

What is critical in the project is the relationship the kids have with the people in the project. Michael [choerographer/tutor] is outstanding and the success of the project comes back to Kate, Jeremy [artsitc directors] and Michael...the way they deal with the kids, you can see they really care for them...
School Partner Team Member

The mentoring that has taken place with Jeremy and John has been really beneficial [and] has provided the kids with advice and guidance. *School Partner Facilitator*

The project also engaged parents and the wider school community:

What makes this project different is that it involves so many different schools and students which then draws in more parent community involvement. It's really important that you engage the families in the process, through performances, as without their support it would fold in. We saw a lot of parents coming to the performances and actually bringing other relatives, friends and neighbours as well. *School Partner Facilitator*

Quite a few [participants] are able to bring friends and family to a performance and say "Look what I've done and I feel I've done well, don't you think?" It gives the kids the opportunity to hear a positive response to this question. *School Partner Facilitator*

Project challenges from a school perspective

The project has not been without its challenges. As well as the benefits and positive changes in the youth and school community, school partner team members also described some of the challenges they faced. Almost all mentioned scheduling of rehearsals and obtaining release from school to perform in shows as difficult to manage, especially around school class times and other commitments the youth have. Scheduling around exams was often cited as a problem for the teachers and school partners. Also, work by school partner team members was voluntary and they needed to find the time to carry out this extra workload, often without enough support. A few of the school partner team members mentioned the need to get more support from within the education system in the future and one mentioned that it would be great for other staff in the school to see this evaluation to better understand work involved and the positive effect the project is having. It was suggested that distribution of the A.R.A.B. DVD could also support this.

5.8.3 Broader links and networks

In addition to school partners, the A.R.A.B. project has built successful on-going relationships with a range of other organisations and groups. A.R.A.B. has strong and productive relationships with funding partners, local government and community organisations many of whom have participated in performances, workshop or events such as Harmony Day celebrations, government launches or Youth Week activities in Federation Square.

The following comments highlight the projects positive relationships with other organisations and groups in the community.

Bennelong Foundation have undertaken to fund the A.R.A.B. project for three years and both myself and the Directors are very supportive and excited about the project. I was lucky enough to attend one of the performances last year at Broadmeadows Town Hall and it was a wonderful experience. It was energetic, entertaining, professional and the involvement with the kids in the audience was fantastic.

Having been to a couple of the rehearsals during the year, it was great to see how the whole show came together and it is a credit to Kate, Jeremy and the other tutors/teachers of how professional the show is. It certainly builds self esteem, team building and the bringing together of different cultures and religions for a common goal, which is what makes it so successful and inspiring.

Susan Frances, Bennelong Foundation

Last year I was privileged to attend a performance at the Broadmeadows Town Hall and was thrilled by the experience...it was one of the most vital, entertaining, pertinent and controlled works I've seen. Despite the number of participants involved the scenes or acts flowed seamlessly. The performers were committed, focused, skilful and bold. It was very exciting to watch. There was great co-operation and harmony in the performance which is in essence what it's all about. There was an element of great joy I have rarely witnessed in a performance of any variety. It was contagious. And the contagion worked for the entire audience, from delighted and captivated primary school children to parents and teachers and others equally captivated.

The project works. The sense of pride and flourishing self-esteem was palpable. The confidence and skills involved were impressive. The overall message against racism was powerful.

I congratulate all those involved creatively in the process and those who assisted funding this exciting and vital project. I hope they continue to do so. *Patricia Cornelius, Melbourne Playwright and Novelist*

A.R.A.B has been highly successful in engaging young people from the Hume City region in a unique performing arts program. Hume City is an interface municipality characterized by very high levels of cultural diversity and areas of severe socio-economic disadvantage. As one of Australia's largest Islamic populations, Hume City has been particularly affected by issues following the terrorist attacks in America and the war against terrorism. This area has also been influenced over a number of years by negative stereotypes and misconceptions. Our community is one for which social harmony is particularly important and where the key characteristics of community wellbeing may not be present.

A.R.A.B. provides participants with the opportunity to be involved in a range of performing art forms – particularly music and dance – that they would not normally have access to. Young people in this area don't have access to the range of performing arts programs or opportunities for self-expression available in other areas. The performances developed by A.R.A.B. present dynamic and authentic expressions of youth culture that reflect the unique characteristics and experiences of young people in our area. These performances are also very moving, with young people sharing in a very open and sincere way their personal and cultural identity, the misconceptions they tackle on a daily basis, and their hopes and aspirations for the future. Since A.R.A.B.'s inception it has been

possible to follow the development of lead artists within the program. Some have gone on to develop professional profiles both in Melbourne and overseas. Young people are also being prepared to take lead roles in event management and marketing and promotion. *Anne Kershaw, Arts and Cultural Planner, Hume City Council*

Those working on the project have also noticed the effects on their community. Young people are mixing in different groups and inter-school friendships are forming (see youth performers sections above). According to one of the key artists working on the project since 2004, 2006 was characterised as being more harmonious than previous years with a strong sense of supportiveness developed between all the young people regardless of which group they were in or which school they are from. “Competitiveness between the schools has diminished and over the last year the performers have been much more supportive of each other.”

5.8.4 Artistic team

To gain some understanding of the experience of the artists involved in the project, interviews were held with two of the artists and personal written responses were provided by a further two. The interviews/written response were with the two artistic directors and two of the dance tutors/choreographers involved in the project.

All four reported that their experience on the project was extremely positive and rewarding. This was the case across a range of levels including:

- Experiencing positive professional and/or personal development
- Observing positive and exciting changes around them
- Observing the experiences for the young performers
- Achieving artistic productivity and satisfaction (reflected also in audience and participant’s satisfaction – see above sections)
- Developing positive and productive community relationships/partnerships (whether with schools, other organisations, individuals or community).

Two of the dance tutors reported positive experiences in respect to the rapport and creative relationships built with the young people over time. One described a very “tough” student who did not like displaying emotion or enthusiasm and who, by the end of the project, couldn’t wait until the following year. This person even wanted to keep rehearsing during the holidays.

Another tutor talked about the rewarding experience of working with young people and seeing the enjoyment they get from the project:

There is not one workshop I do where I don’t get goosebumps. For example there is one young boy who struggles with all of the choreographies but he’s there week in, week out. He also struggles socially at school. But by the end of rehearsal he is jumping around and saying “Thanks! We had so much fun today!”
Dance Tutor/Choreographer

One of the artistic directors pointed to the positive changes in the young people and their hidden talents as one of the highlights of the project:

It is really rewarding seeing the transformations that take place in the young people over time, that is, the transformations they notice about themselves. Even they feel they are unrecognisable – in the best possible sense. The kids have also surprised us. Just when we're wondering how the whole thing is going to come together we find the kids have the trump card in their pocket. Innate in all of them is a mighty fine show-off! They just come out and blow us all away! *Dance Tutor/Choreographer*

Artist challenges

All the artists had found challenges in the work alongside the rewards. Never having enough time and being “stretched to the limit” in terms of time and resources came up as a theme. All artists noted that the dramatic growth of the project over the last year had meant that 2006 was a particularly hectic year. Two of the artists also mentioned that despite this, it all “came together in the end” and the youth performers “shone”.

One of the artists also noted that the project had impacted the wider community, resulting in the “transformation of a community that extended outside of the project”.

Strong relationships had formed between partner schools and the workers at these schools who facilitated the project. One of the artistic directors noted that the relationships with schools partners and workers within these schools “continues to get stronger and deeper and we have a greater understanding of each other’s needs and wants and this provides better results for the kids [youth participants].”



The youth are also becoming known in their communities as “real little go-getters”

because of their participation in the project and they have developed a “fantastic level of pride in what they do”. This is noticed by those who come to view their work.

6. Conclusion

This Stage One Research and Evaluation Report confirms A.R.A.B. as a dynamic community development tool that has far-reaching and long-term implications for communities and individuals involved.

As highlighted through the testimonials and statistical data gathered from youth participants, schools, audiences, family and the A.R.A.B. team, the project has well exceeded its goals and been able to meet its aims and objectives through careful planning, creative skill and commitment from all involved.

Evidence shows that it is not just youth participants themselves who are the beneficiaries of A.R.A.B activities. A.R.A.B. has also had a positive impact on the local area, strengthening communities and increasing engagement between partner schools, families and the broader community.

Specifically the Report demonstrates positive outcomes in the following key areas:

Increasing self confidence, self esteem and self image amongst the youth: This has been achieved with testimonials highlighting the positive experience and outcomes amongst youth, their families and teachers through collaborative, creative and inclusive processes.

Community strengthening: Demonstrated through successful collaboration, participation and engagement through out the range of A.R.A.B. activities and productions.

Reducing racism through the celebration of diversity: Through its work, A.R.A.B. has been able to challenge racism and gang culture in the north and north-west of Melbourne with youth developing increased respect, understanding, tolerance and awareness through their experience.

Skills development: Demonstrated by the development of further pathways to employment, education and training amongst a number of A.R.A.B. participants. Specific arts skills have been developed in a variety of art forms.

Capacity building: Demonstrated through the increased number of performances, increased audience numbers and new audience groups and youth participant willingness to grow alongside the project as a whole.

Supporting success: A.R.A.B. has provided a vital arena for youth participants to be able to celebrate success, have fun

and enjoy the satisfaction of achieving tangible outcomes that would otherwise be unavailable.

Strengthened partnerships: The project has seen the development of new partnerships and the strengthening of existing relationships with many organisations and groups.

Mental Health and well being: The project has successfully tackled the issues of depression, isolation and anti-social behaviour through a performing arts framework. Specific areas include:

Social inclusion

A.R.A.B. has successfully addressed the issue of social inclusion by opening the project to all youth, regardless of age, cultural background, religion, gender or skill level and creating a supportive environment where youth are encouraged to participate collaborate and invent new forms of expression without being judged. This has been demonstrated by the number of young people participating from a range of cultural backgrounds and reports by young people of increased social connectedness and involvement in community and school.

Freedom from discrimination and violence

Broadening the A.R.A.B. program to include all cultural backgrounds and not just Arabic communities has enabled A.R.A.B. to address diversity and discrimination directly. Evidenced through participant feedback, this inclusive strategy has seen a reduction in the incidence of discrimination and violence experienced by participants together with increased tolerance and understanding of diversity.

Access to economic resources

Recognising that access to economic resources is a key determinate in supporting mental health and well being, the project has successfully assisted young people who are disengaged from school, at risk of leaving school early or do not have the confidence and skills to participate within the broader community. Many of the A.R.A.B participants have continued in careers such as in performance and the arts or in event management related activities.

Artistic directors' recommendations

The next period of time will see A.R.A.B. grow and develop even further with some exciting developments and activities in the pipeline. A.R.A.B does not sit alone, however, and in the spirit of collaboration there are a number of key recommendations that the Report wishes to conclude with. It is hoped that existing and potential funding bodies, community partners, arts organisations and schools will continue to support A.R.A.B.'s work into the future.

Specifically the Report recommends the following:

1. **Future growth and capacity building:** That A.R.A.B. continues to expand its activities to include new regions, youth participants and audiences.
2. **Policy and advocacy:** That findings in this Report and associated A.R.A.B activities are used to inform VASS policy and sector development addressing youth disadvantage.
3. **Financial stability:** That A.R.A.B be secured as an ongoing youth performing arts project through provision of recurrent funding in order to achieve sustainable, long term outcomes and benefits to youth and disadvantaged communities.
4. **Modelling innovation:** For the A.R.A.B. working model to be made available for use by other communities as an effective community development tool.

Evaluator recommendations

In undertaking this report, the evaluation team have identified a number of additional recommendations worth citing here. These include:

- Securing greater support for teachers/A.R.A.B. team members working within partner schools
- Continuing evaluation process in multi-media form (including DVD) over next two years
- Developing a structured evaluation model to outline how the evaluation process will continue over next two years
- Scoping the development of a Project Manual to describe more thoroughly this working model and why the project has worked so well with this population
- Improving the organisation of the project to work more effectively around school schedules such as exams, term dates as well as managing *Tawasal*.

We hope that you have gained insight and appreciation of the commitment and creative vision that lies at the heart of A.R.A.B.'s success. In producing this Report we have also mapped a way forward for strengthened partnerships and further growth of this important community development tool – one that has been able to make real difference



for youth and disadvantaged communities and one that we hope will continue to play an important role in the lives of other youth into the future.

Appendix One: 2006 Performance Record

Performance	Audience no
Raw Comedy Heats	150
Oak Park Swimming Pool Anti Racism Action	100
Chinese New Year Celebration	350
Mentoring meeting with comedian Judith Lucy	NA
Performance and workshop at Lyndale Secondary	500
Kangan TAFE Orientation Day	80
Lyndale Secondary College, International Night	150
Northland Secondary College and East Preston Islamic College Workshop and Performance	60
City of Whittlesea Active Women's Week Performance	100
Lalor North Secondary College Hip Hop workshop	60
Big Top Hop Performances Festival Melbourne 2006	3400
Dept Human Services Head Office Performance with a live feed to offices throughout Victoria	80 + live feed
YWCA Harmony Day Celebrations	100
VCAL Performances and Workshops, Kangan Tafe	100
VASS Youth Week Celebrations	50
Youth Mental Health: Listen Up! With Beyond Blue	2000
Lyndale Secondary College Workshop	20
Kangan Batman Tafe Youth Week Celebrations	200
Youth Week; Loud Libraries Kool Schools Winners Performance	60
Youth Week Workshops/Mentoring at VASS Newport	30
Harmony Project Celebrations with Northland Secondary College and East Preston Islamic College, Melbourne City Mission	100
VASS Fundraising Dinner	350
Kensington Housing Week Celebrations, Kensington Housing Estate	30
Northern Migrant & Refugee Youth Council	30
The 2006 Women's Health and Wellbeing Forum	100
Lalor North Secondary College	350
Unlocking Doors by the Human Rights Commission	30
Multicultural Youth Career Expo.	100
Linking Glenroy Project, Moreland City Council	100
Festival for Healthy Living	600
Hume Winter Music Festival Launch!	100
Urban Camp Forum	15
International Food and Music Festival- DHS	50

International Food and Music Festival- DHS	60
Department of Human Services- Early Years	200
Hurriya! A.R.A.B Workshops and Performances	700
CMYI Sports	30
Youth Summit Agenda-Darebin Youth Services and MRC	60
Dinner with Ahmad Fahour (Executive Manager of NAB)	20
Flemington Juniors Football Club	150
Junior Football Presentation Night- Western Region Football League	250
Youth Health and Safety Forum	25
Year 9 Health Day, Bayside College, Altona North	50
Year 9 Health Day, Bayside College, Williamstown	50
Hume Youth Survey	50
The Arrival of the Walk, Association of Neighbourhood Houses & Learning Centres	200
VASS Youth Leadership Program	20
Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth Conference	200
Hume Reaccreditation as a World Health Organisation Safe Community	80
Laverton Peace Conference	100
Iftar Dinner- MRC and Darebin Youth Services	30
A.R.A.B Yallah Hayat!	1200
Young Muslims Women's Career Expo	50
Broadmeadows Uniting Care Report/Meeting	40
Anti Racism Workshops at Juvenile Justice Centre	35
Centre for Culture Ethnicity and Health	30
Himaya- Emergency Services and Youth Leadership Unite	50
Youth Forum at Victoria University	200
Moreland Youth Services Award Evening	200
Darebin Youth Services End of Year Celebrations	100
Workshops for Darebin Youth Services	200
VASS AGM	60
Hume Wipeout Youth Event	40
Anti Racism Workshops	30