



# NEW WORLD, NEW ME

THE  
DRUM

proudly funded by



CITY OF MELBOURNE



Drummond  
Street  
Services

## Annual Report 2020-21

prepared for City of Melbourne

## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of Australia. We acknowledge they have never ceded sovereignty, remain strong in their connection to land, culture and in resisting ongoing colonisation.

the drum respectfully acknowledges that we deliver services and programs on the stolen lands of the Wurundjeri, Boon Wurrung, Taungurung, Dja Dja Wurrung and the Wathaurung people of the Kulin Nations.

We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As a team and organisation predominately comprised of settlers, we are committed to supporting First Nations people in their quest for decolonisation and sovereignty.

FREE  
THE  
FLAG



# Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	2
New world, new me	4
A word from our CEO	5
<b>the drum</b> survey – young people	6
<b>the drum</b> survey – staff	8
Our programs	10
The Venny, Kensington	10
Underground Women’s Program Carlton	11
Underground Men’s Program Carlton and North Melbourne	13
(in)visible	14
Queerspace Youth	17
LGBTIQA+ Mentoring Projects	21
<b>the drum</b> Program stats and facts	22
Youth and Communities social media reporting 2020–2021	24
<b>the drum</b> Key performance indicators 2020–21	26
<b>the drum</b> Our team	32
Funders and partners list	34
Community engagement and community partners	35
Connect with us	36







## New world, new me

This report has given young people a platform to reflect on how things have changed for them, what their triumphs have been and what their frustrations are. It's a medium to tell adults and decision makers what they need to know about what young people have missed out on, are grieving for or expect to change. **New world, new me** explores themes young people shared with us and looks at how the Youth and Communities Team have had to navigate two models of working – one in lockdown and the other within some kind of COVID-19 normal.



# A word from our CEO

## COVID-19's impact on young people who live, work and play across the City of Melbourne

During 2020–2021 we saw a significant escalation in young people presenting in the programs and agency with heightened risk for poor mental health. This was expressed through increased levels of anxiety and depression, including an increase in self-harm, some experiencing or using violence in the home, decreased sense of community safety and more police contact in relation to COVID-19 restrictions. The impact of the extreme lockdown in North Melbourne and the broader housing estates communities, families and young people was significant. This included risks associated with isolation, overcrowding, increased financial hardship for families and youth homelessness. COVID-19 served to magnify already existing inequalities and many of the groups of young people our programs serve continue to be significantly affected.

### Public housing estate residents and many of our young people of colour

The impact of the extreme lockdown on Alfred Street residents – in particular the presence of police, lack of culturally suitable supplies and food, lockup in small overcrowded spaces, and the misguided assumption that home was always safe for young people – caused frustration and anger. Impacts on parents and young people, including loss of income and in some cases employment were, and continue to be, significant. We continue to support many young people across the housing estates who had very unpleasant interactions with police and in some cases received fines through the various lockdowns when young people were in the community. Often the reasons they were out in the community would have met the Chief Health Officer's guidelines in terms of seeking safety or attending health appointments, such as receiving mental health support.

### LGBTIQ+ young people including QTIPoC

We saw significant increases in poor mental health with many queer young people (who may have not been out to parents and family) having to move back home or move in with other family members because their share housing arrangements fell over or they lost incomes over the past 12 months. This resulted in a significant increase in exposure to family conflict and violence, and/or young people feeling unsafe at home. Our local experience

reflected what we found nationally, where 15 to 25-year-old queer young people were found to be 14 times more likely to be unsafe at home than any other lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) cohort or age group. This, in particular, impacted queer, transgender or intersex, people of colour (QTIPoC) and/or transgender and gender diverse young people. For some, where home was too unsafe, we were required to find temporary and sometimes long-term housing options, and at times this meant supporting them in hotels and Airbnb.

### International students and asylum seekers and many people of colour (PoC) and QTIPoC

Many young people were left with no income and did not receive JobKeeper despite losing employment. Many were left homeless or had no means to pay rent or buy basic food.

Throughout the year Drummond Street Services significantly increased individual support, case work, and counselling options and provided wraparound interventions to support young people and their families. A special Priority Response Team was also set up to assist staff to quickly respond to family violence, and provide acute mental health and food, housing and income support. This service will continue throughout 2021.

In addition, we have been advocating to government across a range of issues including:

- » youth homelessness accommodation options
- » brokerage funds to address income and food insecurity, and mental health outreach and support for both young people and at times their families
- » mental health support to address acute mental health needs such as hospitalisation and better access to youth Prevention and Recovery Centres (PARC)
- » family violence advocacy and response including more refuge places, access to client flexible support packages and safety planning
- » provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) including hand sanitisers and masks along with information on current restrictions
- » technology support to stay connected to programs, services and school
- » counselling and trauma support by increasing youth counselling options during lockdowns.

### Karen Field

*Chief Executive Officer, Drummond Street*

# POLARIS X A PLACE AT THE TABLE



## the drum survey – young people

(based on 16 surveys from general programs  
and 29 from QueerSpace youth needs analysis)

We surveyed 16 of our young people  
attending **the drum** programs. These reflections  
were collected via a youth-designed Survey  
Monkey in June 2021.

The survey asked about:

- » how they were finding lock downs
- » level of general satisfaction with **the drum**
- » what they liked most about **the drum**  
support programs
- » which activities they enjoyed most
- » what they were looking forward to in the future
- » what needs they would like **the drum** staff to  
know about.



## What young people told us about the drum

The survey responses also suggested that the programs run by **the drum** have had an influence on building and strengthening the relationships between young people. A large majority of young people reflected on how the programs run by the drum were a gateway to meeting new people and forming new friendships.

**"I liked it when we joined up Yarra and Melbourne groups and it was good to meet new people at school holiday program as well as see old friends."**

The programs offer significant opportunities to learn social and broader life skills and emphasise the importance of companionship, community and belonging.

**"Skateboarding in a big group was the best thing ever."**

This can also be illustrated through the common thread of "meeting new people" that young people reflected on as being a positive about the programs being run at **the drum**. The comments given by young people about **the drum** programs included "fun", "amazing", "cool", "interesting and exciting". This highlights how the programs were beneficial for shifting the energies of young people throughout the week as they look forward to their programs.

**"It's important to have things to look forward to."**

Throughout the reflections, young people were encouraged to give feedback on what they would like to see more of from **the drum** programs with a large majority commenting on new activities and excursions throughout Victoria.

**"It would be good to get out of the city and do some bushwalking or hiking when we can."**

This can be an indicator on how COVID-19 has shifted the perspectives for young people to make most of their physical surroundings while they can. Many of the reflections demonstrate their awareness, empathy and understanding of this virus that has shifted the world. Young people reflected on COVID-19 as being "boring", "restricting", "annoying" and "stressful" with some young people thinking about how to tell the difference between being worried about COVID-19 like everyone else is and being anxious and not mentally OK.

**"It would be weird not be too worried, we all should be worried or we won't be able to beat COVID-19. But how worried should we be? It's like when you're bored... if you get too bored it can feel like being depressed."**

80% of respondents identified that connecting socially was the main thing they appreciated about being part of **the drum**. They made comments including:

**"lock down is a bad time, all you do is school work and jobs in the house and no chance to play basketball or just sit and talk to friends at their house".**

All survey respondents agreed that lockdowns have had an added stressful impact on their families, which in turn has made for some tension in the home. However, because the survey was done in June 21 there was also optimism.

**"It made us glad that we can go out now and be grateful for having some freedom back."**

## What young people told us they're looking forward to

The survey ended by asking young people what they were most looking forward to in the future. The majority emphasised "meeting new people and going new places". One young person expressed how they are looking forward to a "bigger space at **the drum** so more people can come" which demonstrates both the resilience and strength instilled within the young people at **the drum** in being optimistic about the future, despite what has occurred in the past year.

The level of satisfaction was 91%, and 95% said they felt good about themselves when attending the program, but we were unable to meet the KPI of having at least 25 young people complete the survey. This will be rectified in next annual report.

## What young people told us they need

Young people's needs included (listed in no particular order):

- » social connection opportunities
- » continuing to be able to connect via online means
- » running face-to-face community events if possible
- » checking in by the drum staff on wellbeing during lockdowns – keep strong advocacy and support going
- » some mental health education (helping friends) and leading health promoting initiatives (bush walking and camping)
- » opportunities to meet in a space that feels like theirs and projects to make a change in their environments.



## the drum survey – staff

Our staff survey asked six City of Melbourne **drum** staff about:

- » the biggest struggles they saw for young people
- » how young people dealt with these challenges
- » what program participants missed out on
- » what young people wanted more of going forward
- » what government, schools, communities and families could do for young people or with young people
- » what they felt most positive about.

### What staff told us about young people they worked with

We have seen a lot of financial difficulties within families stemming from things like the Coronavirus Supplement being removed, the completion of JobKeeper payments, and under/unemployment due to COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns.

Missing school due to lockdowns was a major issue, which resulted in isolation from community, friends, family, plus instability and changes within routines that increased stress for young people.

The last couple of years and specific situations have been very challenging for young people and their families within the North Melbourne, Carlton, and Kensington communities. For example, the community housing tower hard lockdown situation caused many family problems and stressors. More support will be needed to support some of the most vulnerable people within our community going forward.

The young people dealt with the challenges they were facing by utilising the support of their peers, family, and through referral services assistance. We noticed that young people's engagement dropped a little eventually with online programs as their schooling was primarily online. It made sense, the ones who really needed the connection tend to get online, but it was definitely not as popular as face-to-face. The young women were more inclined to do online **drum** sessions than the young men.

Young people missed out on a sense of normality throughout a vital period of their childhood. They were restless and were lacking a routine and stability due to the lockdowns and have lived with a constant uncertainty of whether activities could go ahead, whether they could attend school and whether they had to miss out on programs.

Common feelings young people expressed to **drum** staff included:

- » a sense of excitement when school holiday programs were able to go ahead after a year of uncertainty
- » frustration at lock-down
- » confusion about some of the restrictions.



## Looking ahead to the future

Looking ahead, the young people have expressed that they would like more school holiday programs (restriction dependent) and similar excursion activities during regular programs. Activities such as skateboarding, and stencil art workshops received lots of praise during feedback sessions with the young people.

We know our program participants need to be regularly informed about the potential for a change in programs and circumstances. They need support to stay connected with their peers, their education and community support services. Necessary adjustments need to be made for this to be possible, for example, young people need regular access to a computer and the internet.

### Government

Governments can provide further support by providing adequate funding to youth work organisations and youth-led programs, co-creating youth-led systemic changes that utilise the feedback and skills of young people, and empower young people to gain experience and opportunities. These may be within government organisations, or through provision of accessible financial assistance, and it would be good to ensure bureaucratic systems are simpler to navigate and access.

### Community residents

Community residents can lead by example. They need to ensure young people are stimulated and encouraged, with healthy risk-taking activities and supports, providing spaces that are youth-led and co-created where young people can feel a sense of ownership over the space.

### Parents, teachers and carers

Parents, teachers and carers can provide consistent support, ensure preventative measures are being put into place, check in regularly on the mental health of young people, listen more, and be honest and real about uncertainties in the future (for example, ongoing home schooling).

### Young people

Young people can provide consistent support to their peers through regular check-ins, encouragement to attend youth spaces, and holding their peers accountable for mistakes without the unnecessarily involvement of authority figures.



## how staff feel about the future

The young people that attend **the drum's** programs have showed an amazing level of resilience and drive through an incredibly challenging few years. Their positive attitudes have been so inspiring, and this makes us feel positive about working alongside young people who are committed to their growth and connecting within their community regardless of the circumstances they're facing. Additionally, young people continue to show a deep commitment to social justice issues and are open to change for a more inclusive environment.



## Our programs

### The Venny, Kensington

The Venny is a free communal backyard for children aged 5 to 16, located in JJ Holland Park, Kensington. The Venny has been in the park for 30 years and has a rich history within the Kensington Community. The Venny is one of five staffed adventure playgrounds in Australia modelled on the original concept from Denmark.

Danish landscape architect Dan Fink imagined "a junkyard playground in which children could create and shape, dream and imagine a reality". This is the history we are connected to at The Venny. The Venny is made possible thanks to the ongoing support of major partner The City of Melbourne and many other funding partners. **the drum** youth services partner with the Venny to support the Boys Group on a Friday night. One of our staff takes some North Melbourne young men over to Kensington to attend the program. We

can offer individual and case work support to those who need it. We also see the North Melbourne participants home safely.

The Boys program is tailored for boys aged between 9 and 15 and is a social and emotional support program with an activity focus. It runs throughout the school term and is delivered online when required.

This program provides boys with positive male role models and encourages cooperation, inclusion and a shared focus while also encouraging positive expression of strong emotions and self-regulation. During Term 3 of 2020 this program did not run at all due to lockdowns. However, over the next three terms we delivered a mix of online activities and face-to-face, when possible, with an average of 22 boys attending.



## Underground Women's Program Carlton

Sian Thomson, Nanchok Chol

As we reflect on the last 12 months, describing them as "unpredictable" is an understatement. Throughout this last year, young people have experienced snap lockdowns, harsh lockdowns, Black Lives Matter movements worldwide and shifting perspectives on what "normal life" looks like day to day. The last 18 months have completely changed the way young people live day to day through restricting human contact and enforcing home schooling. This has helped to keep the community safe but has fundamentally changed the way that young people learn and connect with their peers. For many this has had a negative impact on their social and emotional development. Understandably, many young people are over it! Through the challenging times there have been moments of growth and strength for some – getting a new job, discovering a new hobby, overcoming challenges during lockdown, developing new selfcare techniques, enrolling in a new course, supporting friends and family, and connecting to faith.

Despite the turbulent year, our focus at **the drum** remained the same – to provide social engagement opportunities and support to young people from the Carlton, North Melbourne and Kensington estates. We delivered safe programs face-to-face when we were allowed to and then switched into delivering online programs as needed. It



has been a rollercoaster ride, but we have come out the other side more resilient and adaptable during these uncertain times.

Despite all the lockdowns, we were able to run face-to-face programs which the young women appreciated. They enjoyed trying new things and connecting with their peers. During face-to-face programs young women developed confidence on roller skates, and learnt selfdefence moves and Taekwondo, and we hired young women from community with fashion design skills to teach their peers how to create funky, tie-dye t-shirts.

During lockdowns, for many young women the Underground Women's online programs were





the highlight of the week. They were for our staff as well! In these sessions, young women participated in craft activities, games nights, Wellbeing Wednesday sessions, they shared stories through poetry and spoken word and learnt Afro-beat dance moves. Posters were designed in solidarity for NAIDOC Week and young women from community delivered make-up tutorials and movie nights for their peers. All on Zoom! During the extended lockdown our social media presence ramped up with Tik Tok Dance Challenges, Shout Out Mondays, and Throwback Thursdays. Online programs suited many young women, but they were not for everyone.

Another way we connected and supported young people was through outreach and care pack deliveries. This was a great way to see young people in person and check in on them. **the drum** team sourced incredible donations which enabled us to deliver four rounds of essential care packs (including soap, books, family games, toys and craft activities for a range of ages) to 40 families (160 packs in total), providing them with a little bit of relief and joy during a really challenging time.

In January 2020, 40 young people attended **the drum's** popular Beach Day excursion which was hosted by Surf Life Saving Multicultural Team. Young people participated in important discussions about beach safety, learnt how to paddle board and how to save a friend who is in trouble in the water. They played a competitive game of beach soccer against the lifeguards followed by fish and chips for lunch. It was a spectacular day for everyone!



In April 2020, 18 young women came along to the boating and picnic day at the Fairfield Boathouse. The young women enjoyed the peaceful surrounds, connecting to nature on the Yarra River, followed by games and a picnic.

### Shout outs

- » City of Melbourne
- » Thanks to our partners – Riverside, Signal Arts, Hotham Mission, the Venny, Skate Victoria, YMCA, Dekka (interviewing politicians), Sabrina (live from lockdown), Khadija (hosting panel discussions).
- » Thanks to our students – Ariel, Shalini, Nicole, Leyla, Emma, Jacinta – and our volunteer Hiwot.





## Underground Men's Program Carlton and North Melbourne

### Ayub Abdi-Barre

Obviously the last 12 months have been incredibly challenging for the North Melbourne and Carlton communities. The families and young people that **the drum** youth services regularly engages have faced many trials and tribulations. Issues that have been challenging included financial difficulties within families, missing school due to lockdowns, isolation from community, friends and family as a result of lockdowns, and instability and changes within routines that have increased stress for young people. One way that staff members Ayub, Sammi, and Ali assisted the community was through consistently providing supportive programs (restrictions dependant) both online and in person, planning school holiday programs to uplift the young people after a difficult year, and providing movie tickets to boost social connection.

The weekly programs on Wednesday nights (North Melbourne) and Friday nights (Carlton) engaged approximately 20 to 25 young people per week. These programs helped the young people experience some level of consistency through a very inconsistent period. During the in-person programs, we focussed on activities such as basketball games and PS4 games. This allowed staff to build rapport and check in with the young men in a casual but engaging setting. Online programs averaged 10 to 15 attendees, with the drop in attendance being attributed to school being online and the young people saying they would prefer to be outside instead of on Zoom for programs.

School holidays were very successful, despite changes in initial plans due to restrictions. The activities included Mix-Up Monday, skateboarding and stencil art excursion, and skateboarding and podcasting excursion. Thanks to the generosity of Casey Foley from the Second Try Program, we were able to give skateboards to each attendee at the excursions.

Some of the school holiday activities that were planned for, but couldn't run included an IMAX and Museum Day, and mural painting at the Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre. Because of the limited school holiday programs, we chose to give regular attendees of programs flexible movie tickets to the movie of their choice. As the young people have faced such a challenging year, we felt that giving a movie ticket would be beneficial (as opposed to planning programs that may be postponed or cancelled).

The young people have expressed that they would like more school holiday programs



and similar excursion activities during regular programs. Activities such as skateboarding, and stencil art workshops received lots of praise during feedback sessions with the young people. Moving forward, we will strive to frankly and swiftly inform the young people about the potential for a change in programs and circumstances, and to promote the importance of staying connected with their peers and support services. Necessary adjustments need to be made for this to be possible, for example helping some of them gain regular access to a computer and the internet.

Despite a challenging year, the young people that attended **the drum's** programs showed an amazing level of resilience and drive. They have showed positive attitudes. Working alongside young people who are committed to their growth and to connecting within their community regardless of the circumstances they're facing has been inspiring.

### Shout outs

- » City of Melbourne
- » YMCA North Melbourne and Carlton
- » Young People Australia
- » BIG thanks to previous folks on the program Sami Ibrahim, Ali Abdalla, and Mustafa Abdi.

## (in)visible

Claire Bostock, Bexx Djentuh-Davis,  
Korra Koperu, Sunny Parker

The past 12 months (in)visible has been navigating ongoing shifting environments, with snap lockdowns becoming more frequent. In these past 12 months, we've been exploring ways we can continue to support QTIPoC young people throughout lockdowns and in real-life programs.

The (in)visible team has consisted of Youth Peer Leader Korra Koperu with support of Peer Leader Sunny Parker, and Senior Youth Development Practitioner Bexx Djentuh-Davis. Our previous teammate was Claire Bostock. The purpose of (in)visible is still to provide support and connection for QTIPoC young people, who face a higher risk of discrimination and marginalisation due to intersectional identities. We provide connection with community by creating and holding spaces for QTIPoC young people both in-person and via Zoom, dedicating time to social media posts, care-packs, and creating videos that people can access any time. This is incredibly important since it allows other QTIPoC young people to meet peers who are going or have been through the same lived experience as them and allows space to be able to talk about being QTIPoC.

Over 12 months, the team have been navigating how to support the community

during the lockdown, acknowledging that these times have significantly affected them, with worse mental health rates, suicidality, isolation from peers, and unsafe living arrangements. As a response to attendees who weren't able to attend in real time, we created content that was accessible without a time limit. Some of the posts were:

- » **Tik Tok Tuesdays** (by Claire Bostock) – these posts were about showing some Tik Toks that we found during the week. Tik Tok at the time was starting to gain popularity, so we wanted to show some QTIPoC Tik Tokers on the app. It was also a space for us to focus on some good content, the "warm and fuzzies".
- » **Artist Wednesdays** – this was led by a staff member who isn't out. One of their passions was art and digital design. A way to interact with the community was through shared artists who are QTIPoC. It was the most requested and popular post for the year it was running.
- » **Self-care Fridays** (by Korra Koperu) – these posts were about reminding folks about some self-care tips and things we could potentially do for ourselves during the hard lockdown. Resharing content from PoC healthcare professionals was also good too.

# invisible





Another way to tackle support in a COVID-safe way and virtually was to contract young people who wanted to share their talent. Utilising the budget, the creation of COVID-safe video series **QTIPoC workshop series**. We did a poll to find out what young people wanted to watch, and we found those who were able to film it so we could upload:

- » **Music hour** mix with Yung Brujo
- » **Planting ASMR** with Sable
- » **Poetry** by Lay and a piece from Bobuq
- » **Live acoustic set** with Lyle Makepiece and a set from Leah (Tree's for Ruru)
- » **Zine making** with Sunny
- » **Home workouts with household items** with Rex
- » **Cooking vegan food** with Aminata
- » **Panel discussion on gaming** with Dawn (animator, digital design).

We did, however, still create some online hangout spaces. This allowed folks to talk about things that they were interested in, meet other folks and have a chill space – oh and collect a pizza of their choice!

- » **Korra's pizza and trivia night** – trivia with pizza and prizes.
- » **Pop culture trivia** with Korra and Shereen – trivia with Shereen, a QTIPoC young person (with prizes and pizza).
- » **Game-A-Palooza** – space to talk about video games and a live chat with Dawn.
- » **Put that face in your walk** digital edition – A ongoing makeup series for (in)visible. We were joined by Antonie to show us how to do some blended eye shadow.
- » **Botanical corner** – two workshops learning how to plant and how to look after our plants.
- » **Channel QTIPoC** – Our biggest event for Youth week 2020. Over three hours where three activities were being done at the same time, and the audience members could choose which one they wanted to watch. Like a TV, the audience got to pick what channel they wanted. Either music, cooking, dancing, live art or planting.
- » **Cooking with QTIPoC** – first in real-life/ Zoom program for 2020. Sunny facilitated this program.

Our last approach to young people was providing care-packs. This was good for people who didn't want to engage online but didn't want to be left out either. Working with the Yarra team we were able to use donations from organisations and send them out.

As we reached the end of 2020 and the start of 2021, we noticed that a lot of young people were experiencing Zoom fatigue. With the easing of restrictions, we started doing some face-to-face programs. Initially once a month, we bumped it up to fortnightly catch-ups, which gave young people who wanted something more consistent a chance to hang out:

- » **Botanical corner** – this was a partnership with Plants of Colour to do two classes. The first class was painting a pot and learning how to propagate. Our second class was planting our plants into the pots we painted and learning how to propagate.
- » **Chillout Fridays** – fortnightly catch-up. Our first one was a movie night, where we had pizza and watched *Raya and the last dragon*. The second one was a partnership with QSY and was a board games night. The third one was an art and games night.
- » **Put that face in your walk** – we were joined by QTIPoC make-up artists Trinity and Nisal for two classes. The first class was learning how to do normal kinds of eyeliner, how to fill in brows and lip tips. The second class was about learning graphic eyeliner, how to block out brows and a bold lip.





And with the constant threat of snap lockdowns here in Naarm, we acted quickly and created programs that are easily run that always have young people interested to come through!

- » **DJ hour** – joined by Kiminza, who did a DJ set for an hour
- » **W.E.G Instagram takeover** – W.E.G took over (in)visible Instagram to teach us how to cook dahl rice
- » **Movie night** – we watched the new movie Cruella and sent pizzas to everyone.

Overall, with the ups and downs that COVID-19 has brought, our team has heard what the people wanted and actioned what we could. And with the up-coming year, we want to collaborate with some of the groups that young people love, expand on the themes and make more of a statement that we are here!





# QUEER SPACE YOUTH

## Queerspace Youth

Ruby Cameron, Bexx Djentuh-Davis,  
Sunny Parker, Korra Koperu

The past 12 months of the Queerspace Youth program has been a lot of dynamic work that the team are very proud of. The program was run by Ruby Cameron, Youth Development Practitioner, between July 2020 and March 2021. At this point, Ruby moved to the Queerspace LGBTQIA+ Mentoring Projects full time, and the team has since been facilitated by Peer Leader – Sunny Parker, Youth Peer Leader – Korra Koperu, and Senior Youth Development Practitioner – Bexx Djentuh-Davis who hit the ground running almost immediately for face-to-face programs and planning and delivering regular fortnightly community engagement and peer-support events, plus workshops and excursions for young lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual (LGBTQIA+) people, aged 16 to 25 years, who live or work in and/or have strong personal ties to the City of Melbourne.

The primary purpose of the Queerspace Youth program is to foster a safe and supportive space for LGBTQIA+ and trans and gender diverse (TGD) youth to explore and feel supported in their identity, learn new skills and access new opportunities, and to meet other young peers and leaders in the community. This is achieved by creating an accessible space that is run on a regular basis where young people have the opportunity to connect with one another through the program's peer-led leadership design, and through a strong commitment to co-design and earnest community consultation to deliver a service that genuinely reflects the intersections of identity, needs, and values of our LGBTQIA+ youth cohort.

Throughout the frequent and ongoing lockdowns in 2020, Queerspace Youth ran regular online programs including fortnightly Zoom groups and online games. We adapted our service delivery to meet the needs of young people who were in stage 4 lockdown by increasing the frequency of our program to weekly. This was to ensure that young people remained connected to the LGBTQIA+ community, and their peers, and were accessing the right types of support. We know

that LGBTQIA+ young people's experiences of lockdowns were difficult; including living at home in unsupportive environments, feeling isolated from their friends and community, and the ongoing impacts that this has on their mental health. In August 2020, coinciding with Wear it Purple day, we released a support guide for young people who may be experiencing family violence, or navigating feeling unsafe in their home environment during lockdown. This included messages of support, information about their rights during lockdown, and tips to increase their safety. In addition, we provided spaces for young people to talk about, and share, their strategies and tips for feeling safe.

Operating out of the 'new normal' of easing restrictions at the end of 2020, Queerspace Youth began delivering face-to-face programs again. These included excursions to SeaLife Aquarium and Archie Brothers Cirque Electriq. We also delivered our own events and creative workshops such as sewing our own tote bags, screen-printing, resin workshops, jewellery making, collaging, and videogames nights – with the help of guest facilitators who were young LGBTQIA+ folk in the community. We received the support of Yarra Youth Services (YSS), who granted us access to their youth centre space, as well as the volunteer support of YSS's Youth Arts Officer, Rebeca Sacchero – where we had sufficient space to host in-person programs in compliance with COVID-safe restrictions and social distancing requirements. Queerspace Youth also supported two student placement opportunities, for Ru and Kap who aided in the planning and delivery of programs from April to June 2021.

A consideration we had to be mindful of, even in times of eased restrictions, was the ongoing need to be prepared to indefinitely postpone any planned events, and the need to always have a back-up contingency plan in the case of snap lockdowns. Throughout 2020–2021, Queerspace Youth supported young people in lockdown by promptly transitioning our face-to-face program mode to online engagement opportunities, increasing in our social media presence, and through the facilitation of COVID-safe events, such as an online trivia nights and livestreamed movie nights with dinner delivered out to each individual attendee.

Queerspace Youth experienced both an increase and decrease in participation when transitioning our regular programming online. A decrease in attendance from some regular clients, who were predominantly interested in meeting people face-to-face and our skill building and excursion events. As well as an

increase in attendance of young people who lived in outer-metropolitan suburbs, who otherwise were unable to attend our regular on-site programs due to lengthy travel-times or not being fully 'out' in their gender identity or sexuality, thus being unable to safely attend a program in-person.

Even now, and in the face of the new barriers introduced by COVID-19 and the several lockdowns that ensued, the need for regular social engagement and support opportunities for young LGBTQIA+ folk could be strongly felt with Queerspace Youth seeing growing interest and engagement from community over the last few months, and with our intake list increasing by 121.62% since March 2021. This demonstrates the immense community need for connection and support, and the compounding isolation experienced by young LGBTQIA+ people who have limited options available for engagement and specialist support – particularly those under 18 years.





Online and in-person workshops, panels and events we held in this period were:

- » Regular Zoom catch-ups during lockdown throughout 2020.
- » **Jackbox game nights** – a virtual hangout via Zoom, playing Jackbox mini games.
- » **Drag During Covid-19** – an online panel discussion hosted and facilitated by young, local drag performers, including Belial B'zarr, Randy Roy, Stonehench, and Opal Sky.
- » **Art & zine workshop** – a workshop held at Yarra Youth Services, where pieces were compiled the make the first "Alone Together" zine celebrating queer art in iso/lockdown.
- » **DIY tote bags** – a workshop where attendees created their own designs to screen print onto tote bags, at YYS.
- » **Let's go to the aquarium** – a group excursion for LGBTQIA+ young people to SeaLife Aquarium, with free entry and lunch.
- » **Screen printing workshop series** (2 sessions) – facilitated by a local independent screen-printing artist, also a QTIPoC young person.
- » **Chill out Friday** – a boardgame and pizza night, in collaboration with the (in)visible team.
- » **Switch gaming night** – a videogame night with snacks, held at YYS.
- » **Arcade excursion** – a group excursion for LGBTQIA+ young people to Archie Bros Cirque Electriq, with free game cards and lunch.



- » **LGBTQIA+ clothing swap** – a stall at Bargoonga Nganjin Library, with the Queerspace Youth and (in)visible crew.
- » **IDAHOBIT outreach** – a stall at Collingwood College to engage with young LGBTQIA+ and question young people for International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) day with free resources, snacks and polaroid photobooth.
- » **Pride Cup** – a stall at the Pride Cup fundraising match, hosted by Fitzroy Football Club.
- » **Virtual movie night** – a virtual movie night via Zoom. We watched Scooby-Doo and sent pizzas to everyone.
- » **Kahoot! trivia night** – a virtual trivia night via Zoom, with a total of \$150 in prizes, where young people got to answer trivia related to queer history and pop culture.
- » **Resin workshop** – a resin workshop facilitated by local resin artist, Je'taime, also a queer and non-binary young person, where folk learnt resin safety 101 and were able to design their own resin pieces. The pouring of the moulds took place after program and was filmed and posted online for attendees to see their pieces come to life.
- » **Crafternoon 2.0** – with Je'taime. A follow-up to the resin workshop where individuals were able to unmould and add the finishing touches to their resin pieces, as well engage in arts, crafts and jewellery making.

## We surveyed queer young people

29 young people completed a Queerspace Youth survey in May 2021, all of whom said they would recommend the program to others.

They were asked about:

- » where they lived
- » how they described themselves and their community
- » any special needs
- » what they thought queer young people needed
- » what they would like mental health services and the government to know?

There was also space to give feedback to Queerspace team about anything they could improve upon and whether pineapple should be an accepted pizza topping.

Only 17% of participants lived in the City of Melbourne, but many gravitated to the CBD from the suburbs for study, work or play. Some young people had travelled from more than 80 kms away to attend an event, and all had busy lives juggling elements of work, study, and creative pursuits.

There was a wide range of cultural backgrounds and ways to identify represented with most saying things like, "It's OK not to have all the answers" and "take your time, you don't need to find an identity straight away. Everything is just a process and labels could limit your potential".

Around 30% of those surveyed had a disability, and many had difficulties finding a sense of community locally.

"My community is all on social media! I grew up without any other people of colour, disabled people or queer people around me, so I've only found community recently through social media."

"I always felt lonely, until I came across you. It reminded me that there's a whole community out there full of QTPOC people."



In terms of feeling supported by their community 31% said yes, 38% maybe and 31% no.

"I feel a bit lost in the community itself and wish I got more exposure, education, personal freedom to explore my identity with people who are similar to me or people I can look up to."

Participants reported they would like health and support services to be more mindful that everyone comes from different cultures and backgrounds and provide more queer and bisexual people of colour (BiPoC) counsellors, and "be better equipped to help those with marginalised and intersecting identities". They called for governments to reduce waiting lists, and administrative and financial barriers to access and realise "that we have opinions that they should listen to. Some of the best opinions might come from young people that are not able to vote yet."

The program was appreciated for helping participants feel safe and welcome.

"I'm really grateful that I found this program, it's been the highlight of one of my toughest years!"





## LGBTIQ+ Mentoring Projects

Ruby Cameron, Lan Dugdale,  
Claire Bostock, Mo Musil

The past twelve months of the LGBTIQ+ Mentoring Projects have been nothing short of a COVID-19 rollercoaster with work that the team are very proud of. Project Coordinators Ruby, Lan and Mo and Community Development Practitioner, Claire, have held this program since it started in 2019 and have seen it through from the pilot phase to now, as an ongoing peer-support service offered to LGBTIQ+ communities.

The purpose of the LGBTIQ+ Mentoring Projects is to create social connection as a form of primary suicide prevention, which acknowledges the disproportionate experiences of suicidality LGBTIQ+ people face due to phobia, discrimination, and systemic letdown. This is achieved by connecting members of the LGBTIQ+ community with each other, either one-on-one or in group settings. Many of these connections are created based on shared interests, identities, experiences, and/or desire to connect with community, offered to individuals and families alike.

The LGBTIQ+ Mentoring Projects have had strong community interest and engagement from the outset – training and inducting 25 new mentors and intaking 85 new mentees in the past year alone. Over time, we have seen the cycle complete where mentees become mentors, matches become friendships, and groups are run solely by mentors. The past year has required our mentoring community to go above and beyond, rapidly adjusting to an online setting and new modes of connection. We experienced both increases and decreases of participation in our one-on-one and group matches, due to moving online either creating or barring access around issues such as distance, safety, and/or comfortability. For example, our group for young trans and gender diverse people peaked in engagement from people who had not previously been able to attend in-person.

We got creative with this increased engagement, delving into online activities, games and conversation topics that continued to keep people connected throughout one of the most isolating experiences society has known. For some of our groups and individuals, this online setting simply did not work. This sadly meant putting an indefinite pause on our group for QTPOC, which thrived in person over sharing food, conversation, and being together, but dwindled online for similar reasons of safety, comfortability, and access to technology.

Where we could not reach people in online group spaces, we did so through one-on-one connection, making many phone calls to check-in, supply material or brokerage

support, and find creative ways to keep people in touch such as going for cute walks within the five-kilometre lockdown radius, ordering take-out from separate Zoom locations, or being pen-pals through email and text-based contact.

Thinking about this past year would not be right if it did not acknowledge the sudden, ongoing, and overwhelming impacts of COVID-19. This includes experiences of unsafety and violence at home, physical and mental illness, material uncertainty, suicidality, job loss, housing insecurity, displacement, deportation, and more. These lockdown periods were administered disproportionately to communities already experiencing structural disadvantage, such as the public housing estate hard lockdown. COVID-19 has also taken focus, attention and urgency from important work being done to address structural abuses like these, slowing and distracting the momentum of movements like Black Lives Matter. Furthermore, COVID-19 revealed existing service and policy gaps that leave many people ineligible to receive support, such as international students and people with refugee or asylum seeker status.

Throughout 2020–2021, the LGBTIQ+ Mentoring Projects supported lockdown measures and turned its efforts toward checking in with mentors and mentees to ensure they had access to masks and understood changing restrictions. Our number one highlight is in being witness to how amazing the LGBTIQ+ community can be at supporting each other, with mentors and mentees alike, giving and asking for support in this time. This has been demonstrated through 186 one-on-one activities and 103 sessions of the following groups:

- » **Gay bi men** (two different cohorts) – social group for gay and bi men
- » **Transfemme** (two different cohorts) – social group for trans feminine people
- » **Queertime** – queer related social group and activities
- » **Talking Points** – information and resources for TGD people
- » **A Place at The Table** – education and support for families of LGBA people
- » **Neurodiverse group** – social group for LGBTIQ+ neurodiverse people
- » **Queer Women** – social group for older queer women
- » **New-Bi-Club** – social group and support space for younger bi and queer women
- » **QTPOC meet up** – social group for queer, trans people of colour.

# the drum Program

## stats and facts

Cumulative contacts/  
accesses with young  
people attending  
programs for the year

Online group sessions  
and in person **3892**

Total number of  
young people  
receiving individual  
support

from Drum case  
worker **241**

Total number of young  
people attending  
regular programs

in person **86** coming  
weekly plus many  
more engaging online  
and **349** at events

Total number of young  
people referred

to Drummond Street  
counsellors and  
psychologists **27**

Support during  
lockdowns

**800** telephone call  
check-ins during  
lockdowns

**357** food hampers  
and over **400** care  
packs

**19** laptops and **13**  
iPads

### Special events we ran

Leadership group get togethers	End of year events young men and young women
Regular school holiday programs – skateboarding, Fun Fields outing, Big Beach Day, Riverside, boating on the river picnic day	FReeZA Drop the Beat
Young men's day out	Youth and Blues
Iftah all you can eat!	Movement Mondays
PlayStation competition sessions	Staff spotlight
Meeting the Mothers!	Aardvark session
Organ pipes hike	The drum live – panel
Studio 7	Queerspace Youth/invisible school holiday program
Boating and picnic	Black Lives Matter events
Youth consultation and co-design sessions	Live from lockdown interviews
Pride event	Quarantine cooking programs
Ris N Queer English classes	Meet the artist/graffiti artist/musician
Block party	Access to music studio sessions
Young Men's movie nights	Quiz nights
Underground women's poetry	Insta panels
Carlton Primary School Transition to Secondary School program	Voicefest
NM leadership	Venny BBQ
Haircut at home 1 and 2	Only in the fam
Total number of young people attending events <b>359</b>	

### Consultations

With regular program  
participants (weekly  
feedback)

With Youth Leadership  
Groups

Via insta polls

### Number of referrals

**157**

### Program locations

**2** in North Carlton

**2** North Melbourne

**1** Kensington (Venny)

**1** Melbourne CBD

Plus leadership  
programs at various  
sites and Queerspace  
events in CBD

Across these locations  
**407** young people  
attended one or more  
programs throughout  
the year and of these,  
**86** were regular  
attendees

Number of regular  
programs run either  
online or in person  
as needed:

Monday Mayhem at  
North Melbourne

Underground women's  
Carlton

Underground Women's  
Nth Melb

Friday Night Jam

Leadership Group

(in)visible

The Venny

Queerspace Youth

Carlton Primary  
School after school  
care program

### Top referral points

Homework club

Financial assistance  
(St Vincent De Paul)

Counselling and  
African Family Support  
Program

at Drummond Street  
Services

Community Legal  
Centres (fines)

Housing (Launch)

Family violence  
(InTouch and Safe  
Steps)

### Top five reasons for seeking support

**1.** Mental health  
(isolation)

**2.** Financial

**3.** Family issues

**4.** School issues  
re lockdown

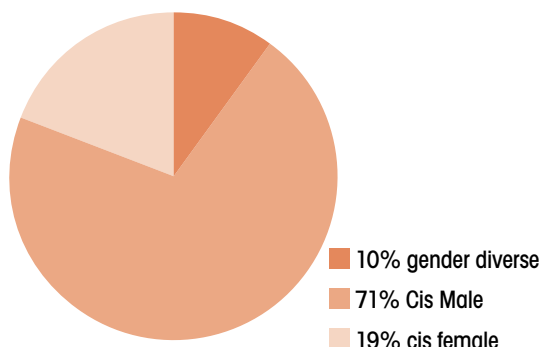
**5.** LGBTQI+



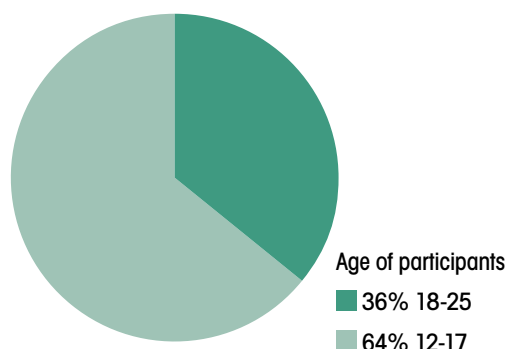
Total regular attendance  
**86**

Those receiving individual supports  
**241**

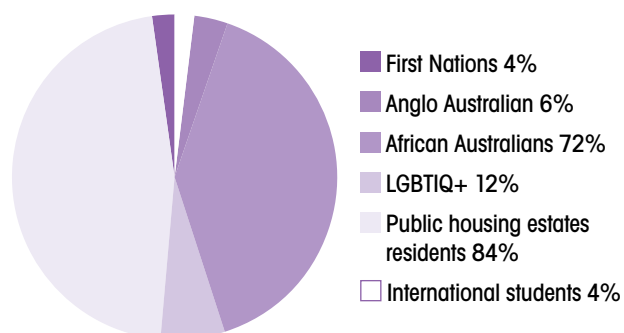
#### Gender of young people



#### Age of young people



#### Targeted cohort (many people fit into more than one group, intersectionality)



As regulations increased, the number of unregistered clients **the drum** serviced reduced. People were less likely to be walking past and dropping in, and we had to comply with maximum number caps. We also needed to ensure we had demographic data from each participant so we could contact them quickly, and they were asked to use QR codes to check in, in case there was a COVID-19 risk down the track.

We did have some unregistered clients over the 12 months. They were young people who typically came along with their friends who were regulars of drum programs, but didn't opt to sign up.

During 2020-2021 **the drum** team sourced, packed and delivered **hundreds of special care packs** to support young people and their families in lockdown. These packs included items to help with COVID-19 safety like make your own mask kits, sanitiser and information, reading material, puzzles, Uno cards, and vouchers. We supported **many families** via delivered food parcels and **material aid** during lockdowns, and this is ongoing.

**the drum's Individual Support** is a practical strength-based case management intervention. **241** young people sought help and spent time talking with our Youth Services Worker. The young people were supported, accessed material aid, were able to reduce isolation and took up referrals to other local specialist services. We made over **800** support phone calls to check in on families during lockdown. A significant percentage eventually start attending **drum** programs.

## VoiceFest

### Facebook

**419**  
followers

there were **20** posts over 12 months, reaching **1357** young people  
there were **102** engaged users that stayed engaged throughout the year  
we received the most interaction when we posted videos and when we posted on a Monday  
the main demographic was females between **18 to 34** years of age

### Instagram

**259**  
followers

we posted **63** stories which reached **865** people  
despite the fact we only posted 23 times we got **4612** impressions  
which is an amazing reach rate





# Queerspace Youth

## Facebook

we attracted **60** new fans

there are **462** engaged users with posts reaching 4,697 people

the population that follows us mostly identify as female (n=212)

there are also 95 people whose gender is undisclosed

the followers of this page are most engaged on Tuesday and Fridays and love videos

## Instagram

for posting **43** times the reach of 25,940 is amazing

this account attracted **655** new followers over the 12 months which was a 58% increase from the year before

we did **179** stories which reached 17,910 people and most of these people (90%) stayed on for the whole story.

people who follow this page mostly identify as female (n= 428)

and 144 people chose to not disclose their gender

followers really like it when we post more than one image per post

## (in)visible

### Facebook

there were **177** posts reaching **11,677** people

posts were shared on **63** occasions highlighting that the audience found the content worth sharing with their own audiences

their posts led to **82** new people following them

our following is predominantly people who identify as female (n=305)

followed by people who choose not to disclose their gender (n=97)

the links to our events have the most reaction on this page followed by videos then images

### Instagram

we posted **182** times over the 2 months and gained **451** new followers which is 1000% increase from the year before

we reached **34,318** people and our engagement was great with 161 comments and over 4,000 likes

we conducted **295** stories (more than a story a day) and reached **10,973** people, which is a massive effort

## the drum (melb)

### Facebook

**643**

engaged users

we got **115** new fans from 69 new posts

our audience is **352** people who identify as females and 115 people who identify as male

Friday is the best day to post based on the engagement of our audience

videos get the best response for our follows, followed by links then images

### Instagram

**279**

followers over the year

we reached up to **13,000** young people with an engagement rate of almost 10%

from five stories we reached **144** people

posting images on Fridays gets the most engagement

## the drum Key performance indicators 2020–21

Key Performance Indicator	Outcome	Measure	Target	Achieved
<b>KPI 1</b> <b>Programs are designed with young people and address their specific needs</b>	Programming provided is safe and inclusive and meets the needs of young people	1.1 Methodology for engaging young people and the co-design process, delivery locations and mechanisms for continuous improvement are established	By end of July 2018, included in Delivery Plan and approved by CoM	Achieved and ongoing. We continue to seek regular program feedback and provide safe spaces.
	Programming provides opportunities for young people to contribute to and lead service and program development	1.2 Full program plan is designed with input from young people	By end of June 2019, included in Delivery Plan and approved by CoM	We continue to co-design based on insta-polling, surveys and verbal debrief as well as feedback to ensure young people are guiding the programs.
		1.3 Programs and activities have input from young people in the design, delivery and evaluation stages	100 per cent of programs	
<b>KPI 2</b> <b>Responsiveness, flexibility and Innovation</b>	The changing needs of young people are identified and rapidly responded to as they arise	2.1 Quarterly satisfaction survey is undertaken across a range of services and programs. Evidence gathered to inform practice, service and program changes, as required	Minimum 25 young people participate At least 85 per cent satisfaction	Survey plans were impacted by lockdown as we scrambled to move programs online (16 from general programs and 29 from QueerSpace Youth). However, we did recover and have a full report of our Satisfaction Survey for July/Aug/Sept 2021 showing 87% satisfaction (see attachment)
		2.2 A yearly needs/aspirations survey of young people is undertaken. Evidence gathered to inform services/programs in the next year's Annual Work Plan	At least 50 young people participate	Achieved and ongoing, number of young people who engaged with the Drum 445 (feedback) for the year



**KPI 3**  
**Reconnection**  
**and Engagement**  
**(Refer to section**  
**2.2 above)**

Targeted services provided to vulnerable young people who are <b>already disengaged</b> from family, social supports, community, education and employment.	3.1 Methodology for targeting services to young people who are already disengaged is established	By end of July 2018, included in Delivery Plan and approved by CoM	Achieved and ongoing. Methodology extended during COVID-19 to re-engage isolated young people through 800 check-in calls and care packages
	3.2 Number of individual young people accessing services	38 per quarter	Number of individuals receiving supports accessed by young people, 241 for the year
	3.3 Number of accesses across all services by young people	80 per quarter	Number of individual support sessions (accesses) 723 – this is not inclusive of 800 telephone check-ins and 400 care packs
Young people in the local community are aware of the support services available	3.4 Plan to inform young people about services available is established	By end of July 2018, included in Delivery Plan and approved by CoM.	

**KPI 4**  
**Preventing Disengagement**

**We have increased our social media presence sign posting young people to opportunities and supports**

Targeted programs and planned activities are provided to vulnerable young people who are at risk of disengagement from family, social supports, community, education, employment	4.1 Methodology for targeting programs to young people who are at risk of disengagement is established	By end of July 2018, included in Delivery Plan and approved by CoM	<p>Provided as part of the contract process. See page 52-63 of the contract/page 32-33 in the invitation to tender. This includes the prioritisation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• young people of colour</li> <li>• young public housing residents</li> <li>• LGBTQI+ young people</li> <li>• international students</li> </ul> <p>Our prioritisation of young people from these backgrounds has continued. Adapting to the online environment, including partnering with grass roots organisations, community organisations and schools to ensure we continue to reach young people</p>
	4.2 Number of individual young people who attend programs	200 per quarter	86 coming weekly plus many more engaging online and 349 at events
	4.3 Number of total attendances across all programs by young people	425 per quarter	3892
Young people in the local community are aware of the programs available	4.4 Plan to inform young people about services available is established	By end of July 2018 included in Delivery Plan and approved by COM	<p>Comms plan was established in partnership with COM in 2018</p> <p>Our social media plan continues to evolve as we adapt to the new COVID-19 environment</p>



## KPI 5

### Municipal wide delivery

Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 we had been delivering:

- two programs per week in Carlton and North Melbourne
- one program in Kensington with final plans for the second to commence in 2020
- monthly queer identified events via (in)visible, Queerspace Youth and RisN English Language classes

Programs and services are delivered consistently across the municipality according to established need

5.1 Methodology for delivering a municipal wide youth service with a focus on Carlton, North Melbourne, Kensington and central city is established

By end of July 2018, included in Delivery Plan and approved by CoM

Provided as part of the contract process. See page 46–47 of the contract/page 27–28 in the invitation to tender

5.2 Number of programs delivered at the agreed locations

Two programs delivered each week at Carlton, North Melbourne, with additional CBD delivery on a needs basis

In 2020–2021 we delivered two programs in Carlton – Friday Night Jam and Young Women’s Underground – and two in North Melbourne – Monday Mayhem and Underground Women’s – plus holiday programs each school holidays and visits to the Venny when possible

**KPI 6****Collaboration and partnership opportunities**

Partnerships have been instrumental to working effectively and efficiently during COVID-19.

We've been more active than ever:

- at the neighbourhood level
- across organisations
- within drummond street

Established partnerships with CoM youth focussed areas, external youth services, adjoining municipalities and other stakeholders to strengthen collaboration and provide opportunities to advocate for system change

6.1 Opportunities for collaboration are identified and established in programming

Done by end of September 2018, included in Delivery Plan and approved by CoM

Provided as part of the contract process. See page 139 of the contract. We continue to participate in the CoM Lead Youth Network and Youth Pathways Framework, The Venny and Young Australians employment programs

Since COVID-19 we've also attended the YaVic Leaders Huddle, Carlton Local Area Network, North Melbourne Agency Collective, Kensington Community Network

6.2 Staffing plan is proposed

Staffing was varied in this period and at times we were somewhat understaffed, but we were also online.

Initially provided as part of the contract process. See page 112 of the contract. An updated model following the 2022 plan is to be provided.

**KPI 7****Youth empowerment**

Young people have a voice in City of Melbourne initiatives and decision making

7.1 Develop an agreed upon process for a direct pathway for young people to contribute to City of Melbourne projects and decision making

By end of Quarter One in FY 2019–2020

Forthcoming as per contract KPIs

7.2 Young people are supported to contribute to CoM decision making processes

Measure to be confirmed by end of 2021

Forthcoming as per contract KPIs





# the drum Our team

**the drum** delivers programs for young people and communities connected to Carlton, Collingwood, Kensington, North Melbourne and Richmond public housing estates. We also deliver activities for LGBTQI+, QTPOC and international students in the City of Yarra and City of Melbourne. The mentoring team delivers initiatives for young people and families across the wider Melbourne area.

## Meet our team

### Chantelle Higgs

*General Manager of Youth and Community  
(she/her pronouns)*

Chantelle utilises her experience co-developing, delivering, and coordinating innovative social change activities and campaigns to support and enable the work of the youth, community and the drum team. Drawing from her passion for working alongside young people deftly navigating structural barriers, and from theoretical knowledge from a Masters in Sociology (by research), she remains committed to identifying and responding to these systemic challenges. Young people continue to inspire and teach her.

### Bec Smith

*Youth Services Manager  
(she/her pronouns)*

Bec has 10 years of experience in the not-for-profit sector in India and Australia, specialising in program design and training for young people. She has developed and facilitated a range of school-based programs, designed and project managed an award-winning youth preemployment program and supervised the delivery of a range of events and programs for local councils.

### Akolda Bil

*Peer Leader (he/him pronouns)*

Akolda is an artist, youth worker and community leader of South Sudanese background. Akolda spent his early childhood living in Egypt before settling in Newcastle, NSW in 2003, later relocating to Fitzroy in Naarm/Melbourne in 2011. Akolda recently finished his Diploma in Community Services and is driven by a want to work side-by-side and empower young people. He wants to be a positive male role model for his community, something he lacked when he was growing up. For Akolda, music, art and connecting with community has been important for his personal development and this motivated him to pursue a career in youth work.

### Ayub Abdi-Barre

*Senior Youth Development Practitioner (he/him pronouns)*

My name is Ayub, I'm a Somali diaspora and have been living in Australia for 27 years.

Growing up in group homes and foster care truly opened my eyes to the lack of services available for young people who look like me. It's wonderful to know that I can work for an organisation that is truly invested in the community.

### Bexx Djentuh-Davis

*Senior Youth Development Practitioner  
(she/her pronouns)*

Bexx is a Ghanian/Maori (Tainui, Ngāti Maniapoto) woman from Aotearoa. For over more than six years, Bexx has curated and supported events around her community. A freelancer for events (stage managing, visual/digital editing, curator) working mostly with community groups, Bexx also co-founded ALTERITY collective and is a director for LISTEN.org. Bexx has prioritised QTPOC communities through engaging with topics of inclusion, accessibility and art practices. Bexx supports young people to connect with their people and wider community resources.

### Ruby Cameron

*Project Coordinator - LGBTIQ Mentoring  
& Youth Development Practitioner  
(they/them pronouns)*

Ruby is a Bundjalung, queer and trans person who is passionate about communityled activism and excel spreadsheets. Their work is focused on empowering young LGBTIQ+ people and challenging the structural and systemic frameworks of oppression through decolonising practices. They hold a Bachelor's degree in social science and have worked in mental health, alcohol and other drug support services. Ruby is the lead worker of the Queerspace Youth and co-coordinates the LGBTIQ Mentoring (A Place at the Table and Polaris) programs.



## Siân Thomson

*Senior Youth Development Practitioner (she/her pronouns)*

Siân works alongside young people to create programs aligned to their aspirations, strengths and wellbeing. She strives to foster an inclusive space for young women to have fun, try new things, develop their talents and connect with each other. Siân is determined to bring in community-lead initiatives and link young people to leadership opportunities. She has experience working on programs that confront stigma and embrace cultural diversity. In her spare time, she enjoys dancing, listening to music, cooking, reading books about human rights, social justice and racism, and playing with her young kids.

## Shukura Chapman

*Youth & Family Practitioner – Individual support (they/them pronouns)*

Shukura is a queer woman of colour using her experience to support young people discover and develop their passions and life skills, connect with community and focus on improving their mental health and wellbeing. Shukura has a background working in LGBTIQ family violence and in empowering young people through skateboarding programs and music workshops. Shukura has qualifications in community development and strives to work inclusively with young people of all backgrounds and identities. They use a gentle, empathetic and trauma-informed approach. In their spare time Shukura enjoys playing guitar, shooting hoops, making beats, ceramics, cooking and reading.

## Nanchok Chol

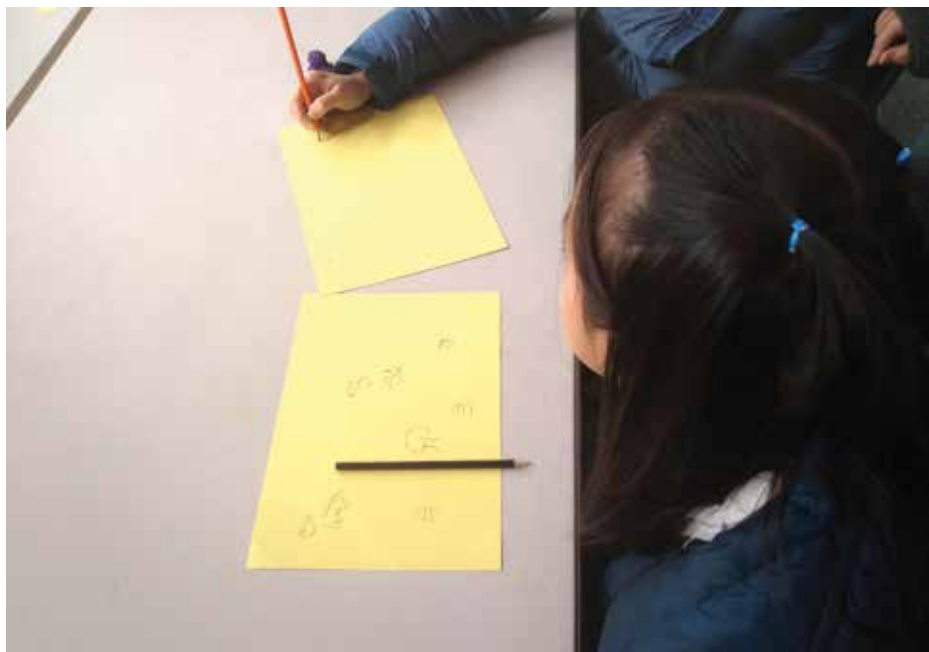
*Peer Leader (She/her pronouns)*

Nanchok is a South Sudanese woman who is passionate about both working and being of a service to community. Nanchok is a Peer Leader within the Underground Women's programs. She values co-designing programs that have a focus on strengthening and building communities, amplifying voices, and giving a platform for community stories to be heard. Nanchok is undertaking a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Sociology and has experience in facilitating conversations about Mental Health involving intergenerational communities. Nanchok believes that "Life will always progress with community."

## Korra Koperu

*Youth Peer Leader (She/They/He Pronouns)*

Korra Koperu is a gender diverse 19-year-old Māori/Mori (Ngāti Moko Marae, Tapuika Iwi) person. Korra is the current Youth Peer Leader at (in)visible, which they have helped to facilitate groups through lockdown virtually and in-real-life programs. Korra started their advocacy journey for TGNB youth when they were 13, helping to navigate and dismantle systems that discriminated against and weren't made for TGNB young people, which is still ongoing fight. Korra is passionate about their community and wants to collaborate with other QTIPoC young people to not only make sure we have a seat at the table but to re-arrange that table, which we are disproportionality excluded from. Outside of their role, Korra is passionate about continuing to learn more about their culture and decolonising themselves. They are currently on a journey of self-discovery and re-learning about themselves. They love videos games, makeup, fashion, art and plants.



## Sunny Parker

*Peer Leader (they/them pronouns)*

Sunny is a queer, neurodivergent, non-binary trans man of colour passionate about empowering the voices of other queer, trans and gender-diverse young people and young people of colour, from all walks of neurodiversity. They aspire to do this through developing positive spaces and platforms for others to be seen and heard, assisting others with access to opportunities and resources, and supporting others through the development of strong relationships with peers & within the community. They are currently a Peer Leader of Queerspace Youth & Voicefest, and a former Student Placement with our team at (In)Visible as well. In their spare time, they like weightlifting, playing video games, podcasts, singing and playing the guitar, and going out to see live music gigs.



## We would also like to thank our former team members for their hard work and commitment.

We thank them for their hard work in building connections in community, strengthening networks with other organisations and helping build a strong future for **the drum** and its participants in challenging times.

We did have some turnover of staff, like many non profit organisations. Many people chose to change their work lives while adapting to Covid-19.

Ali Abdallah	Sabrina Adem
Dalilah Thalib	Idil Ali
Fardowsa Nur	Sandra Tay
Mustafa Abdi	Tianah Nyguen
Samy Ibrahim	Mo Musil
Shan Berhi	Claire Bostock

## Thanks to our wonderful students:

Ahn	Etsub
Ariel	Ru
Shalini	Sunny
Nikki	Korra
Emma	Kap
Heran	Etsub
	Niketa



## Funders and partners list

- » Our partners – Riverside, Signal Arts, Hotham Mission, the Venny, Skate Victoria, YMCA
- » Our champions – Deka (interviewing politicians), Sabrina (live from lockdown), Khadija (hosting panel discussions)
- » Our believers and fearless champions Karen Field and Robert Ricconi, drummond street
- » Krystel Bendle and Jasmina Stanic, City of Melbourne
- » Paula Butcher, YMCA
- » Students in 2020-2021 – Ariel, Shalini, Nicole, Leyla, Emma, Jacinta
- » Volunteers in 2020-2021 – Hiwot

## Our funders

- » City of Melbourne
- » Engage funding from Department of Premier and Cabinet
- » FreeZa funding from Department of Premier and Cabinet
- » North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network
- » Pride and Equity
- » Youth Week funding from Department of Health and Human Services

## Our donors

- » Two Birds
- » Lush
- » City of Melbourne Libraries
- » Pride and Equality network
- » Allen and Unwin
- » Carman's Kitchen
- » Harper Collins Publishers Australia
- » Helping Hoops
- » Ikea
- » Kensington Neighbourhood House
- » Lush Northland, Lush Melbourne Central and Lush Southland
- » Melbourne United
- » Nike
- » The Little Bookroom
- » The Wellington
- » Typo
- » Aesop
- » Nova Cinemas
- » Melbourne University Women's Football Club
- » Happily Made

proudly funded by



**CITY OF MELBOURNE**



**Drummond  
Street  
Services**

## Community engagement and community partners

- 
- » Australian Muslim Social Services
  - » Baasto
  - » Baker Boy
  - » Capital City Local Learning and Employment Network
  - » Carlton Baths
  - » Carlton Local Area Network (CLAN)
  - » Carlton Primary School
  - » Church of All Nations (CAN)
  - » City of Melbourne: Community Engagement  
Family Services  
Libraries  
Recreation and Leisure Services  
Youth Network
  - » CoHealth
  - » Collarts
  - » Department of Human Services
  - » Flemington Kensington Legal Centre
  - » Front Yard
  - » Good Cycles
  - » Helping Hoops
  - » High Rising Hip Hop
  - » Hotham Mission
  - » JUDAH
  - » The Huddle
  - » IMAAP
  - » Inner Melbourne Community Legal
  - » Inner West Children and Youth Network (formerly Kensington Children and Youth Committee)
  - » Islamic Youth
  - » Jesuit Social Services
  - » Junglepussy
  - » Kathleen Symes Library and Community Centre
  - » Koorie Heritage Trust
  - » Medley House, University of Melbourne
  - » Melbourne Arts Centre
  - » Melbourne International Film Festival
  - » Melbourne University
  - » Minus18
  - » Moonee Valley City Council
  - » Netball Victoria
  - » North Melbourne Area Collective (NAC)
  - » Our Place
  - » Polytechnic
  - » Pookie
  - » Probuild
  - » Queerspace
  - » Reclink
  - » RiS'N
  - » School Focused Youth Services
  - » SIGNAL
  - » Spectrum Intersections
  - » St Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre
  - » St Joseph's Primary School
  - » Strong brother, strong sister youth org
  - » Study Melbourne
  - » Surf Life Saving Australia
  - » Switchboard Victoria
  - » The Huddle
  - » The Push
  - » The Wellington
  - » The Venny
  - » Tilde Film Festival
  - » Transcend
  - » TransFamily
  - » Ubuntu
  - » University High
  - » Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Association
  - » The Village
  - » Visionary Images
  - » Whosane
  - » Ygender
  - » Youthlaw
  - » YMCA Kensington
  - » YSAS
  - » Zoe Belle Gender Collective





## Connect with us

We are evolving and working with how organisations and clients can contact us, especially in a virtual space. The great thing about working with young people is they are extremely skilled and knowledgeable about connecting.

- » **the drum** Instagram panel on Black Lives Matter had 348 views on IGTV
- » A young person interviewing a person of colour running for council had 595 views on IGTV
- » our live from lockdown interview with young people had 1 200 views on IGTV

Please see our websites and social media for ways you can find us and some of the programs we run as well!

proudly funded by



**CITY OF MELBOURNE**



**Drummond  
Street  
Services**

## Social media

### the drum website

<https://thedrum.ds.org.au/>, the drum generally

<https://www.facebook.com/thedrumyouthservices/>

<https://www.instagram.com/thedrummelb/>

### (in)visible for young QTPOC

<https://www.facebook.com/invisiblethedrum/>

### (in)visible on Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/invisible.thedrum/>, Queerspace youth

<https://www.facebook.com/queerspaceyouth/>

### Queerspace youth

[https://www.instagram.com/queerspace\\_youth](https://www.instagram.com/queerspace_youth)

### Voicefest

<https://www.facebook.com/VOICEFESTdifferenceisstrength/>

<https://www.instagram.com/voicefest.thedrum/>

### Instagram – private for Underground Women

<https://www.instagram.com/undergroundwomen.thedrum/>

### Only in the Fam Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/onlythefam.thedrum/>