



*Mt Theo –  
Yuendumu Substance  
Misuse Aboriginal  
Corporation*

**Strategic Plan  
2006 – 2011**

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*This Strategic Plan was written under direction of the Mt Theo Committee and endorsed at a planning workshop facilitated by the Office of the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations, Yuendumu, June 2006.*

## OVERVIEW

Mt Theo Program was established in 1994 as a strategy to deal with and prevent petrol sniffing in Yuendumu. This is and always will be our core priority.

Twelve years later, there is very little petrol sniffing in Yuendumu, and this has allowed Mt Theo Program to embrace a broader focus both regionally and within Yuendumu. Mt Theo Program now provides services to the wider Warlpiri Nation, including the provision of youth activities in Willowra, and the Jaru Pirrjirdi (Strong Voices) Project, which addresses the issues underlying youth substance misuse, has become embedded in Yuendumu community culture.

In addition, Mt Theo Program is now able to work with young people who are suffering the consequences of misuse of alcohol and other drugs, or at risk of self-harm, and the Outstation is being used as a facility for diversion of juveniles and young adults from the criminal justice system.

In order to prevent petrol sniffing in Yuendumu, Mt Theo Program needs to remain functional and open as a respite facility. The very concept of having Mt Theo open provides a strong deterrent against young people choosing to sniff petrol. While petrol sniffing has been absent from Yuendumu for a substantial period of time, it could very easily start up again. In order to be prepared for this possibility Mt Theo needs to be maintained as a mechanism that the community can use to immediately deal with sniffing. The most naïve action we could take would be to be lulled into a false sense of security and close down Mt Theo Program because we do not have sniffing anymore.

In the same way, having Mt Theo Outstation as a diversionary option for young people engaging in anti-social behaviour, allows young people to reflect on their actions outside the criminal justice system, and with assistance from elders and mentors, make healthy choices about their futures. The Youth Program and Jaru Pirrjirdi Project provide aftercare and support on their return to the community.

With this in mind the strategy for Mt Theo Program for the next five years is based on enhancing our services. We will build on the successes of the last twelve years in stopping petrol sniffing and providing community development strategies that are conceived and directed by community elders and young people. The broken spirits of our previous clients are healing and the Mt Theo Committee acknowledges their strength and potential as emerging leaders for Yuendumu community.

Overall strategic focus:

- Better not bigger
- More Aboriginal workers in salaried positions
- Develop programs and train staff and Committee to specifically address abuse of marijuana, alcohol and other drugs
- Emphasis on cultural activities across all Program areas
- Improved infrastructure to support Program activities
- Improved organization management to allow Mt Theo to demonstrate a sound evidence base for the Program

## FIVE MAIN ARMS OF SERVICE

The Mt Theo Program currently has five major areas of activity. Originally, from 1994 – 1999, the program was focused primarily on the prevention of petrol sniffing in Yuendumu, through the operation of Mt Theo as a petrol sniffer respite outstation and provision of a program of youth activities in Yuendumu, which drew young people away from the petrol sniffing scene.

Mt Theo Program now also focuses on the Jaru Pirrjirdi (Strong Voices) Project – a youth development and leadership initiative, which works with young people and the broader Yuendumu Community to address the issues underlying youth substance abuse; Outreach and Education work with other communities; and the Willowra Youth Program.

The objectives of the Mt Theo-Yuendumu Substance Misuse Aboriginal Corporation are:

- a) To provide direct relief of poverty, misfortune, destitution, disadvantage, distress, dispossession, serious economic disadvantage and suffering among the Warlpiri people of Central Australia; and
- b) to that end:
  - (i) provide treatment and rehabilitation for petrol sniffers and young people suffering from other substance misuse such as gunga and alcohol
  - (ii) assist in the prevention of petrol sniffing and other substance misuse within the community;
  - (iii) to provide counseling, education and socialization to young people at risk of substance misuse or suffering from the effects of substance abuse, and related issues such as family violence
  - (iv) to provide support to families suffering from the effects of substance misuse and related issues
  - (v) to provide a safe, secure environment for cultural strengthening at Mt Theo Outstation for young Warlpiri persons referred by the Courts as an alternative to incarceration
  - (vi) provide sport and recreational facilities and infrastructure for recreation in the community to facilitate diversionary and prevention programs;
  - (vii) provide and manage diversionary sport, recreation and social activities for youth in the community.
  - (viii) to provide cultural strengthening, youth leadership and development activities, through the Jaru Pirrjirdi (Strong Voices) Project

With this as our vision, the Mt Theo Program is planning to continue the five main arms of service over the next five years:

- ∞ **Mt Theo Outstation Serving the Warlpiri Nation**
- ∞ **Jaru Pirrjirdi (Strong Voices) Project**
- ∞ **Yuendumu Youth Program**
- ∞ **Outreach and Education Work**
- ∞ **Willowra Youth Program**

Each of these arms of service is outlined in this plan.

**Current Situation:**

As outlined previously, Mt Theo Outstation needs to remain operational as a deterrent and immediate response strategy for dealing with petrol sniffing in Yuendumu. As well as providing a place for Yuendumu community to send its petrol sniffers, Mt Theo is open to petrol sniffers from the Warlpiri communities of Willowra, Nyrippi and Lajamanu. This aspect of Mt Theo Program is described in our 1999 document, *Mt Theo Stage Two*.

Increasingly, Mt Theo Outstation is accepting referrals from FACS, Reconnect and CAYLUS for young Warlpiri people who are abusing petrol and other substances and engaging in harmful activities in Alice Springs.

In 2000 when the Mt Theo Program was incorporated as an Aboriginal Corporation, the objectives included the use of Mt Theo Outstation as a diversionary option for juveniles and young adults. This is now in place, and during 2005-2006, 87% of clients were referrals from police or Alice Springs Magistrates.

The Mt Theo Program has traditionally been based on tribal authority where Warlpiri elders have had the discretion to make decisions regarding who stays at Mt Theo and for how long based on their personal knowledge of an individual, and kinship and cultural factors. This applies also to diversionary clients. Formal engagement with the mainstream Australian legal system recognizes this tribal authority and works with it.

More recently clients have been referred to Mt Theo by Yuendumu families who are concerned about marijuana and/or alcohol abuse and resulting suicide attempts.

Mt Theo Outstation will also continue to be used as a base for conducting workshops and mentoring clients as part of the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project (see below for details).

**Case Management**

Mt Theo Program has created a manila folder based case management filing system where each individual petrol sniffer who stays at Mt Theo has a file. The Program has received funding to install and manage an electronic database in 2006 to better monitor clients and their welfare. In current files the following information is recorded:

- Name
- Date of Birth (where available)
- Reports of when the individual was sniffing in Yuendumu
- Reports of intervention (talking to family etc)
- Reports of when the client went to Mt Theo and when they returned
- Reports of follow up, three, six and twelve months after leaving Mt Theo

**Infrastructure**

Mt Theo Program was awarded funds in 2004 to develop infrastructure for the Outstation. There has been lengthy consultation with Mt Theo Traditional Owners, Outstation workers and Mt Theo staff, and renovation of the existing house has been completed. As at June 2006, the designs for dormitory style accommodation, upgrade of solar power system and upgrade of water tanks have been finalised and have gone to tender. Construction will begin in July 2006.

Bushlight (Centre for Appropriate Technology) have partnered with Mt Theo in providing a sustainable solar power system for the Outstation needs. Their involvement includes training for workers and clients in the efficient use of power, and repairs to equipment.

The improved infrastructure at Mt Theo will allow more effective and efficient ongoing operation and maintenance of the Program.

## **Key Issues:**

### **1. Referrals from Community Corrections**

There is no financial assistance provided to Mt Theo to care for these clients. Moreover the cost of care for such clients far exceeds welfare referrals. Many are referred to Mt Theo for several months, and during this time must travel to Alice Springs to attend court appearances, the cost of which is currently borne by Mt Theo Program.

Discussions to formalize this process and gain some financial assistance for Corrections clients are ongoing with the Northern Territory Department of Correctional Services, NT Police, the Commonwealth Attorney Generals Department and the Mt Theo Program and the Mt Theo Traditional Owners.

### **2. Educational resources for clients**

In the early years of the Program, when numbers of petrol sniffing clients was high, a teacher was working at the Outstation. As numbers of these clients declined, and prior to the current trend of diversionary clients, this service was suspended. It is now a priority for Mt Theo Program to be provided with a teacher on a permanent basis to ensure young people have the opportunity to increase their educational standards. Discussions with DEET and Yuendumu Community School are ongoing.

### **3. Marijuana and alcohol abuse and suicide prevention**

Young people who are at risk of the effects of marijuana and/or alcohol abuse, and suicide have been referred to the Outstation for respite and cultural strengthening. Mt Theo Committee have requested training for themselves and workers in appropriate care and safeguards for caring for these clients.

### **4. Respect for Traditional Owners**

The Mt Theo Program acknowledges that there would be no Program if not for the commitment and generosity of the Traditional Owners. The Traditional Owners have received no personal financial gain for the twelve years Mt Theo has been operating. Mt Theo Program seeks to show our gratitude by providing opportunities for Traditional Owners to spend time in their country. This also has enormous benefits for young clients. The renovated house is available for Traditional Owners to stay, and two demountables have been committed by Newmont Mines, to be delivered in 2006. These will be sited with power, and covered with a shelter.

### **5. Maintenance of new infrastructure**

Capital works funding from OATSIH does not provide for ongoing repairs and maintenance of the facilities under construction at Mt Theo.

**Funding Source for this Service: OATSIH, DHACS, Department of Health & Ageing**

## **Strategic directions – overview**

1. Secure formal processes and financial assistance for clients referred through Community Corrections and Juvenile Justice Department.
2. Secure a permanent teacher for Outstation clients.
3. Oversee completion of construction works - dormitory style accommodation, upgrade of solar power system and upgrade of water tanks.
4. Ensure funding for ongoing repairs and maintenance of the new infrastructure is secured.
5. Develop programs and train staff and Committee to specifically address marijuana, alcohol and other drugs, and suicide prevention.

6. Continue Jaru Pirjirdi mentorship of Outstation clients through regular bush trips and youth forums.
  7. Landscaping and market garden project to be implemented at the Outstation.
  8. Ensure all efforts are made to assist Traditional Owners to spend time in their country.
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## YUENDUMU YOUTH PROGRAM

### **Current Situation:**

Mt Theo Program will continue to manage the Yuendumu Youth Program.

The Yuendumu Youth Program is an essential aspect of the Mt Theo Program as it works to provide a vibrant and attractive alternative to petrol sniffing and other substance misuse. The Youth Program currently has a five year plan which is set out below.

As part of providing youth services in Yuendumu the Mt Theo Program has, in the absence of a viable council, been made lead local agency to further the successful PIRA (Pools in Remote Areas) program and ensure construction and management of the swimming pool for the next five years .

The development of the Youth Committee through the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project, has resulted in young people taking on a greater level of responsibility for running and organizing youth program activities. This means that the current youth program plan is subject to change in a way that is responsive to the outcomes of the Youth Committee and more broadly the Jaru Pirrjirdi process.

### **Yuendumu Youth Program Five Year Development Plan**

The prime objective of the Yuendumu Sport and Recreation Program is to cater for the recreational needs of the Yuendumu Community in a way that is empowering of local people. This program operates seven days a week providing afternoon, evening and weekend activities. By having such a program in place we provide positive recreational alternatives to the patterns of crime and substance misuse which used to plague the community. In addition the program promotes fitness and a healthy, happy lifestyle.

Our five year plan builds on the strong program of activities and increases on-site training of our workers and volunteers in the coaching and umpiring of various sports. Within this period we will achieve a level of local expertise and excellence in the sports that the community is interested in developing such as football, softball and basketball.

Recognising the increasing self-confidence and sense of personal and community responsibility of Jaru Pirrjirdi members, Mt Theo Program will work towards full-time employment for two local Youth Workers, to be selected by the Committee and Jaru Pirrjirdi team. Workers will receive training in planning and facilitating youth activities prior to appointment.

### **Youth activities:**

- 1) **Regular nightly activities.** Discos, film, pool table and video games.
- 2) **Football.** Organising coaching and umpiring clinics, & local summer competition at Yuendumu.
- 3) **Basketball.** Running a local men's and women's basketball competition at least two nights a week. Organising coaching and umpiring clinics at Yuendumu.
- 4) **Softball.** Running a local softball competition at least two afternoons a week. Organising coaching and umpiring clinics at Yuendumu.
- 5) **BMX Competition** to be held weekly on weekends.
- 6) **School Holiday Program.** Having a school holiday program that operates seven days a week during school holidays. Including activities such as: Football, Basketball, Roller-skating, Softball, Discos, Film nights, Billiards, Swimming, Art,

Dance and Music workshops, Computer and Multi-media workshops and Excursions.

- 7) **Excursions.** Many people in Yuendumu requested that we include excursions as part of the recreation program. We will continue to have excursions on a regular basis that involve young people and tribal elders. Some excursions would be overnight and would involve activities such as: swimming in local water holes, gathering bush tucker, learning skills about making traditional artifacts, and visiting sites of historical significance. The School no longer allows Mt Theo Program to use their bus for excursions, so Mt Theo will need to purchase a bus.
- 8) Maintaining a stimulating and attractive environment in the **Yuendumu Youth Centre** and developing a sense of involvement and ownership amongst participants by:
  - *Involving participants in the refurbishment and cleaning/maintenance of the Centre;*
  - *Mural workshops;*
  - *Maintaining and replacing equipment such as pool tables, video games and special lighting and effects for disco;*
  - *Involving participants in the running of activities and in decision making about the Centre and its activities.*
- 9) **Youth Development Activities** in conjunction with our Jaru Pirrjirdi (Strong Voices) Project / After School Care Program to provide recreation that meets the needs / aspirations that young people have identified for themselves. These include: music and art programs, internet workshops and training in land management.
- 10) **Training of CDEP recreation workers** and volunteers in all aspects of the recreation program including specialist sports training, plus administration and basic book-keeping / fundraising.

If funding for our current activities continues then further development of activities and facilities are envisaged:

- 1) Funding for architect/engineer to **design a new youth centre** in consultation with Mt Theo workers and Committee.
- 2) **Construction of a modern large multi-functional recreation centre** to include space for concerts / disco / roller-skating / basketball, gym, band storage / practice area, art projects, pool table, video, video games room, music listening area, reading room and kitchen / kiosk. Funded with a combination of government or corporate funds.

### **Key Issues:**

#### **1. Youth Centre**

The Youth Centre that has been utilized for twelve years is old and repairs and renovation have become financially excessive. While we use whatever limited funds are available in trying to ensure the building is safe for activities, it is in a state of ongoing decay.

#### **2. Excursions**

Until recently Mt Theo Program was able to use the Yuendumu School bus for country trips and excursions. The School has recently bought a new bus and will no longer allow other organizations to use the bus. This places a critical aspect of our cultural strengthening program in jeopardy.

### **3. Yuendumu Swimming Pool**

As part of providing youth services in Yuendumu the Mt Theo Program has, in the absence of a viable council, been made lead local agency to further the successful PIRA (Pools in Remote Areas) program and ensure construction and management of the swimming pool for the next five years. The Business Plan being developed will ensure Mt Theo Program receives the administrative and organizational support necessary for the Pool project, to ensure our core business is not compromised.

#### **Recurrent Funding Sources for the Youth Program:**

Funded primarily by FACS Outside School Hours Care with other funds from Mt Theo Program (OATSIH) and NT Sport and Recreation, as well as community fundraising.

#### ***Strategic directions – overview***

1. Developing local capacity to run Youth Program.
  2. Training young people in coaching and umpire skills for sporting activities.
  3. Working with Commonwealth & NT governments to complete construction of the swimming pool and manage pool operations effectively
  4. Eight young people initially trained in pool management and life-saving skills to work at the swimming pool, with ongoing rotational training to increase pool workforce.
  5. Increasing cultural activities offered in the Youth Program.
  6. Planning and constructing a new multi-functional recreation centre.
  7. Setting up a healthy food canteen in the Youth Centre.
  8. Buying a second-hand bus for excursions.
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### **Current Situation**

Jaru Pirrjirdi (Strong Voices) is an integrated after-care and community development project for young people aged 16-30 in Yuendumu. Whilst the Youth Program is primarily geared to provide an 'entertainment' for youth aged 5-15, the Jaru Pirrjirdi attempts to provide a structure through which young adults can engage in positive, meaningful and productive community activity.

Many of the young people involved in this program have been previously treated through the Mt Theo Petrol Sniffing Prevention Program, may be at high risk of substance misuse, or experiencing other related 'harmful' issues such as suicidal ideation, criminal behaviour and domestic violence. This project will continue to work to assist "high risk" young people to create more meaningful lives beyond these issues. One of the ultimate aims of this project is that youth will graduate naturally from their activities in the Youth Program into working within the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project and never feel the need to engage in substance misuse or other related issues. The Jaru Pirrjirdi project attempts to identify and work with the underlying causes of substance misuse and other related personal or social issues such as domestic violence, suicidal ideation and criminal behaviour.

The overall approach of the project is to progress young adults through seven different project elements, which correspond to the three levels of experience within the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project (see below). The ultimate outcome of this process is to 'graduate' young adults into career pathways within the community, in order to benefit them personally and the community at large. This is firmly based in a community development process that seeks to empower local people into positions of employment and strategic power within the community. Intimately correlated with this outcome is the development of strong, confident, responsible and capable young adults who have high self-esteem, have deep cultural knowledge and strong problem solving, mentoring and conflict resolution skills.

### **The Jaru Pirrjirdi Process**

There are seven elements to the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project. Young adults who join the project begin at element 1 and work their way progressively through the seven elements of the project. These seven elements are divided into three levels, which reflect differing levels of experience and responsibility within the project. The goals for the members of each level also differ in order to reflect the differing capabilities of individuals at each level. Whilst there is no rule, experience has generally suggested that young adults spend 18 months-2 years working through these elements before reaching level 3 and Jaru 'graduation'.

#### **LEVEL 1: Training Jaru**

Young adults who join the Jaru Pirrjirdi project begin at level 1. This level means being involved in two activities : acting as workers who run the Youth Program and/or participate in Night School. Young adults who begin at level 1 are introduced to the structures and nature of the Jaru Pirrjirdi project. The aim is to provide them with paid work through the Youth Program and create an additional sense of purpose and activity to their life. Young adults who join at this level may be currently engaging in harmful behaviours such as substance misuse. Past experience with the project has found that the introduction of these activities and exposure to more senior Jaru members have significantly reduced such harmful behaviours. Workers at this level may receive casework/mentoring support where necessary.

### Element 1: Youth Program Workers

Jaru Pirrjirdi workers run the Mt Theo Youth Program activities. These activities occur outside school hours, every day from 3-10.30 on school days and all day on from 9am to 11pm on weekends. These Youth Program activities include a wide range of activities through sport, recreation, art, music, culture and excursions. Jaru Pirrjirdi workers act as the 'on-the-ground' youth worker under periodical supervision from senior Jaru. There are generally 5-6 Youth Program activities every day and two workers can be paid for each activity.

### Element 2: Night School

Night School is a Jaru Pirrjirdi initiative created after young adults expressed an interest in furthering their education. Many of these young adults had left school early or had negative experiences within the educational system. Night School aims to provide a less formal environment through which young adults can re-access their education. Night School activities variously involve mathematics, english, reading, writing, art, music, land management and computers. Additionally Night School has a practical focus and may include workshops on issues such as sexual and relationship health, substance misuse forums and dealing with 'government forms'.

### **LEVEL 2: Jaru Members**

After a period of 3-6 months, and/or when Mt Theo staff and Senior Jaru deem it appropriate, Jaru members at level 1 begin working and participating at level 2 of the project. Level 2 requires a deeper level of commitment and involvement to the Jaru project as activities may depend upon one specific individual's presence, run for 3-4 days or simply require a greater level of personal involvement. Members at this level have generally ceased any chronic harmful behaviours and the aim is to reduce any cyclical or patterned nature to these behaviours. Closer connection with Senior Jaru and Mt Theo staff also means that members are able to explore potential broader underlying causes behind such behaviours such as unhealthy relationships or family difficulties. This is furthered at the casework and mentoring level by the fact that the individuals will have developed trusting and supportive relationships with senior Jaru and Mt Theo staff.

Jaru workers at level 2 engage in project work and bush trips. These elements (detailed below) provide workers with appropriate environments for investigating and moving beyond these issues as much of this work may be conducted in small groups, one on one or out of the community out bush. They also provide workers with a positive engagement on many community issues and needs and institute deep cultural knowledge and pride. Jaru members at this level also still engage in all of the activities of level 1.

### Element 3: Projects

Jaru Pirrjirdi project work involves a wide range of potential activities. This work is ongoing and constant and responds to Jaru initiatives or those from the community or external sources such as government or other indigenous groups. Examples of past project work includes *external representation* (at government/indigenous meetings & conferences, visits to other communities), *films* (on subjects such as domestic violence, Jaru activity), *radio* (presentation of Jaru work or specific radio documentaries such as alcohol abuse), *acting as cultural liaison officers for community visitors*, *art projects* (including painting, music and dance with positive youth, community and culture representations) and other *miscellaneous projects* such as the gaining of car licences. These projects also allow Jaru members to begin training or identifying potential career pathways through activity across a broad range of areas.

### Element 4: Bush Trips

Bush trips form a vital part of the Jaru Pirrjirdi process and occur in two forms. The first and most significant is a monthly trip for three days to sites of cultural significance. The first aim of these trips is to strengthen and record cultural knowledge among young people. This trip usually involves 15-20 young people and 3-4 elders. The group journey

to sites of cultural significance and record the elders stories of these areas. Upon return from the bush trip the Jaru members edit the film and audio of these bush trips to add to the cultural mapping archive. The aim is to produce a community archive for sites of cultural significance so this knowledge will not be lost. Moreover young people will hold this cultural knowledge themselves and can pass it on to others.

Additionally these trips provide young people with the chance to spend time with community elders who can pass on their knowledge about personal and community issues. This is the second aim of the bush trips which is to create personal strength and support for young people and their issues. With the elders, senior Jaru and Mt Theo staff young people hold formal and informal discussions about personal and community issues through meetings and nightly camp fire discussions. These discussions are facilitated by the fact that young people are out of the community and in an environment understood to be used for the discussion of such issues.

The second form of these bush trips is regular day trips to sites outside the community. These trips are mentoring trips and usually involve several Jaru members and young adults facing personal issues. These trips provide a relief from these issues, support from strong peers and appropriate forums in which to discuss these issues. In this sense their peers will encourage the 'at-risk' individuals beginning, continuing or returning participation in the Jaru project.

### ***LEVEL 3: Senior Jaru***

Jaru members at level 3 in the Jaru project are considered to have 'graduated' from the Jaru project. They can participate in three elements of the project (see below) and/or move on to employment or CDEP positions with other organizations. At this level the Jaru members are program, and young community, leaders. They are equipped with a sense of pride, capability and responsibility that enables them to deal with any personal problems that may arise but also to assist fellow Jaru, peers, youth and indeed any community members with personal or community issues. Jaru members at this level can also participate in any of the activities of level 1 and 2 Jaru.

#### ***Element 5: Youth Committee***

The youth committee is comprised of senior Jaru members and is the driving force behind the strategic direction of the project. As well as regular informal reflection on the project formal meetings are held with Senior Jaru to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the project and suggest ways forward. This committee may also wish to draw attention to young individual's at risk within the community and potential support mechanisms. Several members of this committee also sit on the over-arching Mt Theo Program committee (MYSMAC) and report on Jaru activities and direction. This committee has been responsible for the whole evolution and framework of the Jaru project as well as specific ideas such as Night School and Bush Trips.

#### ***Element 6: Mentoring***

Senior Jaru members regularly engage in mentoring activity for young people of all ages in the community. This may take on various forms such as regularly checking in on individuals at risk, providing support for them and their families, bringing individuals on bush trips, visiting Mt Theo outstation to talk with clients, bringing young adults into the Jaru project and guiding their progress. It can also involve more formal interventions and representations such as removal from at risk situations, liaising with clinic, police and Mt Theo staff and representation in court.

#### ***Element 7: Career Pathways***

The final element of the Jaru process is that of career pathways. The empowering process of the Jaru Pirrjirdi project has seen many young people emerge as young community leaders who are of immense value to the community and have a strong desire to work within various community organizations to benefit their community. Current senior

Jaru have already taken up positions in other community organizations such as Yuendumu Night Patrol, Yuendumu Police, Warlpiri Media, Yuendumu Old People's Program and as workers within the Mt Theo program (admin and carers at Mt Theo Outstation). These and other organizations (such as clinic, school, shop) represent potential career pathways within Yuendumu as well as additional organizations outside the community such as indigenous organizations like Central Land Council.

### **Key Issues:**

Despite Mt Theo Program's success in dramatically reducing petrol sniffing within the Warlpiri region, the majority of past petrol sniffers remain engaged in, or at high risk of other substance misuse, or still engage in other harmful behaviors as previously noted. Beyond this there is the concurrent need not only to restrict, reduce or prevent these behaviours but also to create positive, engaged and meaningful futures for young people.

**1. Address underlying causes of 'at risk' behaviour** such as substance misuse (particularly petrol, marijuana and alcohol) and other related issues such as suicide ideation, criminal behaviour and domestic violence.

Past experience with this project has demonstrated that the meaningful engagement of young adults can significantly reduce the frequency and intensity of substance misuse and related behaviours. An abiding lack of personal engagement, meaning and purpose has been found to be a significant force in the production of harmful and 'at-risk' behaviours. The progressive structure means that young people feel their own capacity increasing as they move through the different levels and elements of the project.

This engagement contributes to the development of strong and capable young adults who emerge as community leaders. This development of personal strength and capability means that the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project acts not just as a restrictive force in inhibiting harmful behaviour, but rather as a positive and productive force that reduces the needs and causes of harmful behaviours.

Jaru Pirrjirdi have designed the overall project framework and progressive stages. This means that they reflect the real needs of these young adults and also constitute activities that young adults are significantly interested in engaging in and pursuing.

### **2. Jaru Pirrjirdi members as Youth Workers for the Youth Program**

The Jaru Pirrjirdi members work as a large 'pool' of workers for the Mt Theo Youth Program on a daily basis. This is crucial in the provision of an active, relevant and diverse Youth Program for the children of Yuendumu. This also provides Jaru members with purpose, part time employment and a growing sense of personal confidence and control over their community. Most importantly the Jaru members as young adults are the best placed to understand the needs of the children of Yuendumu and to adjust the Youth Program accordingly.

Funding is currently drawn from the Sports and Recreation salary, which is not sufficient to cover even half of the money paid to Jaru Pirrjirdi workers through a voucher system.

Currently, the two youth workers are non-Aboriginal. However, the comprehensive 'on-the-job' training and work completed by Jaru Pirrjirdi members through the Youth Program as casual youth workers should work towards full-time employment for at least two local youth workers.

### **3. Exploration and strengthening of traditional culture**

The access to and exploration of traditional culture is a key component of the Jaru Pirrjirdi project. This element is crucial because it allows young people to deepen their own cultural knowledge and to ensure that this knowledge is not lost. These bush trips should

not only occur monthly (as well as the daily bush trips/excursions) but should focus on recording the stories and mapping the wide range of significant sites in the Warlpiri region. This information is to be collated and made available to the wider Warlpiri community in formats such as a book or internet site. The involvement of community elders is thus central to dealing with this key challenge. Any exploration and recording of culture should be directed by these elders with the support of Mt Theo Program staff.

This element is also crucial as 'cultural strength' and pride in Warlpiri identity, has from past experience, been a crucial ingredient in the construction of positive futures for young people.

#### **4. Mentoring**

The mentoring element of the Jaru Pirrjirdi program emerged as a natural evolution from the development of strong, capable, caring and responsible senior Jaru Pirrjirdi members. Their strength has naturally placed them in positions of care and responsibility for other young people. This involves a wide range of activities from informal support through daily checking in with an individual and their family through to formal interventions such as court representation and liaising with police.

There is a distinct need for greater support to be provided for the young people engaging in a mentoring role and to further explore the possible tasks, responsibilities and demands of such a role. It is expected that this element will continue to grow as more Jaru Pirrjirdi members move through the program.

#### **5. The Youth Committee**

This is currently comprised of Senior Jaru Pirrjirdi members. This group meets formally on irregular occasions but constantly holds informal discussions.

The senior Jaru Pirrjirdi members have been intimately involved in the development and framework of the Jaru Pirrjirdi project. The next step in their personal development as future leaders is to formalize the Youth Committee as a sub-committee under the overarching Mt Theo Program committee with the relevant powers of such a structure. There are currently five young Jaru members already serving on the Mt Theo Program committee and the participation of several Jaru member positions should be formalized as part of the Mt Theo committee.

#### **6. Meaningful futures for young people**

The aim of the Jaru Pirrjirdi project is the production of positive, engaged and meaningful futures for young people. Associated with the personal strength, confidence and capacity that emerges from the Jaru process is the creation of career pathways for young Jaru members.

This element should be strengthened and pursued for all relevant Jaru members, through Night School and other training providers, according to their skills and interests. There are many potential sources within Yuendumu for training and employment, all of whom should be made explicitly aware of the development model and goals of the Jaru Pirrjirdi project. Potential sources include Yuendumu council, Yuendumu workshop, Yuendumu Police, the two local shops, WYNHealth, Yuendumu clinic, Yuendumu school and the two community Night Patrols.

This element should also be pursued for organizations that exist outside the community, most particularly indigenous organizations, that may be of interest to Jaru Pirrjirdi members. Potential sources include the many town based indigenous organizations that work in remote communities such as CLC (Central Land Council), CAYLUS (Central Aboriginal Youth Link Up Service) and various relevant government departments.

**Funding Sources for this project** – A combination of general Mt Theo Program (OATSIH) funds and funding from: Foundation for Young Australians, Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation, NT Crime Prevention, FaCS Outside School Hours Care, fund-raising activities.

***Strategic directions – overview***

1. Maintaining and enhancing the current Jaru Pirrjirdi structure and process, with particular focus upon casework support, mentoring and cultural bush trips.
  2. Developing more systemic solutions to the issues facing young adults within Yuendumu.
  3. Secure adequate funding to cover wages for Jaru Pirrjirdi workers as casual workers for the Mt Theo Youth Program.
  4. Maintaining Jaru bush trips as a learning and recording mechanism for culture.
  5. Continuing to record the stories from bush trips and mapping the wide range of significant sites in the Walrpiri region.
  6. Providing greater support and formalizing the mentoring program to create a formal and accessible network of mentors.
  7. Formalize the role and purpose of the Youth Committee, as a sub-Committee within the Mt Theo Program Committee, with training provided on governance and roles and responsibilities.
  8. Enhance accessibility to and courses offered at Night School.
  9. Strengthen and pursue career pathways.
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## OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

### **Current Situation:**

Mt Theo Program plans to continue its outreach and education work. This will include providing workshops and presentations on petrol sniffing and the Mt Theo Program to interested parties on request. To date these have included:

- At risk and petrol sniffing youth
- Jaru Pirrjirdi Youth Committee Members
- Community members
- Other community organisations
- Other workers in the field
- Student health workers
- Clinic staff
- Police
- Researchers and Academics
- Policy makers
- Conferences
- Members of Parliament
- Providing petrol sniffing community action workshops for communities. This includes tribal elders and team members sharing what we have learnt about petrol sniffing.

This element of the Mt Theo Program provides a forum for young people who have become strong through the Program to build self-confidence and pride by telling their stories of hope to interested parties.

The Committee have long talked about producing a book, film and audio documentary on the Mt Theo story so other communities may try this successful model. Possibilities will be explored and presented to Committee for direction.

### **Education / Information Packages**

Mt Theo Program will also continue to develop education and information packages which will include:

- Distribution of Mt Theo information packages on request. These packages include: the Mt Theo Story; Mt Theo newsletters (*Yapa Kurlangu Yimi*) containing information on "The Brain Story", "Community Connections Canvas", "Thinking About Young People Canvas", and the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project; and selected media articles about the Mt Theo Program

**Funding Source for this Service:** This is currently not specifically funded. Mt Theo has requested funding from OATSIH to develop this crucial area of our work.

### **Strategic direction – overview**

1. Develop a stronger capacity to respond to requests for information and presentations.
2. Continue to develop skills of more members of the Jaru Pirrjirdi team to tell their stories publicly.
3. Production of Mt Theo story in print, film and audio.

## WILLOWRA YOUTH PROGRAM

### ***Current situation:***

In early 2005, Mt Theo Program assumed the responsibility for the Willowra Youth Program. This formalization followed a long period of internal community consultation and the development of a reference group of key Willowra residents. A non-Aboriginal resident of Willowra was engaged to assist the community to address petrol sniffing and provide challenging and meaningful diversionary activities for young people. Young people sniffing petrol in Willowra were provided with respite and cultural strengthening at Mt Theo Outstation, and on their return were provided with after-care through a program of interesting activities.

Despite lack of funds, no community representative body, and severely limited services, Willowra has seen remarkable success through their youth strategies. There has been no petrol sniffing in Willowra for over twelve months, and the program of activities, and supporting infrastructure continues to strengthen. A dilapidated building has been partly renovated, using local materials and workers, and is now the hub of the Youth Program. The Youth Centre is used regularly for discos, film nights and concerts. Funding has now been secured to provide a powered, lined secure area for storage and multimedia and IT equipment, a catering kitchen and a recreation room. Tangentyere Constructions will manage the renovations, and will continue to use local young people in the project.

With no operational expenses, buying and maintaining essential Program equipment has been problematic. CAYLUS has assisted in many ways, not least of all in providing a lap top which has enabled many young people to train in multimedia, two-way literacy, record music, burn CDs and put on discos. This computer has burnt out, and no back-up computer is available. The young people have developed strong skills and interests in this area, and locally made films have proved the most popular on film nights, so the lack of a computer seriously disadvantages the plans and proposed outcomes of the Program.

There is little sporting infrastructure in Willowra, so young women are developing skills in organizing ball games for younger ones. The football oval needs renovating, and this is being pursued by Yuendumu Council while a submission for two basketball courts with lights was recently rejected by NT Office of Sport and Recreation. A group of young women have developed a catering initiative whereby they cater for community and school functions, often in return for food that can then be used in the Youth Program. The young men have formed a band, practice regularly and are planning to record their own CD.

The successful intervention with petrol sniffing, through strong community action gives us a real cornerstone to work from. Comprehensive involvement in planning and programs and community direction at every level has developed people in Willowra's ability to take action and improve their quality of life. The development of the Youth Centre is a physical manifestation of our dreams. Young people are so more able to express themselves and manage their lives through these successes and incredible personal development training in IT, catering, multimedia, and facilitating community events.

However, development of the Program as a long term strategy to address the issues underlying substance misuse, and the security of Program equipment, continues to be hampered by ongoing alcohol abuse and violence.

There is no housing for a Youth Worker in Willowra. The current worker has accommodation because her husband works in the Clinic and is provided with housing. Furthermore, the workload in a community with such limited services, is unsustainable for one Youth Worker. A second Youth Worker has been engaged for one month mid 2006

as a trial for long-term employment. Should this be successful, funding would need to be secured for his position.

In acknowledgement of their extraordinary commitment and success, Willowra has now attracted operational funding for the next three years.

### **Key issues:**

#### **1. Infrastructure**

Appropriate infrastructure is one of the greatest challenges for the Program. Completion of the Youth Centre renovation will enable activities to be held consistently in a safe and secure environment, as well as a secure lock up space, and an office/IT/multi media area. A large workshop on one side of the Youth Centre is planned for young men's vocational training.

The community sees education and vocational training as a priority for the Program, and has planned an intergenerational learning centre to be sited next to the Youth Centre, as an opportunity to improve community literacy, Warlpiri language maintenance, and job creation prospects. They would use this facility to develop projects to train young people to provide the community with essential services that are lacking. The community administrator has agreed to the building and concept in principle. Yirara School has sought funding to construct this learning centre, however their involvement will depend on the number of young people accessing their secondary school activities. In recent months, due to community unrest very few young people have been attending secondary school.

Music is a strong forum in which to engage young people, and the community plans to build an insulated and sound proof music studio, with an external stage for concerts, next to the basketball courts. This project will allow young men to start to take responsibility for musical equipment, develop their skills, and receive training to assist them to record their own material.

The community would like to construct toilets and showers near the sporting grounds.

There is no housing for a Youth Worker. If the Program is to be sustainable, it is essential that accommodation be secured for two Youth Workers. The community has identified a house that could be renovated, but approval has not yet come from the Department of Infrastructure and Planning.

The lack of availability and variety of food in the local store necessitates the construction of a food and equipment storage facility in Willowra, to ensure the catering project can continue to grow, and adequate supplies for youth activities.

#### **2. Alcohol abuse and community violence**

This behaviour has caused considerable damage to Program equipment, and the ability of the Program to provide a wide range of resourced activities. Several families who have found this drinking behaviour unacceptable have left the community, and in most cases, their children have been the strong backbone of the Youth Program. This has drained the pool of strong workers who would normally be assisting the Youth Program.

#### **3. Local workers**

Through mentoring by the Youth Worker some young people have become strong and resourceful workers. When this is recognized by the community, these young people are often allocated tasks in other areas in the community, and are no longer free to receive more training or to pursue their own interests within the Youth Program.

#### **4. Governance**

Formal meetings for the direction and development of the Youth Program are rare. Discussions occur on a regular basis with family groups and while this works, it is not optimum. While community members recognize and appreciate that they direct the Youth Program, it would be beneficial to be able to hold formal meetings on a regular basis to ensure the vision remains intact, and to be able to address problems as they arise. The Youth Program is the only community based service operating in Willowra and has already provided a solid training ground for more effective governance, with evidence of successful social action.

#### **5. Program management**

Effective program management including the maintaining of equipment and supplies requires a designated office area where the Youth Worker may access a phone, internet and fax, and maintain Program records. A key area of the youth activities involves the use of a computer, and it is essential that at least two working computers are available at all times.

#### **6. Catering Project**

This young women's project has become a popular community commodity. The women want to receive more training in catering skills, as well as learning how to develop the project into a small sustainable income generating activity. While a kitchen is included in the funded renovations, we still need kitchen equipment and trainers.

#### **7. Multi-media and IT**

This is one of the most exciting areas of the Program, and one that engages nearly all of the young people. Locally made films are the most popular at film nights, and send a strong message about Willowra young people as well as exploring their concerns. Young people want to make larger scale features and record essential traditional stories. Warpiri Media assists in training young people in computer and multi-media skills, but more equipment is essential to meet the demand and plans for this project.

#### **8. Autonomy**

While the inclusion of Willowra Youth Program in the Mt Theo Program reflects a shared desire to strengthen our young people to resist substance misuse and to make healthy life choices, there are some distinct disadvantages. When funding is released by various government departments, it is allocated to a specific Program, not a specified location. This means that funding Mt Theo is successful in seeking can be used by Yuendumu or Willowra, not both communities. So both Willowra and Yuendumu can find themselves disadvantaged in 'competing' for funds.

Even more important for Willowra community is that the Youth Program builds on the grass roots development and stays firmly grounded as a Willowra Community Organisation, working towards self determination through incorporation and local management. Willowra community has it's own problems, and solutions, and should ultimately be in a position to pursue their own objectives in their own way. This autonomy is essential to the older community members and the young people who will eventually take their place as leaders and managers in Willowra.

**Funding source:** NT Department of Health and Community Services, and Commonwealth Family and Community Services.

#### ***Strategic directions – overview***

1. Complete renovation and extensions to Youth Centre
2. Construction of the intergenerational learning centre alongside the Youth Centre
3. Construction of a music studio and stage

4. Secure funding for a second Youth Worker
  5. Secure housing for two Youth Workers
  6. Construction of a food and equipment storage facility
  7. Construction of new basketball courts and lights
  8. Construction of toilet and shower facility near sporting grounds
  9. Secure at least 5 CDEP workers to work in the Youth Program
  10. Strengthen the Youth Program Committee and hold regular meetings
  11. Fit out of office space in the Youth Centre, and equip appropriately
  12. Provide ongoing training in catering and small business management for women conducting the catering project
  13. Secure adequate multi-media and IT equipment
  14. Explore possibilities of an independent Willowra Youth Program by 2011
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## INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

### ***Current Situation:***

In order to continue to provide the services outlined in this plan the organization has a number of infrastructure needs, some of which are currently being addressed. Infrastructure improvements under way are:

In Yuendumu:

Construction of a Community Swimming Pool  
Construction of staff housing

At Mt Theo:

Construction of Client's House / Dormitory Accommodation  
Repair of Solar Hot Water System and Renovation of Existing House  
Repair of Solar / Wind Power System

### ***Key Issues:***

#### **Reconstruction of Yuendumu Youth Centre**

The Youth Centre that has been utilized for twelve years is old and repairs and renovation have become financially excessive. While we use whatever limited funds are available in trying to ensure the building is safe for activities, it is in a state of ongoing decay.

#### **Construction of Food and Equipment Storage Facility in Yuendumu**

Yuendumu Social Club kindly allows Mt Theo to store dry good in their storeroom, and frozen goods in their freezer, but this impacts severely on their own storage facility.

Other program equipment is stored all over the community – at the office, in the Youth Centre, in sheds and homes of staff. It is highly inefficient and time-consuming to keep track of and replenish our supplies when they are not centrally located.

**Funding Source for this Service:** OATSIH / Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. Funding may be sought for Youth Centre replacement and Storage Facility from NT Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Grants (2009) or as part of an SRA.

## WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Mt Theo Program plans to build on and maintain the following relationships over the next three years:

Warlpiri Media Association – The Jaru Pirrjirdi Project has been working jointly with Warlpiri Media to produce a number of youth issues radio programs that have been broadcast to eleven local communities generating very positive feedback. A focus of the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project is documentation by film or video of cultural stories and Warlpiri Media will continue to provide training and support.

Yuendumu Community Education Centre – Mt Theo Program will continue to work collaboratively with the school in sharing resources to support the youth program.

Jaru Pirrjirdi and the Yuendumu Community Education Centre developed a collaborative initiative with Youth Challenge Australia that began in February 2004. Building on the key outcome of the Jaru Pirrjirdi youth visioning forums that demonstrated youth in Yuendumu desire access to further education, this project aims to enhance youth development and education in Yuendumu. It involves the school and Jaru Pirrjirdi youth committee jointly overseeing an educational youth development program outside school hours, Night School. The school provides the location and some resources for this program that assists high risk young people to access education, currently not provided for this group within Yuendumu.

Yuendumu Clinic – The Mt Theo Program Manager and the Yuendumu Clinic will maintain regular contact regarding petrol sniffing issues. A memorandum has been signed that commits the Clinic and Mt Theo to working well together to ensure clients are well cared for. The Clinic assesses all clients prior to going to Mt Theo, and visits every fortnight to check their health status. The Clinic also commits to going to Mt Theo in case of medical emergency.

Young people involved in the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project participate in youth forums and focus groups regarding health issues and improving health care services in Yuendumu that target young people. These focus groups revolving around health issues affecting young people, particularly effects of substance abuse and sexual health, provide a much needed preventative strategy, especially for at risk young people. Clinic staff have used the strong relationships Jaru Pirrjirdi has with young people to increase youth attendance at the clinic during community wide screenings.

Yuendumu Police – Mt Theo Program has a good working relationship with the Police by working collaboratively to deal with petrol sniffing in Yuendumu. We also have discussions with the Police regarding broader issues regarding young people and the law.

Yuendumu Police and Jaru Pirrjirdi work closely. The Yuendumu police have been helpful in providing any necessary resources or information to Jaru Pirrjirdi regarding drug and alcohol abuse. The Police have also used the close relationship the Jaru Pirrjirdi Coordinator has with young men to assist in filling in statement for crimes that Jaru Pirrjirdi members were implicated in. In many instances this relationship has meant that young people who have engaged in crime, will go to Police first, rather than wait to be arrested.

Yuendumu Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) – Young people involved in the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project have been linked into the CDEP scheme. Jaru Pirrjirdi participants work on collaborative projects between Mt Theo Program and CDEP that provide benefit to the local community. This enables young people to gain meaningful

employment in an environment that supports their aspirations to live meaningful lives free of substance misuse.

Warlukurlangu Aboriginal Artists Association – Warlukurlangu and The Jaru Pirrjirdi Project have jointly conducted a number of youth mural workshops both at Mt Theo and in Yuendumu. Involving “high risk” young people these workshops have been successful in drawing young people away from patterns of substance misuse to engage them in meaningful activity values by themselves and their peers.

Warlukurlangu Artists is also keen to assist in organising and equipping young people’s art workshops that will be conducted both during the Jaru Pirrjirdi bush workshops as well as following these trips in Yuendumu.

Local Musicians – Jaru Pirrjirdi is working with some of the most talented local musicians in developing a young people’s music program which will offer after school hours tuition in playing, recording and writing music. This program will commence with the completion of the youth centre renovations.

Yuendumu Central Land Council – Jaru Pirrjirdi members have been engaged by CLC through their Warlpiri Rangers program. The training assists young people in gaining necessary skills and confidence in land management and cultural heritage management issues that value and provide economic incentive to maintain existing cultural knowledge.

Yuendumu Baptist Church – The Yuendumu Baptist Church will continue to support the Mt Theo Program through making visits to Mt Theo and working with the young people there.

Jaru Pirrjirdi has communicated with many church leaders and who are key players in the leadership courses, taking young people out bush for Warlpiri Christian teachings, and mentoring young Mt Theo clients.

Batchelor College – is supporting Night School through the provision of teachers and accredited courses that young people have identified, and working with local specialists in providing specific courses.

Yuendumu Community Government Council - Since early 2005, there has been no formal Council in Yuendumu. It is anticipated that when elections are held, and local Councillors back in charge of their community, we will be able to forge a strong partnership with the Council as in earlier years.

Central Australian Youth Link Up Service (CAYLUS) - Mt Theo Program is a member of the CAYLUS Consortium. The program has offered encouragement and support to all regional workers and regional committees. CAYLUS may facilitate other communities visiting our program for workshops, and Mt Theo workers visiting other communities to share what we have learnt about dealing with petrol sniffing and running youth programs. CAYLUS also provides strong support when Mt Theo clients return to Alice Springs, and inform us of any concerns.

Jaru Pirrjirdi works collaboratively with the Central Australian Youth Link Up Service and has regular phone link ups with the service co-ordinator to discuss the project and it’s progress.

Community Corrections - The Northern Territory Department of Community Corrections places young people who are involved with the courts, at Mt Theo as a diversionary option. This attracts no funding support and negotiations will continue. It is not viable for Mt Theo to continue to care for these clients unless some support is offered.

Night Patrol - The Mt Theo Program will continue to work closely with the Yuendumu Night Patrols. This will include the Night Patrol supervising the area around the youth centre, encouraging young people to go home at the conclusion of the night's activities, and reporting any incidents where young people are at risk.

Northern Territory Department of Sport and Recreation - Mt Theo staff have given presentations at Department of Sport and Recreation workshops on community based sport and recreation programs, and may be called to do so in the future. The Department of Sport and Recreation currently funds our sport and recreation officer's position, which we divide among up to 42 Jaru Pirrjirdi workers who are managing youth activities.

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## SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2006-2011

### Overall strategic focus:

- Better not bigger
- More Aboriginal workers in salaried positions
- Develop programs and train staff and Committee to specifically address marijuana, alcohol and other drugs
- Emphasis on cultural activities across all Program areas
- Improved infrastructure to support Program activities
- Improved organizational management to allow Mt Theo to demonstrate a sound evidence base for the Program
- Strengthen support to other Warlpiri communities

### Mt Theo Outstation

1. Secure formal processes and financial assistance for clients referred through Community Corrections.
2. Secure a permanent teacher for Outstation clients.
3. Oversee completion of construction works - dormitory style accommodation, upgrade of solar power system and upgrade of water tanks.
4. Ensure funding for ongoing repairs and maintenance of the new infrastructure is secured.
5. Continue Jaru Pirrjirdi mentorship of Outstation clients through regular bush trips and youth forums.
6. Landscaping and market garden project to be implemented at the Outstation.
7. Ensure all efforts are made to assist Traditional Owners to spend time in their country.

### Yuendumu Youth Program

1. Develop local capacity to run Youth Program.
2. Train young people in coaching and umpire skills for sporting activities.
3. Work with Commonwealth & NT governments to complete construction of the swimming pool and manage pool operations effectively
4. Eight young people initially trained in pool management and life-saving skills to work at the swimming pool, with ongoing rotational training to increase pool workforce.
5. Increase in cultural activities offered in the Youth Program.
6. Plan and construct a new multi-functional recreation centre.
7. Set up a healthy food canteen in the Youth Centre.
8. Buy a second-hand bus for excursions.

### Jaru Pirrjirdi Project

1. Maintaining and enhancing the current Jaru Pirrjirdi structure and process, with particular focus upon casework support, mentoring and cultural bush trips.
2. Developing more systemic solutions to the issues facing young adults within Yuendumu.
3. Secure adequate funding to cover wages for Jaru Pirrjirdi workers as casual workers for the Mt Theo Youth Program.
4. Maintaining Jaru bush trips as a learning and recording mechanism for culture.
5. Continuing to record the stories from bush trips and mapping the wide range of significant sites in the Warlpiri region.
6. Providing greater support to and formalizing the mentoring program to create a strong and accessible network of mentors.

7. Formalize the role and purpose of the Youth Committee, as a sub-Committee within the Mt Theo Program Committee, with training provided on governance and roles and responsibilities.
8. Enhance accessibility to and courses offered at Night School.
9. Strengthen and pursue career pathways.

#### Outreach and Education

1. Develop a stronger capacity to respond to requests for information and presentations.
2. Continue to develop skills of more members of the Jaru Pirrjirdi team and Committee members to tell their stories publicly.
3. Production of Mt Theo story in print, film and audio.

#### Willowra Youth Program

1. Complete renovation and extensions to Youth Centre
2. Construction of the intergenerational learning centre alongside the Youth Centre
3. Construction of a music studio and stage
4. Secure funding for a second Youth Worker
5. Secure housing for two Youth Workers
6. Construction of a food and equipment storage facility
7. Construction of new basketball courts and lights
8. Construction of toilet and shower facility near sporting grounds
9. Secure at least 5 CDEP workers to work in the Youth Program
10. Strengthen the Youth Program Committee and hold regular meetings
11. Fit out of office space in the Youth Centre, and equip appropriately
12. Provide ongoing training in catering and small business management for women conducting the catering project
13. Secure adequate multi-media and IT equipment
14. Explore possibilities of an independent Willowra Youth Program by 2011

#### Infrastructure

1. Reconstruction of Yuendumu Youth Centre
  2. Construction of Food and Equipment Storage Facility in Yuendumu
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## APPENDIX: LINKS TO THE CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN SUBSTANCE MISUSE PLAN

The Mt Theo Program's Strategic Plan is in line with the following objectives and tasks as set out in the *Central Australian Regional Substance Misuse Strategic Plan 2001*:

**“Section One: Preventative and Protective Measures**

**Objective One: Build Capacities In Individuals and Families  
Increase the community capacity to strengthen individuals in their formative years and prevent substance misuse”**

### “Community Sector Tasks

**Community prevention measures**, including better support for small scale, locally developed projects of bush communities, respite outstations and agencies trying to address substance misuse problems amongst Indigenous youth.”

Mt Theo Program is a community based prevention measure that includes a respite outstation. Jaru Pirrjirdi is a locally developed long-term prevention strategy for substance misuse among indigenous youth.

**“Indigenous youth programs** in all major communities, with full-time trained Indigenous youth workers and dedicated youth facilities, supported by whole of community responses, and using locals as trained workers.”

Mt Theo Program has developed the Yuendumu Youth Program, which has dedicated youth facilities, is supported through a broad network of community members in response to the petrol sniffing crisis of the 1990s, and employs indigenous youth workers. Through the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project, Mt Theo is now encouraging more empowering participation and ownership by young people of the youth program. Currently 42 young people are casual youth workers for Mt Theo Program.

**“Recreational facilities and equipment:** Adequate sport and recreation facilities and equipment need to be supplied to all sizeable communities through the recreation programs. There should be an increase in the number of isolated communities supplied with basic recreation facilities and resources, particularly competitive wages, vehicles and housing for trained recreation officers, basketball courts with lighting for night games, and swimming pools.”

Mt Theo Program is continuing to work with local organizations and funding bodies to improve youth facilities in Yuendumu, which include maintaining the lit basketball court, renovating the youth centre, and now as lead community organization to manage the construction and operation of the proposed community swimming pool.

**“Resources for youth activity projects:** These projects, which are attached to urban and remote community councils, clinics, schools or other institutions , should be properly resourced to provide services to Indigenous youth, including sport and recreation, and extensive after-school, evening, weekend and school holiday recreation and health-related programs.”

In managing the Yuendumu Youth Program, Mt Theo has provided an extensive program of youth activities seven days and nights a week. This is planned to continue into the future. At the current moment, limited resources and difficulties in repairing infrastructure hamper the youth program from operating at it's optimum level.

Communities should receive resources to run **school holiday programs** and **out of school hour activities** as needed. These resources could possibly be provided through the special youth intervention and assistance service where communities feel unable to organize the programs themselves for the first couple of years.

Even in the absence of outside resources to run holiday programs and out of school hour activities the commitment of the Mt Theo team has been to provide such activities in Yuendumu consistently. Mt Theo Program now enjoys the support of FACS Outside School Hours/Vacation Care. Mt Theo Program intends to continue its efforts to provide these activities in Yuendumu Community.

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