



UNIVERSITY
OF TASMANIA

YOUNG RECIDIVIST CAR THEFT OFFENDER PROGRAM (U-TURN)

Local Evaluation – Tasmania Final Report

Prepared for:

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ENFORCEMENT
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Glossary

AGD	Australian Government Attorney-General's Department
BPM	Best Practice Model and Business Plan for a Young Recidivist Car Theft Offender Program
DPSS	Department of Police and Public Safety
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
HBT	Hand Brake Turn
NCP	National Crime Prevention
NMVTRC	National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council
TILES	Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies

List of Terminology

Participants/clients – the young people who are participating in the U-Turn Program.

Volunteers/respondents/interviewees– those participants who volunteered to be interviewed for the local evaluation.

Program – the U-Turn Program which comprises a number of courses.

Course/cycle – a ten-week course in the U-Turn Program.

Program Staff – staff who are employed by Mission Australia to run the U-Turn Program.

Program Manager – the manager of the U-Turn Program at Station St, employed by Mission Australia.

Project Manager – the manager of the U-Turn Project, employed by Tasmania Police.

Evaluation Manager – the manager of the evaluation, employed by TILES.

Stakeholders – organizations with a direct interest in the outcomes of the U-Turn program (for example, referral agencies, employers, family welfare organizations).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

U-Turn is a diversionary program for young people aged 15-20 years with a history of motor vehicle theft, or who are at risk of becoming involved in motor vehicle theft. The core component of the program is a structured ten-week automotive training course in car maintenance and body work, delivered in a workshop environment. Other components of the program include: case management and personal development; links to employment and further education; recreational activities; literacy and numeracy education; road safety education and post-course support.

U-Turn is based on the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council's (NMVTRC) Best Practice Model and Business Plan for a Young Recidivist Car Theft Offender Program which is available at www.carsafe.com.au.

The U-Turn program was piloted in Tasmania over a two-year period with funding provided by the NMVTRC and the Australian Government's National Crime Prevention (NCP) program. The program was delivered by Mission Australia under contract to Tasmania Police. During the pilot period, eight courses were run and fifty-two young people graduated from the U-Turn program.

A key emphasis of the Tasmanian pilot project was restorative justice, with participants undertaking projects such as repairing damaged vehicles for presentation to victims of motor vehicle theft.

The establishment and implementation of the U-Turn program was overseen by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the funding bodies (NMVTRC & NCP), the Crime Prevention and Community Safety Council and the business, industry, education, welfare, youth and justice sectors. The Steering Committee was chaired by the Commissioner of Police. A project manager appointed by Tasmania Police had responsibility for the day-to-day contract management activities, and worked closely with the program staff.

In October 2003, Mission Australia received a grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund to establish a supported accommodation service to enable young people from the North and North-West of the state to participate in the U-Turn program. With the funding provided, Mission Australia was able to lease a three-bedroom community housing property in the Hobart suburb of Warrane and appoint two casual supported housing care workers.

The U-Turn program is also being piloted in New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland. A local evaluation of each pilot site is being conducted, and the Australian Government's Attorney-General's Apartment is funding a meta-evaluation across all four pilot sites. The Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement

Studies (TILES) was contracted by Tasmania Police to conduct the local evaluation of the U-Turn pilot project.

THE LOCAL EVALUATION

The evaluation framework centres on three key objectives of the U-Turn Program (Sharley and Associates, 2002:23). They are:

- To manage the program efficiently and effectively in line with Total Quality Management principles and best practice;
- To bring about a shift in the lives of the recidivist young offenders and other program participants through behavioural change and life skills; and
- To prevent recidivists re-offending.

The local evaluation comprised a literature review, in-depth semi-structured interviews of participants, two mail surveys of stakeholder organisations, telephone interviews with participants' significant others, process-oriented interviews with project staff and management, and on-site observation. In addition, the evaluation team utilised police charge and conviction data to explore the offence rates of participants during and following their involvement in the U-Turn program.

The local evaluation began during the final week of the first course (3 May 2003) and continued through to the completion of the eighth course.

KEY FINDINGS

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Program Staffing

As recommended in the Best Practice Model, the program was staffed by a program manager (full-time), a youth worker (full-time), two automotive trainers (0.8. of full-time each), and a part-time administrative officer.

Implementation of Program Components

All of the program components outlined in the BPM were implemented, but the provision of courses in literacy and numeracy proved to be problematic.

Target Group

The program participants 'fit' the profile identified in the BPM. Importantly, the program appears to work better when participants aged 15-16 are combined with 'older' participants aged 18-20, than when these 'younger' and 'older' age groups are separated.

The evaluation suggests that in the majority of cases mixing young people with a history of motor vehicle theft offences with young people 'at risk' of becoming involved in motor vehicle theft is not problematic. However, it appears that the program may have had an adverse effect on two of the "at risk" graduates. These two graduates have recorded a number of motor vehicle theft offences since their involvement in the program. Also, for six of the 'at risk' clients there appears to have been an increase in the number of road traffic offences recorded after the program compared to the number recorded prior to their involvement in the program.

Only one participant was female; she attended the course for one day and then dropped out for personal reasons. This partly reflects the fact that the majority of the young car thieves in Tasmania are male. Attempts were made to proactively recruit young women to the program but these were largely unsuccessful.

Assessment and Referral

Referrals to the program began slowly but grew considerably by the time of the final course. Initial referrals came from Youth Justice and Tasmania Police but later came from a broader range of agencies.

Conclusion – Program Management

The information provided in the report clearly indicates that the BPM was implemented wherever possible. While there were some start-up problems, by the completion of the pilot the program was working well and the evaluation provides strong support for the conclusion that the expectations and outcomes of the program were being met at a very high level.

There are two components of the program that have proven to be very significant for its success in Tasmania: restorative justice and the supported housing program. Neither of these components is specifically identified in the BPM.

PROGRAM IMPACT: BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE AND LIFE SKILLS

The U-Turn database and interviews with program staff revealed that common problems among participants included anti-social and offending behaviour, poor educational attainment, truancy and school exclusion, as well as issues surrounding anger management and drug and alcohol use. A significant proportion were victims of sexual abuse.

Conclusion – Program Impact: Behavioural Change and Life Skills

The evaluation provides extensive evidence from interviews with participants, significant others and program staff that demonstrates the profound impact of the

program in bringing about a shift in the lives of the majority of the program participants. This has included positive changes in: anti-social behaviour; life and personal skills; practical vocational training and experience in the automotive industry; workplace skills; self-esteem and confidence; social skills and self-awareness; interview and job skills; and awareness of others and the broader community.

PROGRAM IMPACT: RECIDIVISM

To examine outcomes in relation to this criterion, records relating to conviction and charges for the 52 U-Turn participants who completed the full ten-week course (referred to as the U-Turn graduates) were examined. The offence records examined were current as to 25 February 2005. The length of the follow-up period for the participants varied according to which course they completed. Road traffic offences are excluded from the analysis of the graduates' offending patterns prior to, during and after the program, unless stated otherwise.

The vast majority (94%) of the U-Turn graduates had a prior conviction for a serious offence prior to entering the program. Only one graduate did not have any prior convictions on entry to the program. Based on their prior convictions on entry to the program, 24 graduates (46%) were classified as motor vehicle theft offenders and the remaining twenty eight graduates (54%) were classified as 'at risk' of becoming involved in motor vehicle theft. Fourteen of the twenty-four motor vehicle theft offenders had more than one prior conviction for motor vehicle theft on entry to the program.

Conclusion – Program Impact: Recidivism

The data analysis demonstrates a positive outcome for the majority of U-Turn participants who completed the course. The majority of the U-Turn graduates (92%) did not commit any offences while they were participating in the program and 52% have not recorded any offences since completing the program. Only eight graduates (15%) have recorded a motor vehicle theft since completing the program.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The local evaluation of the U-Turn Program in Tasmania offers a positive picture. The implementation of U-Turn in Tasmania follows closely the BPM and there is a high level of success in achieving the aims and objectives of the program.

The key success factors emerging from the evaluation relate to:

- relationships;
- post-course support;
- empowerment;

- homogeneity of the client group;
- dynamics of the participants in each course;
- developing pathways into mainstream community; and
- the 'culture of cars' as the 'glue' that makes it all work (with go-karting as a key component).

Problematic aspects of the program relate to:

- the state of the automotive industry in Tasmania;
- the resources for the delivery of literacy and numeracy courses; and
- the development of protocols and structures for formal inter-agency post-program support on a long-term (e.g. 2-year) basis.

This evaluation has demonstrated that:

- Mission Australia has implemented the BPM as fully as possible under local Tasmanian conditions;
- Mission Australia has implemented the BPM effectively in Tasmania;
- The BPM as implemented in Tasmania is effective as an intervention;
- The BPM as implemented in Tasmania is capable of meeting its intended outcomes.

Recommendations

1. Best Practice Model: That the BPM be viewed as a framework open to evaluation and modification in local contexts.
2. Program Focus: That the U-Turn Program, while maintaining its focus as a motor project, ensures that modules in a range of life-skills are included; for example, modules in anger management, drug and alcohol abuse, social skills, household management.
3. Addressing the Offending Behaviour of Participants: That the U-Turn Program acknowledges the extensive and diverse offence histories of participants and addresses these in a transparent and direct manner.
4. Literacy and Numeracy Education: That identification and referral be incorporated into the BPM as the most effective ways in which to address the literacy and numeracy problems of the majority of U-Turn clients. Alternatively, consideration should be given to the inclusion of an additional staff member with specialist skills in workplace literacy and numeracy training.
5. Program Length: That consideration be given to extending the length of the course to 6 months.

6. Supported Accommodation: That supported accommodation be included where issues of access and equity exist. The provision of this service must be accompanied by an active marketing campaign to ensure referrals from diverse sources.
7. Evaluation of Supported Accommodation: That a more comprehensive evaluation of the supported accommodation be undertaken to determine its effectiveness in achieving the goals of U-Turn among residents.
8. Core Components: That consideration be given to including the following as 'core' components of the U-Turn BPM:
 - go-karting as a recreational activity;
 - the restorative justice component (e.g. providing victims with restored cars);
 - mixing age groups.
9. Female Participants: That efforts to increase the proportion of women in the U-Turn program be extended to include:
 - recruitment of women through referral agencies;
 - marketing of the program to potential clients.

Importantly, the inclusion of women into the program will need to be closely monitored and modification made quickly (for example, consideration may be given to employing a female youth worker).
10. Post-Course Support: That post-course support be enhanced via a collaborative case management model to ensure that the multiple needs of the participants (e.g. mental health, drug and alcohol, literacy, sexual abuse) are met.
11. Additional Youth Worker Position: That consideration be given to expanding the core program staff to include two youth workers.
12. Indicators of Success: (a) That the BPM should acknowledge that there is no consistent definition of recidivism and that how it is defined may need to vary depending on what type of program is being evaluated. (b) Given the difficulties associated with defining and measuring recidivism that greater weight be given to more subjectively-defined developmental outcomes as indicators of program success.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The theft of older vehicles by young people for transport, or to commit another crime, is the most common form of vehicle theft in Australia. One of the top three priorities of the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) is to divert young offenders from vehicle theft. Consistent with this focus, the NMVTRC developed a 'best practice' model for a young recidivist car theft offender program. The Best Practice Model draws on the lessons learned from the review and evaluation of motor projects from the United Kingdom, and incorporates the best features of two Australian programs, Street Legal and Hand Brake Turn¹. In both programs, training in mechanics provides a 'hook' for young people to join the program and this is coupled with case management to address the underlying causes of their offending behaviour.

Motor projects were originally developed in the 1970s by the probation service in the United Kingdom, and aimed to change the attitudes and behaviours of offenders via a 'hands-on' approach involving practical activities such as vehicle maintenance and 'banger' racing combined with group work (Smith, 1999). As the motor projects evolved, the focus shifted away from car racing towards educational rehabilitation, improving employment prospects and the development of life skills.

The existing motor projects operating in Australia and the UK offer a range of different types of diversionary activities and aim to distract young offenders away from criminal involvement. This type of program has been shown to be cost effective compared to the cost of keeping a young person in detention, which is estimated to be in excess of \$140,000 per person a year. The programs have been carefully designed to capture the interest of the targeted participants taking into account their learning needs and their probable inconsistent and negative contact with learning environments in the past. The programs have a 'hands-on' approach with an emphasis on practical activities and educational rehabilitation, skill development and building pathways to future employment.

Based on a review of the literature on motor projects, the Best Practice Model concludes that motor projects can and do work. However, to maximise success they require careful targeting and management. The outstanding strength of these programs is that they capitalise on the interest of young people in motor cars: cars are the tools of engagement which then facilitate delivery of education and personal support (Sharley 2002).

¹ NMVTRC (2002) *Best Practice Model and Business Plan for a Young Recidivist Car Theft Offender Program*

Alastair Smith has evaluated a number of motor projects in the UK (Smith, 1999). He cites earlier work, by Martin and Webster (1994) and Sugg (1998) from the UK, which did not report good outcomes and concluded that this was largely due to poor management and poor definition of desired outcomes. He states that motor projects with good management practices and competent staff provided good outcomes. He also suggests that the measurement of outcomes is crucial and that a wider range of outcome measures be adopted including social and personal indicators and not just those based on reconviction rates.

The available evidence on the efficacy in terms of reconviction rates of participation in motor projects varies, with some suggesting that reconviction rates remain unchanged (Sugg 1998), while others are more positive (for example, Smith 1999; Chapman 1995; Skingley 2000).

A review of the literature on youth diversionary programs reveals a number of factors that diminish the likelihood of successful outcomes, as well as a number of factors that are likely to enhance the potential for positive outcomes.

First, it is noted that diversionary programs typically target a difficult client group; namely, young people with entrenched offending behaviour that has become a part of their lifestyle. Such behaviour is extremely difficult to change even if the young people are motivated to do so (Lipsey and Wilson 1998). Furthermore, on the whole, the issues faced by young offenders occur in clusters of deficits in all basic areas: nutrition, health and development, education, attachment and bonding, abuse, and social and psychological issues (Ward and Brown 2004, Adler 1997). Many programs fail because they do not acknowledge the entrenched nature of the clients' offending behaviour; not taking responsibility for the criminal behaviour can mask the issues that really require attention (Day and Howells 2002, Hagell 2002, Howells and Day 1999, Hollin 1999, Loeber and Farrington 1998).

Diversionary programs that work well have multi-faceted service delivery elements, are delivered in a variety of settings, and are coordinated by a central case manager (Weiss and Hawley 2002, Department of Human Services 2001, Anderson, Cottle, Lee and Heilbrun 2001, Farrel, Meyer, King and Sulliman 2001). They begin with an initial assessment that allows a realistic plan to be put together at the beginning of the intervention; that is, a plan that enables the most pressing issues to be resolved first and has the best chance of success within real timeframes (Ward and Brown 2004, Lyon, Dennison and Wilson 2000, Redondo, Garrido, Sanchez-Meca 1998). The most effective diversionary programs are highly structured and directive, have strong program integrity, have highly trained staff and access to funding, and are able to be replicated (Lipsey and Wilson 1998, Redondo et al 1998). There is also evidence that:

- programs that appear to be effective are compulsory and court-ordered, and;

- some young people benefit from custodial sentences that are then followed up with entry into programs designed to deal with recidivism while addressing personal and life issues for the participants (Day and Howells 2002, Howells and Day 1999).

1.2 The U-Turn Program

U-Turn is a diversionary program (motor project) for young people aged 15-20 years with a history of motor vehicle theft, or who are at risk of becoming involved in motor vehicle theft. The core component of the program is a structured ten-week automotive training course in car maintenance and body work, delivered in a workshop environment. Other components of the program include: case management and personal development; links to employment and further education; recreational activities; literacy and numeracy education; road safety education and post-course support.

U-Turn is based on the NMVTRC's Best Practice Model and Business Plan for a Young Recidivist Car Theft Offender Program which is available at www.carsafe.com.au.

The aims of the program are to:

- reduce the rate of motor vehicle theft by young people;
- prevent recidivism and chronic career offending by young people;
- address anti-social behaviour;
- address life issues of participants and link participants to a comprehensive network of support; and
- assist young people to maximise their potential so that they can offer a positive contribution to society.

The U-Turn program was piloted in Tasmania over a two-year period with funding provided by the NMVTRC and the Australian Government's National Crime Prevention program (NCP). The program was delivered by Mission Australia under contract to Tasmania Police.

A key emphasis of the Tasmanian pilot project was restorative justice, with participants undertaking projects such as repairing damaged vehicles for presentation to victims of motor vehicle theft. The general practice was for each course of participants to work on a vehicle with a view to presenting it to a victim of crime at the conclusion of the ten-week course.

The U-Turn program is also being piloted in New South Wales, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. A local evaluation of each pilot site is being conducted, and the Australian Government's Attorney-General's Apartment is funding a meta-evaluation across all four pilot sites. The Tasmanian Institute of

Law Enforcement Studies (TILES) was contracted by Tasmania Police to conduct the local evaluation of the U-Turn pilot project.

In May 2004 the Tasmanian Premier, the Hon Paul Lennon, announced that his Government had allocated nearly \$1.5m to extend the successful U-Turn program into 2007. The announcement is an indication of confidence in the NMVTRC model and a measure of how well U-Turn has been accepted by local stakeholders and the Tasmanian community.

1.3 The Supported Accommodation Service

In October 2003, Mission Australia received a grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund to establish a supported accommodation service to enable young people from the North and North-West of the state to participate in the U-Turn program. With the funding provided Mission Australia was able to lease a three-bedroom community housing property in the Hobart suburb of Warrane and appoint a supported housing care worker. This added another important component to U-Turn and enhanced the ability of the program to deliver a service to a wider cohort of participants. It also added a further research element to the evaluation in that it allowed for a comparison of those residing in the supported housing and those who are not.

A review of the literature indicates that there are no other programs in Australia for young offenders that offer supported accommodation outside the formal juvenile justice or shelter systems. The literature suggests that there are no discrete programs offering a supported housing component as implemented in the U-Turn Program in Tasmania.

Literature and program searches have turned up little about the value and effectiveness or otherwise of a supported housing component within a model delivering diversionary, educational and task-focused programs to young offenders and or potential offenders. There is some evidence that a case management model of service delivery (which incorporates residential, mentoring and life skills elements) has been effective in youth programs with this target group and within indigenous communities.

1.4 The Automotive Industry in Tasmania

The automotive industry is a major sector of the Australian economy, with an annual turnover exceeding 450 billion and employment in excess of 300,000. The industry is represented by two main sectors, the vehicle manufacture and component producers and the retail, service and repair sector. The Tasmanian Automotive retail services sector employs approximately 6000 people in various retail, repairs and spare parts businesses. These businesses average 10 employees or less with the average number being 4 employees per business.

The automotive industry is currently experiencing skills shortages in four specific areas - Motor Mechanic, Auto Electrical, Panel Beater and Vehicle Painting. These areas are the focus of new training initiatives from a state and commonwealth government perspective. In Tasmania, TAFE has a leading role in the provision of industry training. The level of skill complexity required in the motor retail, sales and service sector increased dramatically in the 1990s and this has meant many challenges have had to be met by the industry and training providers. New advanced training and diagnostic programs are needed to maintain a sophisticated fleet of new vehicles, growing demand for servicing, and far less demand for repair. The 'repair' element has been reduced to 'replace', and this requires different and more sophisticated skills. Ongoing training while employed is seen as mandatory.

TAFE in Tasmania is the registered training organisation for the automotive industry and it is in the process of implementing the national training package. The package has an emphasis on workplace assessment and flexible learning strategies to assist trainees. The automotive industry in Tasmania through the Motor Trades Association and the Tasmanian Automobile Chamber of Commerce is concerned at the attrition rate of their skilled tradespersons, who are leaving for increased remuneration interstate in the same trade, or leaving the trade altogether. There is also a concern about the industry's ability to attract suitable candidates at entry level. The industry does not have an attractive reputation and the predominantly male work force has made it very difficult for women to enter the field and make a career.

These dynamics in the automotive industry pose real barriers to young people wishing to enter the workplace who are significantly socially and educationally disadvantaged. These difficulties are not insurmountable but the necessity to reach functional literacy and numeracy levels is apparent. It should be noted, however, that in Tasmania the skills shortage has only become evident in the last couple of years along with improvements in the economy. Prior to that, apprenticeship opportunities only existed in car dealerships because small businesses did not have the business confidence to take on trainees. While this is problematic for that proportion of the population with literacy problems (approximately 25%), it offers increased opportunities for the remaining 75% of the population for whom there are improved job prospects.

1.5 Structure of the Report

This report discusses the findings of the Tasmanian local evaluation conducted by TILES that began in May 2003. As precursors to this report, TILES has submitted four progress reports and a draft final report in accordance with the following timetable:

First Progress Report	June 2003
Second Progress Report	September 2003

Third Progress Report	January 2004
Fourth Progress Report	May 2004
Draft Final Report	August 2004

Section 2 of the report outlines the evaluation methodology utilised in the local evaluation of the Tasmanian pilot project.

As recommended in the Best Practice Model, the evaluation framework centres around three key objectives of the program.

The first of these objectives relates to the effective and efficient management of the program. The other two objectives relate to the impact of the program on participants in terms of: (1) behavioural change and improved life skills; and (2) the prevention of re-offending.

Section 3 of the report presents the findings from the evaluation as they relate to the first objective, namely efficient and effective program management.

Section 4 of the report presents the findings concerning the ability of the program to bring about a shift in the lives of program participants in terms of behavioural change and improved life skills (objective 2).

Section 5 of the report presents the findings in relation to the impact of the program on recidivism (objective 3).

Section 6, the final section of the report, identifies the key success factors for the pilot project and contains recommendations for the future operation of the program, including some suggested refinements to the Best Practice model.

2. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

This report focuses on the local evaluation that was designed to inform and add value to the national meta-evaluation being conducted by Urbis Keys Young. In the local evaluation, a multi-dimensional approach was adopted, involving qualitative interviews, document searches, data analysis, on-site program reviews and surveys of stakeholders. Through these data collection activities, a range of data types was created and collected, enabling checking for validity and triangulation, and comparison across sites if desired by the meta-evaluator.

The local evaluation comprised a literature review and document search (national and international), in-depth semi-structured interviews of participants, two mail surveys of stakeholder organisations, telephone interviews with participants' significant others, process-oriented interviews with program staff and management, and on-site observation. In addition, the evaluation team utilised the data held by the Department of Police and Public Safety as a secondary source to explore the offence rates of participants before, during and following their involvement in the U-Turn program.

The evaluation was designed to be consistent with the Best Practice Model (Ann Sharley and Associates, 2002:21) which recommends that the program evaluation be guided by the following principles:

- Plan for evaluation early.
- Consult with all stakeholders.
- Use multiple procedures for gathering data to allow comparative interpretation of outcomes.
- Use methods that enable participant involvement.
- Develop a broad range of perspectives.
- Use a variety of data sources and performance indicators.
- Apply rigorous ethical procedures.
- Identify and record unintended consequences of the program.

2.2 Evaluation Framework

The evaluation framework centres on three key objectives of the U-Turn Program (Sharley and Associate, 2002:23). They are:

- To manage the program efficiently and effectively in line with Total Quality Management principles and best practice.

- To bring about a shift in the lives of the recidivist young offenders and other program participants through behavioural change and life skills.
- To prevent recidivists re-offending.

The local evaluators and the meta-evaluators are each addressing these key objectives through the use of different evaluation techniques. Specifically, the quantitative analysis of program records is predominantly the responsibility of the meta-evaluators. The local evaluators have been responsible for the analysis of qualitative data (collected through interviews with participants, ‘significant others’ and program staff) together with quantitative and qualitative data collected via methods such as stakeholder surveys and on-site observations.

Table 1 summarises the strategies utilised in the local evaluation.

Table 1: Strategies for evaluation of program process and outcome

Process evaluation	Outcome evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site program reviews • Surveys of stakeholders • Document searches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative data analysis • Qualitative interviews (participants, significant others, program staff)

2.3 Ethics and Confidentiality

The TILES U-Turn Evaluation Team recognised that empowerment, privacy and mutual respect are particularly important considerations for the U-Turn target group. Therefore, a key component of the evaluation methodology was related to ethical considerations.

The evaluation was subject to the scrutiny of the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee which abides by the *Privacy Legislation* and the *NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans*. All data collection activities were approved by this committee, and the processes ensured that privacy and confidentiality were protected at all times. Because of the backgrounds of the research subjects, it was imperative that those involved gave informed consent under voluntary conditions. Prior approval was obtained and any variations to procedures were reported to the committee.

The University of Tasmania ethics policy includes provisions to ensure all human subjects are fully informed of the nature and extent of research to be conducted and how the data collected will be used. Before research can begin, all human subjects must be given full information in both written and oral form, are provided with an opportunity to ask questions, and must give written consent. Human subjects are also informed that they can withdraw from the research process at any stage without any penalty or disadvantage.

TILES guidelines for the gathering, storage and retention of data are as follows:

- TILES shall ensure that material supplied by funding bodies is used, copied, supplied or reproduced only for purposes outlined in contracts with these bodies.
- All confidential material will be kept in a secure and safe place and only accessible to the project team involved.
- TILES shall not, without the prior written approval of the funding body, divulge any confidential information contained in funding body material.
- Upon the expiration of contracts with funding bodies TILES shall return all material from that agency that has been obtained and used for specific projects.

All staff employed by TILES sign a confidentiality agreement that outlines their obligations as employees of the Institute, which includes the Code of Conduct in Research, a non-disclosure of confidential material and the TILES guidelines for collecting, storing and retaining data.

Information provided under the Youth Justice Act 1997

On 15 November 2004, the Director of TILES wrote to the Commissioner of Police requesting access to conviction and charge data for all U-Turn participants for the purposes of determining the impact of the program on recidivism. In accordance with the *Youth Justice Act 1997*, with the written approval of the Commissioner such information may be provided to a person undertaking research that does not involve the identification of the youth, the victim or any other person referred to in the relevant provisions of the Act.

The requested conviction and charge data were supplied to TILES in a de-identified format. Any information that could be used to identify a U-Turn participant was removed from the conviction and charge data, including the following:

- the participant's name, address and date of birth;
- details as to any file, charge or complaint number;
- the names of any co-offender/s; and
- details relating to the location of any diversionary procedure, including the name of the police officer who conducted the caution.

The information supplied only specified the type of offence, the date of the offence, the type of action taken, the date the action was taken and the outcome/status. The information did not include any details about the victim or any other parties involved in any diversionary or court proceedings.

The Director of TILES provided the Commissioner with assurances that:

- the Final Report would include aggregate data only; and
- every effort would be made to ensure that no individual will be identifiable in the reporting of this data.

2.4 Methods

Literature Review

The literature review was conducted during December 2003-January 2004 and involved a comprehensive search nationally and globally for relevant material. This included websites, journals and reports, as well as pertinent excerpts from publications in book form. Reports from related programs conducted elsewhere, particularly in the UK, were particularly rich sources.

The major themes that emerged from this review were:

- The effectiveness of empowerment models;
- The effectiveness of programs with an homogenous client group;
- The impact of family background on behaviour: parental monitoring, socio-cultural encouragement, parents' education, number of parents in the home and familial connectedness;
- The link between negative attitudes to authority and delinquency;
- The link between mental illness, anti-social behaviour and delinquency;
- The links between poor educational attainment, high levels of truancy, experience of school exclusion and offending;
- The effects of poverty and social isolation on rates of offending;
- The association between deprivation from mainstream services and interaction with child protection and criminal justice, and criminal and anti-social behaviour; and
- The existence of a strong association between repeat victimisation and first-time delinquent behaviour, as well as delinquent recidivism.

These themes formed a foundation that directed and informed the field research that followed.

Participant Interviews

Participant interviews were a major component of the evaluation. While a 100 percent sample was not a realistic option, it was planned to interview seven to eight participants in each intake (from an average of 12 – 16). Interviews were taped providing the participant gave permission for this. Consent forms were

signed (or in the case of minors, signed by parents or guardians prior to the interview taking place). In a few cases, verbal consent was received from guardians. Interviews were conducted in the participants' first week at U-Turn, in the final week, and, where possible, three months after completion.

The interviews were conducted on site at the U-Turn premises. They took a semi-structured form and covered a number of key issues [see Interview Schedule - Appendix A]. While the duration was not fixed, it was expected that most would take approximately thirty minutes, and this was the case.

The tapes from the interviews were then transcribed professionally to facilitate the subsequent thematic analysis.

Significant Other Interviews

Participants were invited to identify a 'significant other' who would be able to comment from another perspective on the impact of the program on the participant when at home and in the wider community. For reasons of safety for the interviewer and also convenience for the interviewees, these interviews were conducted by telephone. A structured interview schedule was used for these interviews, with space for unstructured comment on the part of the interviewee. (See Appendix A: Significant Other Interview Schedule)

Stakeholder Survey

A mail survey of key stakeholders was conducted in January 2004, and repeated again in November 2004. Stakeholders were identified through discussions with U-Turn staff and management, and also with the DPPS project manager.

The questionnaire (see Appendix A: Stakeholder Survey) was sent to stakeholders in a number of government and non-government organisations, including Youth Justice, Tasmania Police, Community Corrections, Department of Education, Anglicare and youth advocacy groups. The questionnaire aimed to evaluate the use of, and referral patterns to, U-Turn, any changes in service delivery practices and perceptions of the efficacy of the program.

Process Interviews

Wide-ranging interviews were conducted with staff at U-Turn. These dealt with key aspects of the management and organisation of the project, as well as exploring the views of staff members about issues relating to the implementation of the program.

Observations

A number of opportunities arose for the chief investigators to engage in observations of events that were significant to the U-Turn Program. These included:

- the U-Turn Open Day;
- a U-Turn staff meeting;
- the Graduation Ceremonies for Courses 4, 6 and 7.

2.5 Supported Accommodation Service

The introduction of a residential program provided an opportunity for comparative evaluation between groups of U-Turn participants. Four U-Turn courses were conducted with a residential component. All four of these courses were included in the evaluation.

The evaluation of the supported accommodation service had three components:

- Collection of quantitative data;
- Interviews with the supported housing care worker;
- Focus group with participants/residents from each course.

Quantitative data was collected from U-Turn and the supported housing care worker was interviewed. A voluntary focus group of residents was conducted at the conclusion of each course in the form of a pizza night held at the residence. For risk management purposes, the supported housing care worker was on site during these events, but not in the room or participating.

2.5 Conclusion

This section has provided an overview of the methods of data collection employed in the local evaluation of U-Turn in Tasmania. The information collected via these methods provides the basis for the evaluation of the program against its stated objectives.

The local evaluation followed the principles identified in the BPM. It adopted most of the measures and techniques suggested. One suggestion that was not adopted was that 'Where possible, program participants should be involved as co-investigators or peer interviews in the evaluation process'. After careful consideration and consultation, the local evaluators decided that the training of peer interviewers among this client group would require more resources than were available. This decision was also influenced by the need to ensure that clients were not 'set up to fail' in such a difficult and unfamiliar task.

3. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

3.1 Introduction

As outlined in the previous section of the report, one of the three key objectives of the U-Turn Program (see Sharley and Associates, 2002:23) is:

- To manage the program efficiently and effectively in line with Total Quality Management principles and best practice.

In order to address this objective, this section of the report provides a description of how the program was undertaken in Tasmania, and examines the extent to which Mission Australia implemented the Best Practice Model. Data for this component of the evaluation was drawn predominantly from interviews with program staff (see Attachment 3), stakeholder views (see Attachment 4) and on-site observations with supplementary data drawn from the other data collection methods employed in the overall evaluation.

Many of the young people who participate in U-Turn have already developed offending lifestyles. U-Turn applies an intensive 'hands-on' approach to assist young people to begin to deal with issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence and literacy problems that may underlie their offending behaviour. There is debate about whether it is useful to mix these offending young people with those who are at 'risk' of offending because of their behaviour, life experiences and trajectory. The evaluation addresses this issue in the context of the U-Turn Program in Tasmania.

3.2 Program Delivery

During the pilot period, the U-Turn program was delivered by Mission Australia under contract to Tasmania Police. Mission Australia is an organisation that fits the description in the BPM. With more than 280 services across Australia, Mission Australia (Mission) is a national community service organisation with extensive experience in delivering counselling, alcohol and drug education, family reconciliation, skills training and employment placement services.

While Mission Australia has had a relatively long history of involvement in a variety of social programs in Tasmania, it is important to note that a short time after Mission was contracted to implement the U-Turn pilot project, it lost its status as a major provider of employment services in Tasmania. This meant that the initial establishment of U-Turn coincided with a period of managerial and structural change, together with associated feelings of uncertainty among Mission employees.

The contract between Tasmania Police and Mission Australia was signed on 17 January 2003 and the first program course started on 17 February 2003.

The U-Turn Program timetable in Tasmania was as follows:

First Course	17 February 2003	to	9 May 2003
Second Course	19 May 2003	to	26 July 2003
Third Course	4 August 2003	to	10 October 2003
Fourth Course	20 October 2003	to	24 December 2003
Fifth Course	19 January 2004	to	26 March 2004
Sixth Course	12 April 2004	to	18 June 2004
Seventh Course	6 July 2004	to	10 September 2004
Eighth Course	28 September 2004	to	3 December 2004

The local evaluation began during the final week of the first course (3 May 2003) and continued through to the completion of the eighth course.

3.3 Program Staffing

As recommended in the Best Practice Model, the program was staffed by a program manager (full-time), a youth worker (full-time), two automotive trainers (0.8. of full-time each), and a part-time administrative officer. In addition, two casual Supported Housing Care Workers were employed for the additional housing component. The program manager reported to Mission Australia's Southern Tasmania Services Manager, who in turn reported to the National Operations Manager.

The duties of the various staff followed those outlined in the BPM with the exception of the Administrative Officer. This person took on additional duties (Project Management) which focused on providing meals for the participants.

3.4 Governance Structure

The establishment and implementation of the U-Turn program was overseen by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the funding bodies (NMVTRC & NCP), the Crime Prevention and Community Safety Council and the business, industry, education, welfare, youth and justice sectors. The Steering Committee was chaired by the Commissioner of Police. A project manager appointed by Tasmania Police had responsibility for the day-to-day contract management activities, and worked closely with the program staff. The project manager reported directly to the Commissioner of Police (Goodwin and Julian, 2004:3).

3.5 Guiding Principles

The Best Practice Model (Sharley and Associates, 2002:9) identifies the following

guiding principles of the U-Turn Program:

- assist young people to accept responsibility for their own behaviours;
- promote positive, functional and non-offending lifestyles;
- provide a supportive environment which encourages participants to resolve problem behaviours;
- assist young people to develop practical alternative ways of coping with stressors;
- focus on remedial education and basic skills to raise social and occupational competence, thus leading to further training opportunities and jobs;
- assist in establishing and strengthening relationships, including the relationship between young offenders and police, facilitated by positive role models and mentors;
- meet the needs of young women, aboriginal young people and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

3.6 Program Components

The BPM identifies the key components of the program as follows (Sharley and Associates, 2002: 10 & 13):

- Automotive education and training (general car maintenance and body work)
- Case management and personal development
- Recreational activities
- Links to employment, work experience and further education
- Post-course support and follow-up (via mentoring, case management or referrals to other support workers or agencies)

The BPM also states that 'In addition, training in the following areas is made available' (Sharley and Associates, 2002:10):

- Road safety education and assistance to acquire a learner's permit and/or a drivers licence
- Literacy and numeracy.

3.7 Implementation of Program Components

This section examines the extent to which the program components identified in

the BPM have been implemented in Tasmania.

Automotive education and training

This aspect of the program was successfully implemented. There were some early problems associated with the appropriate accreditation of these courses but these were resolved toward the middle of the program. Early attempts to deliver the full Certificate 1 in Automotive were found to be too difficult due to the limited amount of time available. Four of the requisite seven modules are delivered during the ten-week course. Participants who wish to receive the full certificate are invited back one day a week to complete the remaining three modules. It should be noted, however, that delivery of the full Certificate 1 is not a requisite of the BPM.

Case management and personal development

This has been a core aspect of each course since the program began. The evaluation indicates that this was a key factor contributing to the success of the program. (Attachments 3, 4 and 5 provide extensive evidence of this component).

Recreational activities

Go-karting is a key aspect of the incentive scheme utilised by program staff. The evaluation shows that this is a key factor in the success of the program. Given the target group's interest in cars this is not surprising. Importantly, however, the negative impact of not being able to offer go-karting in some of the courses as a consequence of an inability to renew the insurance coverage was significant. Clearly, among this target group, other recreational incentives do not work nearly as well (or at all for some participants).

Links to employment, work experience and further education

This aspect of the program has been a concern to program staff since the program began. It is a particularly challenging aspect of the program given the state of the automotive industry in Tasmania. Strategies aimed at addressing this aspect of the program were pursued by the Program Manager, including the holding of a corporate night in the fifth course.

Despite these difficulties, U-Turn graduates have been successful in gaining employment and in extending their education. There were some difficulties associated with arranging work experience as a two-week placement at the completion of the course. Many of these difficulties were overcome by restructuring the work experience component of the course so that it occurred on a weekly basis over a five-week period during the course.

Post-course support and follow up

Post-course support is a crucial component of the program. Some successful aspects that were implemented included mentoring and case-management, as well as the open invitation to past participants to revisit U-Turn. Referrals to other agencies (e.g. mental health, youth support) took place in a predominantly informal manner and were seen as the responsibility of the young person himself to follow up.

Most of the post-course support involved mentoring and a continuation of case management. The level of post-course support offered varied according to the needs and motivations of the individual.

Providing encouragement and support to participants in linking with employers, labour market programs and educational institutions was identified as a significant challenge.

Road safety education

A limited form of road safety education was delivered by Tasmania Police. Primarily, this involved practical activities undertaken at the Police Academy Driver Training Facility. The evaluation shows that this contributed to the fostering of positive relationships between participants and police.

Literacy and numeracy

The provision of courses in literacy and numeracy has proven to be problematic. Initially, literacy and numeracy training were delivered in a classroom situation during a morning session (when participants were most likely to be alert). This method of delivery did not prove successful and a decision was made during the fifth course that a formal literacy and numeracy 'class' would no longer be offered. Workplace literacy and numeracy was implemented in its place, involving strategies such as the assessment of daily worksheets. Strategies such as these were considered to be much more effective as they tapped into the motivation and learning styles of the clients.

The Program Manager acknowledged that there are likely to be limited outcomes from this method of teaching literacy and numeracy. It should be noted, however, that this decision was reached after a considerable amount of research and consultation and was based on the conclusion that significant advances in literacy and numeracy were unlikely given the contact hours between clients and staff in a ten-week course and the severity of the literacy and numeracy problems typical of most course participants.

Management decided that they could best serve the needs of their clients by *identifying* literacy and numeracy problems and referring clients to agencies with

the resources and specialist skills to address them. This is particularly important in situations where clients have developed very successful strategies to hide their literacy and numeracy problems from others. One of the positive outcomes of the trusting environment established between clients and program staff at U-Turn is that clients eventually reveal their literacy and numeracy problems. Significantly, however, such revelations may not take place until the seventh or eighth week of the course. It was determined that *identification* and *referral* were the most effective ways in which to address the literacy and numeracy problems of the majority of U-Turn clients.

3.8 Other aspects of program delivery

Target Group

Participants in the program 'fit' the profile identified in the BPM. The evaluation (see section 4 for further discussion) provides evidence that in the majority of cases mixing young people with a history of motor vehicle theft offences with young people 'at risk' of offending is not problematic. However, it appears that the program may have had an adverse effect on two of the 'at risk' graduates (see section 5 for further details). Importantly, the program appears to work better when participants aged 15-16 are combined with 'older' participants aged 18-20, than when these 'younger' and 'older' age groups are separated.

No females completed the program. This partly reflects the gender profiles of young car thieves in Tasmania². Attempts were made to proactively recruit young women to the program but these were largely unsuccessful. One young woman did commence the eighth course but dropped out during the first week due to personal issues.

Some difficulties were experienced in recruiting the key target group (i.e. young people with a history of motor vehicle theft). As a consequence, in some of the courses there was a larger number of 'at risk' clients than anticipated. While this did not prove to be a significant problem in terms of outcomes, it does raise some issues around recruitment strategies.

The literature review revealed that diversionary programs are often most effective when participation is compulsory and court-ordered. Given the difficulties in recruiting 'voluntary' participants from the key target group, some consideration could be given to making the program compulsory.

² Between 1/7/00 and 30/6/04, 14.3% of the young people aged between 15 – 20 who were charged with motor vehicle stealing, contrary to section 37B(1) of the Police Offences Act 1925, were female (data extracted from Tasmania Police's Prosecution System on 24 August 2004)

Eligibility

The participants in the program meet the eligibility criteria specified in the BPM. The key criteria contributing to success appear to be a 'willingness to participate and cooperate with program involvement' and 'having an interest in automotive training'.

Assessment and Referral

Referrals to the program began slowly but grew considerably by the time of the final course. Initial referrals came from Youth Justice and Tasmania Police but later came from a broader range of agencies.

Young people referred to the program were carefully screened by the Youth Worker (with limited involvement from the Program Manager). Willingness to commit to a more positive way of life was a key criterion for acceptance into the program. How the individual will contribute to the dynamics of the group is another factor given careful consideration by the Youth Worker.

The Youth Worker and the Program Manager developed a 'case picture' for each individual. Referrals to outside services and agencies were predominantly dealt with on an informal basis by the Youth Worker.

Program Structure and Curriculum

A formal workshop program was conducted over a 10-week period as stated in the BPM. Some of the participants who dropped out of a course were invited to re-enrol in a later course if the Youth Worker considered that their circumstances or levels of motivation had changed in such a way that it seemed they would benefit from participation.

All aspects of the formal workshop program identified in the BPM were implemented including:

- orientation;
- a weekly program consisting of modules in: communication; motor vehicle mechanics, panel beating and spray painting; life skills; literacy and numeracy; and road safety and driver education;
- recreational activities;
- vocational support;
- case management;
- mentor relationship;
- exit strategy plan and options;
- graduation ceremony.

3.9 Conclusion

The information provided in this report clearly indicates that the BPM was implemented wherever possible. While there were some start-up problems, by the completion of the pilot, the program was working well, and the evaluation provides strong support for the conclusion that the expectations and outcomes of the program were being met at a very high level.

There are two components of the program that have proven to be very significant for its success in Tasmania: restorative justice and the supported housing program. Neither of these components is specifically identified in the BPM.

Restorative Justice

A key emphasis of the U-Turn program has been restorative justice, with participants undertaking projects such as servicing vehicles for community organisations, and repairing damaged vehicles for presentation to victims of motor vehicle theft. The general practice has been for each course of participants to work on a vehicle with a view to presenting it to a victim of crime at the conclusion of the ten-week course (Goodwin and Julian, 2004:4).

This has been an extremely important aspect of the program. Participants report that having direct contact with victims of crime gave them an awareness of the impact of their crimes on specific individuals and, in some cases, led to reported decisions not to engage in such crime in the future. In addition, the fact that the presentation of the car to a victim of crime took place at the graduation ceremony, with parents and friends in attendance, also added a public acknowledgement of the participant's change in attitude and/or awareness. This added further weight to such changes where they had been made by participants.

Supported Housing Program

In Tasmania, the U-Turn program was extended to include an additional component, namely a supported housing program so that participants from outside metropolitan Hobart could participate. This has proven to be a very important addition that has addressed concerns regarding access and equity relating to geographical location in the state.

4. PROGRAM IMPACT: BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE AND LIFE SKILLS

4.1 Introduction

A second key objective of the U-Turn Program (see Sharley and Associates, 2002:23) is:

- To bring about a shift in the lives of the recidivist young offenders and other program participants through behavioural change and life skills.

The extensive qualitative data collected through interviews with participants, significant others and program staff provides ample evidence of a positive shift having taken place in the lives of the majority of U-Turn participants.

While quantitative data analysis is useful for measuring changes in offence rates (see Section 5), qualitative methods are useful for identifying incremental 'successes' throughout participation in the program. This highlights the importance of valuing both types of data. This section provides a summary of this qualitative data.

Many participants reported positive and incremental changes in their lives and they all speak positively of this. Many referred to U-Turn as a 'stepping-stone', a beginning, and an opportunity to see the world differently and in a more positive light. Some expressed a belief that participation in U-Turn had given them a new outlook on life. For some this was a revelational and dramatic change from feelings of helplessness and depression, living on the fringes of the community, to feelings of more self-worth and of hope to continue feeling this way.

The qualitative data has added a rich layer of nuance and information that is not evident in the quantitative data. This has allowed the evaluation team to discuss other aspects of the course with staff and participants. Importantly, there is a rich source of information and learning to be gained from interrogating this data.

This section provides a profile of the U-Turn participants and an overview of the qualitative data collected in the course of this evaluation. A more comprehensive, and thus more nuanced, account of this data is provided in Attachments 2 – 5.

4.2 Profile of U-Turn Participants

There were 83 participants in the U-Turn Program in Tasmania covering 8 courses. Fifty-two participants actually graduated from the program, having completed the full ten-week course. The remaining participants were involved in the program for varying periods of time. Only one participant was female; she attended the course for one day and then dropped out for personal reasons.

The U-Turn service database records details of each participant. The data was entered by the Youth Worker, based on the responses provided by the participants when asked about their circumstances. In some cases the data may reflect the Youth Worker's subjective assessment of the participant's characteristics, including the extent to which they experienced problems such as poor literacy/numeracy skills; low self-esteem; poor social skills etc.

The information presented below is based on data extracted from the U-Turn database and supplements the information provided in the mid-point data collection results for Tasmania undertaken by the meta-evaluators, Urbis Keys Young (Fourth Progress Report). TILES was granted permission to include some of the Tasmanian data in this final report for the local evaluation.

Some of the key characteristics of the participants, based on the information contained in the U-Turn database, are as follows:

- Of the 83 participants, 17 identified as either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.
- Most of the participants lived in towns, regional cities or the capital city. Thirteen participants reported that they lived in small towns or in rural locations.
- Very small numbers of U-Turn participants self-reported physical, intellectual or psychological disabilities as issues which they identified as problems.
- Two areas that participants identified as being problems in their lives were literacy and living in low-income households. This was combined with self-reporting of parental and family involvement in illegal activities as being of concern to participants.
- The consumption of drugs and alcohol was identified by participants as having a significant impact on their functioning; however, the use of these substances was considered desirable and 'normal'. Almost all of the participants smoke cigarettes.
- Most participants identified low household income as a problem in their family life.
- Participants reported a range of anger management, social skills and self-esteem-related issues as problems in their lives prior to entering the U-Turn program.
- Participants reported some history of truancy in about one third of cases, some history of family conflict in about a third of cases and some history of abuse in about 20% of cases.
- Of the 83 participants during the 8 cycles, 52 young people attained a Certificate of Completion and the balance (31) did not complete the

course. Some of those who did not complete the course have returned and are working toward gaining their automotive certificate.

Attachment 2 contains further details about the characteristics of the participants.

Interviews with program staff revealed that common problems among participants included anti-social and offending behaviour, poor educational attainment, truancy and school exclusion, as well as issues surrounding anger management and drug and alcohol use. A significant proportion were victims of sexual abuse.

4.3 U-Turn Courses Evaluated

The evaluation encompassed each of the U-Turn courses that was delivered in 2003 and 2004. Table 3 (below) lists the number and type of interviews that have been conducted for each U-Turn course.

Table 2: Number and type of interview conducted for each U-Turn Course

COURSE	Interview A (Initial)	Interview B (Program Completion)	Interview C (Post-Program)	Interview E* (Significant Others)
First (Pilot)		3		
Second	7	3		0
Third	7	5		3
Fourth	7	5		1
Fifth	7	3		1
Sixth	6	4		2
Seventh	8	3		
Eighth	7	4		
TOTAL	49	30	10	7

*Interview D = Key Informant Interviews with Program Staff (see Appendix A)

4.4 Participant Interviews

Characteristics of the participants

The participants interviewed were all male and were aged between 14 and 21, with the average age being 17.

Participants' offending history

The majority of the participants interviewed identified themselves as car thieves. Approximately one third of the participants interviewed said that they had never been involved in car theft.

Participants gave a variety of reasons (and often more than one) for why they were involved in car theft. Common reasons were:

- Boredom
- I like driving
- For money (to buy drugs, cigarettes, alcohol)
- For the thrill
- To support a drug habit
- To get places
- As payback.

Problem solving and responsibility

Participants appear to be developing problem-solving skills and taking more responsibility for their behaviour. When asked about changes that had occurred by the end of the course, the following themes emerged as common:

- Reduced drug and alcohol use;
- Increased motivation and better attitudes toward life;
- Getting their life back on track;
- Driving safely;
- Better relationships with family and friends;
- Not hanging around the streets as much; and
- Not wanting to steal cars and commit other types of anti-social behaviour.

Education and employment

Only one of the participants stated that they had had a good experience in the educational system and all but one had been suspended from school, usually on multiple occasions. Nearly half of the participants stated that they had been excluded from the traditional educational system. Some participants reported that they had left school early because they found it intolerable. A quarter of the participants reported having difficulties with other students and a third with the teachers. Questions about participants' education elicited statements indicating that at least half of the participants have difficulty dealing with authority.

While participating in the program, only three of the participants stated that they had no long-term life plans. All the other participants stated that they could see themselves employed in the future, the majority working with cars in some form. A significant number of the participants also saw themselves as owning their own house.

A few of the participants stated that doing the course had assisted them in making life changes by keeping them occupied and away from their peers. For example:

“Oh yeah it has changed me mind a bit, but it’s mostly ‘cause I’m here and not up there mucking ‘round with mates and getting into trouble.”

“It’s (the program) kept me out of heaps of trouble ‘cause I have to come here every day. It’s given me something to do ‘cause before I come here I wasn’t doing nothing ‘cause I don’t go to school now.”

Families

The majority of participants were in single parent families although a few were living in a nuclear family or a blended family. The overwhelming majority of single parent families included the participant’s mother. It was also significant to note that nearly a third of the participants had had no relationship with their fathers for over 10 years.

Significantly, the majority of participants had had a long-term interest in cars, since early childhood. The family culture seems to have contributed to this, where an ‘obsession’ with cars can be described as a way of life. Importantly, many stated that their first driving experience, and working on cars, occurred with their father or another significant male in their family circle at an early age:

“Yeah always in my life. I started working on ‘em when I was young with me Dad when I was living at ... and haven’t stopped since.”

“I don’t know I’ve just got a thing with cars and driving. I like it, which is good. Dad got me into it when I was real young, bikes and cars and that, yeah.”

This is an area in which the program has had a significant influence. Interviews with participants demonstrate that the program staff provide them with important positive male role models. Most participants report having had few (if any) positive relationships with men. They respond extremely well to the relationships developed between staff and the participants at U-Turn.

Views on the program and staff

Participants’ views on the program were extremely positive and they found it difficult to suggest aspects that could be improved. Some of the general positive features identified by participants were:

- The staff and their manner in dealing with participants;
- It gave them something to look forward to every day;

- Go-karting;
- Learning about mechanics and body work;
- Working on the motors;
- Passing exams; and
- Working on their own cars.

Recidivism and anti-social behaviour

There were many reported incidences of car theft where participants had not been caught. These self-reported incidents ranged from one to one hundred cars. One client claimed to have 'taken a look' at around ten cars while others admitted to previous multiple offences but did not specify how many. Almost all of the clients admitted to other crimes and anti-social behaviour at the beginning of the course. These included theft, burglary and stealing, assault and wounding, break and enter, shop-lifting, vandalism, illicit drug use, harassment and aggressive behaviour, driving without a licence and drink-driving.

Of those participants who said that they had been involved in car theft, two thirds stated that they had not stolen a car during the course, while the other third stated that they had done so.

Over a third reported that they had not been involved in any anti-social behaviour during the course. However the majority stated that they had maintained these types of behaviours although at lower rates of frequency and severity.

Overview of participant interviews

A strong and consistent theme throughout interviews with participants is the overwhelming obsession with cars and the reliance on cars as an identity marker. Many of the participants learned to drive at a very young age.

Many of the interviews indicate an underlying sadness and hopelessness among participants. Stealing cars was the only thing that made them feel better – similar to a drug 'hit'.

Many of the participants said all the 'right' things about wanting to get a job and to learn; however, they had little idea of the level of activity and commitment required to achieve this.

Common themes were:

- the predominance of early and persistent drug use
- poor engagement with parents/family and community

- being overly hopeful about the outcomes that are possible in a ten-week program (there was a lot of pressure on the Youth Worker ‘to deliver’)
- a feeling that many were using the program as a ‘holiday’ from reality (which is often very bleak)
- knowing other participants prior to commencing the program (mentioned by quite a few participants)
- experience of family violence and trauma in many cases
- lack of empathy with the plight of others or the harm their actions may cause
- real issues with literacy that undermine any progress
- a lack of willingness to risk moving out of their comfort zone without a great deal of support
- being afraid of looking or seeming foolish or ‘dumb’
- being extremely sensitive to the tone and mood of others in the course (relies a great deal on a very strong leader in the course)
- residual and remaining antagonism toward authority (including police).

4.5 Post-Program Interviews

A generally positive picture emerged from the 10 post-program interviews conducted. All but one of the participants saw the course as being useful and felt they had gained new skills in a number of areas including mechanics, electrical wiring, panel beating, welding and spray painting. Four said they were more confident as a result of U-Turn and that they had better interpersonal and communication skills largely as a result of the ‘customer relations’ component of the course.

Drug and alcohol usage

Half of the participants were not using illicit drugs at all; however, three reported heavy use of cannabis and one client said he still smoked cannabis occasionally. Likewise half reported only occasional or moderate use of alcohol and one client did not drink at all. The remainder made no reference to alcohol use.

Views on the program and staff

In the post-program interviews, the majority of clients said they found the staff at U-Turn supportive both during the course and after the course. The informal ongoing support and freedom to return regularly appears to be an important aspect of the program for the participants.

As one said:

“Yeah like they always -- they told us all to come back in. Like we were all welcome back, you know.”

Recidivism and anti-social behaviour

Only two of the respondents stated that they had offended since completing the course. One was arrested for disorderly conduct and another for drug-related offences.

Education and employment

One participant had secured an apprenticeship in the automotive industry, two were still at school and one had returned to school since completing the program. Two had completed work experience placements organised by U-Turn and one had a casual job picking fruit. Four remained unemployed or had not participated in any further training or education.

4.6 Interviews with Significant Others

The recruitment of significant others was a very difficult process throughout the evaluation period. In order to adhere to ethical guidelines, it was not possible to contact significant others directly. The method adopted was to ask participants who had agreed to be interviewed to forward information sheets and consent forms to a significant other. The significant other would then contact one of the local evaluators to arrange for the interview to be conducted.

Consequently, it is important to acknowledge that the data collected from significant others is drawn from a very small sample (n=7) and that these respondents are likely to be those who have positive views of the program rather than those who have negative views of the program.

Relationship Between U-Turn Participants and Significant Others.

The significant others reported varying degrees of strain in their relationships with their sons, at different times, prior to the U-Turn program. Poor communication, resentment of authority (both parental and police), anger management and unacceptable behaviour were all identified as issues. One set of parents said they were ‘on eggshells’ all the time with their son because they couldn’t get him to get out of bed and when he did he would just ‘blow up’ often with no provocation. Most report communication with the young people as unstable and often unreliable, of a volatile and difficult nature.

All significant others reported an improvement in their relationships as a result of U-Turn, particularly in terms of communication, attitude, responsibility and anger management.

As one parent put it:

'He is sleeping properly again, he gets out of bed and he smiles all the time, he has something to look forward to, we are all a lot happier and we get on well'.

Another said:

'I think we talk more about the future now. He turned around before he got in too far and he can see that now. He has respect for people now and he can see that what he does affects other people, he didn't care before'.

Attitude

All significant others said they had observed a change in attitude due to the U-Turn Program. Parents identified overall improvements in confidence, anger management, willingness to see other points of view, patience and willingness to ask others for help.

Values

Similarly all significant others said they had observed a change in participants' values as a result of the program. These changes included taking responsibility for actions and realising the consequences of actions on other people.

Skills

All significant others observed a change in participants' skills as a result of U-Turn. These included both practical and social skills.

Interests and Hobbies

Four significant others said they had observed changes in participants' interests, hobbies and activities. Their interests were still primarily related to cars but because of new skills, they felt able to help and teach others more about cars. Three family members reported an increased level of motivation to do things and this had led the boys to be more interested in what others in the family were doing and to participate generally in the family.

All significant others said they had observed changes in participants' social relationships and peer groups. In some cases this was having a whole new circle of friends and in others it was reconnecting with old friends and family.

All significant others reported an improvement in the participants' anti-social behaviour and particularly in their language and attitudes to others.

4.7 Interviews with Program Staff

U-Turn staff held positive views of the program. They acknowledged the difficulties and stresses associated with working with the target group and recognised the importance of good teamwork in achieving both a high level of job satisfaction and good client outcomes. They highlighted the importance of establishing positive relationships, based on respect and trust, with the clients and emphasised that significant outcomes are often intangible: increased self-esteem and confidence; a more positive outlook on life; a willingness to get up in the mornings; and an increased desire to get a job. Given the level of disadvantage of the majority of the clients, however, the staff viewed an emphasis on objective outcomes, such as reduced offending, as unrealistic given the limited length of the program.

The staff also emphasised the importance of acknowledging the 'pilot' status of the program to date. There were a number of problems in the early stages of the program that related to management and resource issues. They stressed the need to view the program as developmental; in their view, the first eighteen months of the pilot involved much trial and error. It is only in the final six months of the program that they began to feel that they were working effectively to achieve the goals of the program.

Objectives of U-Turn

The staff members were asked to comment on their views of the objectives of the program. There was a great deal of uniformity in their views which centred on giving vulnerable young people a chance to succeed at something and work toward a positive future.

The following comments were typical:

'Our main objectives are to give these guys the competencies they need to fit them into a work environment, so into a workplace or further education.'

'Outcomes vary a great deal from personal growth and less aggression to a job.'

'We cannot always see outcomes, mostly it involves attitudinal shifts and that's not always tangible.'

'If we're going to say we've got ten guys here and we're going to sort the whole ten out it's being unrealistic. It's really impossible, but I think to get

two or three guys out of that group of ten and to have them guys turn some stuff around -- that's the success that we need.'

Respect and Trust

'Respect' as a term and as a concept recurred in all interviews both with staff and participants and their families. This thread of respect as an attitude and a practice seemed particularly strong and gave the program a coherence and attitudinal quality of valuing others. In the words of one of the program staff:

'Some of the kids have had no respect shown to them and they show little for others to begin with but we say that respect is where we start and that's a rule, after a bit they all try real hard and they get it.'

Trust is something that the staff felt was important to work on at the beginning:

'Talking the talk I suppose. So that breaks down a lot of barriers 'cause they think "Gee I just had a normal conversation with this guy and he didn't try to stand over the top of me. He hasn't tried to get anything out of me. He's actually just talked to me." So little things like that, which we probably take every day for granted where these guys are always looking at someone -- "Why is he talking to me? What is he trying to get out of me? When is he going to rip me off?'

Self Esteem

A key principle in working with the young people is the necessity of building self-esteem, often from a very low base. The staff did this in a variety of ways:

'Through talking to 'em and being very positive. Just reinforcing to the guys that they are good people. You know a lot of these guys come here with low self-esteem. They don't feel too good about themselves. So, yeah, just reinforcing that they are good people and they can do stuff and giving them the opportunity to do it I think is very positive for them'.

'Yeah a lot of them have low self-esteem. I think probably 80% of the guys who come in and although we don't turn all of them around, but the few that we do turn around are a success.'

The building of relationships and self-esteem was seen as integral to the program:

'It's pretty much worked into the whole course. The self-esteem stuff that more comes out in the workshops with the trainers and the trainers make them feel confident about themselves and they can feel they are a good person and they can do the task'.

Course Outcomes

Staff acknowledged a wide range of outcomes, many of them intangible:

'They've got a lot more respect for themselves because we -- we always like even if they do a little bit better we say "Well look what you've done. Look what you've achieved. You've achieved this." You can always see from when a guy first starts to the end of the course he's totally different and with our influence and what they've learned here as well.'

An interesting comment about some of the side benefits of the program concerned the diet and eating habits of the young people:

'A really important part of it is their diet as well. Like probably the lunch, which we provide, is basically their main meal for the day. So I suppose you can see the change -- the diet comes in when you see they haven't got that much concentration and they're a bit malnourished, by about five weeks when we've started to give them some good food, their attention starts coming up and they lift their head up a bit and they start putting on a bit of weight as well and that improves the way they learn as well.'

Other staff spoke of the motivation of the young people:

'They want to learn how to fix cars. They want to work in a workshop. They want to be mechanics. I suppose like a lot of people which worked here say "What do you do?"... these guys to have a qualification as a motor mechanic it's the Holy Grail. It's what they wanna do -- their karma you know. You know they want to become professional mechanics. That's what their chosen profession is supposed to be. So once we give them a step closer to that that's when they start getting a lot of respect for us as well.'

All staff agreed that the range of skills that were learned at U-Turn was much wider than automotive trade skills. Some of the most positive outcomes of the program for the young people were an increased tolerance of others and an ability to cooperate.

4.8 Stakeholder Surveys

A mail survey of key stakeholders was conducted in January 2004, and repeated again in November 2004.

Perceived Objectives of U-Turn

Respondents were asked to list up to five objectives of the U-Turn program. While responses were varied, they fell into a number of broad categories: learning practical skills, personal growth and engagement and reducing motor vehicle crime and recidivism.

Table 4 below shows the number of times an objective in each category was identified. It appears that stakeholders clearly identify personal growth and engagement as major objectives of the U-Turn program, being named more than twice as often as learning practical skills and nearly three times as often as reducing crime and recidivism.

Table 3: Incidence of Perceived Objectives of U-Turn (Survey 1)

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5	Total
Practical skills	4	8	1	2	1	16
Personal growth and engagement	6	6	12	7	3	34
Reduce crime and recidivism	6	1	3	2	0	12
Other	1	1	0	1	1	4

33% of respondents identified reducing crime and recidivism in their first objective, 33% identified engagement and personal growth while 22% identified learning practical skills related to motor vehicles.

Learning practical skills dominated the second objective (44%) but again 33% identified personal growth and engagement as objective two.

Personal growth and engagement dominated the third objective with 75% of responses in this category.

Meeting Perceived Objectives

Table 5 below shows how well respondents believed U-Turn met the identified objectives. 50% believed U-Turn had met objectives 'quite well' and 16.7% 'very well'. 22.2% of responses were neutral and 2 respondents (11.1%) did not answer this question.

Table 4: Capacity of U-Turn to Meet Identified Objectives (Survey 1)

Response	%
Very well	16.7
Quite well	50.0
Neutral	22.2
Not very well	0
Not at all well	0
Missing	11.1

Comparison of Survey 1 and Survey 2 responses

In the 10 months between the administration of the first and second stakeholder surveys, a general trend towards a more positive view of the U-Turn program is apparent. In particular, this is reflected in the following results:

- identification of better relations developing between police and the young people in the program;
- closer working relationships developing between U-Turn and other organisations (in the context of closer ties being developed between police and other agencies in Tasmania);
- acknowledgement that earlier problems with feedback issues were being resolved;
- identification of more concrete outcomes of the program e.g. increased enthusiasm and self-esteem among participants, gaining employment, and reduction of criminal activity and;
- a shift towards the majority of respondents stating that the program was 'highly respected' by other organisations.

At the same time, however, it is apparent that referrals to U-Turn continued to be from a relatively small number of sources and that these were located in the South of the state. Concerns continued to be expressed over the location of the program in Hobart and the additional problems this poses for potential clients from the North and North-West of the state. However, this evaluation has demonstrated that the Supported Accommodation addresses issues of access and equity for potential clients in the North and North-West.

4.9 Conclusion

A number of key points can be made on the basis of the data discussed in this section:

- Staff at U-Turn in Tasmania have worked hard to deliver a program that has become increasingly responsive to the needs of a vulnerable and troubled group of young people.

- The complexity of the needs of these young people has made it very difficult to deliver a preventative model recidivist car theft program while the young people have so many personal, health, educational and social deficits.
- All of the young people enter the program at different points on the continuum of criminal activity. Many of them are well advanced along the pathway to prison and long-term criminal activity of many kinds, including being perpetrators of significant harm and violence toward others.
- For many participants the experience of doing the program had been the first time they had engaged positively with a learning environment and with adults who they had learned to trust. They often said that at U-Turn they felt safe and respected.
- Given that many of the young people came from extremely deprived and socially isolated backgrounds it is unrealistic to expect total life change in the space of a 10 week course. The positive changes that were achieved need to be recognised and built on. U-Turn has the potential to act as a catalyst and building block for the future. In some ways the program does this already by offering informal support and the use of facilities for past participants, and also by offering the opportunity for some to return to the program and complete work towards the automotive certificate.
- The number of jobs or apprenticeships is not an accurate benchmark of success, neither is completion of certificates. Many of the achievements are much more subtle than this and are not quantifiable. The qualitative data recorded in this Final Report provides ample evidence of such successes.
- These young people have had many problems in their lives for a long time and their history of offending in many cases is extensive. To expect dramatic transformation in such a short space of time for this group is unrealistic and potentially further damaging to the self-esteem and future chances of the participants. Nevertheless, it is clear that for the majority of participants the direction of change is overwhelmingly positive.

The evaluation (see Attachments 2 – 5) provides extensive evidence from interviews with participants, significant others and program staff that demonstrates the profound impact of the program in bringing about a shift in the lives of the majority of the program participants. This has included positive changes in:

- anti-social behaviour
- life and personal skills
- practical vocational training and experience in the automotive industry
- workplace skills
- self-esteem and confidence

- social skills and self-awareness
- interview and job skills
- awareness of others and the broader community.

5 PROGRAM IMPACT: RECIDIVISM

5.1 Introduction

A third key objective of the U-Turn Program (Sharley and Associate, 2002:23) is:

- To prevent recidivists re-offending.

The measurement of recidivism and re-offending is not straightforward. To examine outcomes in relation to this criterion, records relating to conviction and charges for each U-Turn participant who completed the program were examined. These records were released to TILES after a written request was made to the Commissioner of Police and confidentiality agreements were signed by all TILES staff with access to this data.

Four types of records were examined for each participant:

1. The participant's conviction history (including diversionary procedures) from the Information Bureau (IB) system;
2. Charge data from the Prosecution System;
3. Traffic Infringement Notices (TINS);
4. Charge data from the Online Charging System.

Trends in relation to these measures were examined for the U-Turn participants who completed the full ten-week course (referred to as the U-Turn graduates). This provides an indication of the effectiveness of the program in reducing re-offending among U-Turn participants. Comparison was also undertaken of participants in the housing program and participants who were not in the housing program. It should be noted, however, that it is not possible to determine whether participation in the program is the major causal factor in reducing recidivism without being able to compare recidivism rates among participants with a control group. This method was outside the scope of this evaluation.

The issue of recidivism was explored in the interviews with participants and significant others. Self-reported changes in offence rates were a significant component of the qualitative data collected via these methods (see Attachment 3).

5.2 U-Turn Graduates Offence Data Analysis

Eighty-three young people commenced a 10-week U-Turn course during the pilot period. Of these, 52 completed the full 10-week course and thus graduated from the Program. 31 participants did not complete the course.

Table 5: Number of U-Turn Graduates in Each Course

Course Number	Course Dates	Number of Participants who Completed the Course
1	17 February - 9 May 2003	4
2	19 May - 26 July 2003	7
3	4 August - 10 October 2003	7
4	20 October - 24 December 2003	7
5	19 January – 26 March 2004	7
6	12 April – 18 June 2004	7
7	6 July – 10 September 2004	7
8	28 September 2004 – 3 December 2004	6

The Department of Police and Public Safety supplied offence data on each graduate of the U-Turn Program. The data is made up of individual Conviction Histories, Prosecution Complaints as well as Online Charges. Road Traffic Offences recorded by each graduate were also supplied but are not included in the detailed analysis of offending. Offence records were current at 25 February 2005.

Each offence recorded by a graduate received an applicable coding against the Australian Standard Offence Classification (ASOC). From this it was possible to produce a range of tables and charts to provide an overview of the graduates' offending behaviour prior to, during and after they had completed the U-Turn program, up until February 2005.

5.3 Categories of Offences

For the purpose of the analysis of the impact of program on the offending behaviour of the U-Turn graduates, the following categories of offences have been relied on, based on the ASOC definitions:

1. Road Traffic Offences

Road traffic and Motor Vehicle Regulatory offences including:

- a) Driving Licence Offences
- b) Road Vehicle Registration and Roadworthiness Offences
- c) Regulatory Driving Offences such as parking, speeding, prescribed alcohol limit offences
- d) Pedestrian Offences

2. Minor Offences

Offences against Justice Procedure specifically where defined:

- a) Breach of Bail

- b) Breach of Parole
- c) Breach of Justice Order
- d) Resist or hinder Police Officer or Justice Official

Public Order Offences specifically where defined:

- a) Offensive Language
- b) Offensive Behaviour
- c) Disorderly Conduct

Miscellaneous Offences specifically where defined:

- a) Dangerous substances offences
- b) Licit Drug Offences
- c) Public Health and Safety Offences

3. Serious Offences

- Homicide and Related Offences
- Acts intended to cause injury
- Sexual assault and related offences
- Dangerous or negligent acts endangering persons
- Abduction and related offences
- Robbery, extortion and related offences
- Unlawful entry with intent
- Theft and related offences (other than motor vehicle theft)
- Deception and related offences
- Illicit drug offences
- Weapons and Explosions offences
- Property damage
- Public Order Offences other than those deemed to be Minor Offences
- Offences against Justice Procedures (other than those deemed to be Minor Offences)
- Miscellaneous Offences (other than those deemed to be Minor Offences)

4. Motor Vehicle Theft

- a) Theft of a Motor Vehicle
- b) Illegal use of a Motor Vehicle

- c) Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts or Contents when defined

For the purpose of this report, the detailed analysis of offence history will not include Road Traffic Offences unless specified.

5.4 Offending Patterns of U-Turn Graduates as at February 2005

An analysis was conducted to determine the offending patterns of the 52 U-Turn graduates prior to, during, and after completion of the Program. This analysis includes both charges and convictions, but every effort has been taken to ensure that there has not been any duplication so that where a charge and conviction relate to the same offence, only the conviction is counted.

As at February 2005, the 52 U-Turn graduates had recorded a total of 967 offences, not including Road Traffic Offences. The maximum number of offences per person is 96, the minimum is 0 offences and the median is 11 offences per person.

Offence numbers range from:

- 3 graduates having between 75 to 96 individual offences recorded;
- 6 graduates having between 40 and 56 offences recorded;
- 3 graduates having between 20 and 40 offences recorded;
- 39 graduates having between 1 and 20 offences recorded; and
- 1 graduate having 0 offences recorded.

For the 52 graduates, the highest recorded types of offences ranged from Theft (251), and Burglary (168), to Breach of Justice Orders (156), Motor Vehicle Theft (128), Property Damage (86) and Public Disorder offences (83).

Figure 1: Offence Type and Frequency for U-turn Graduates as at February 2005

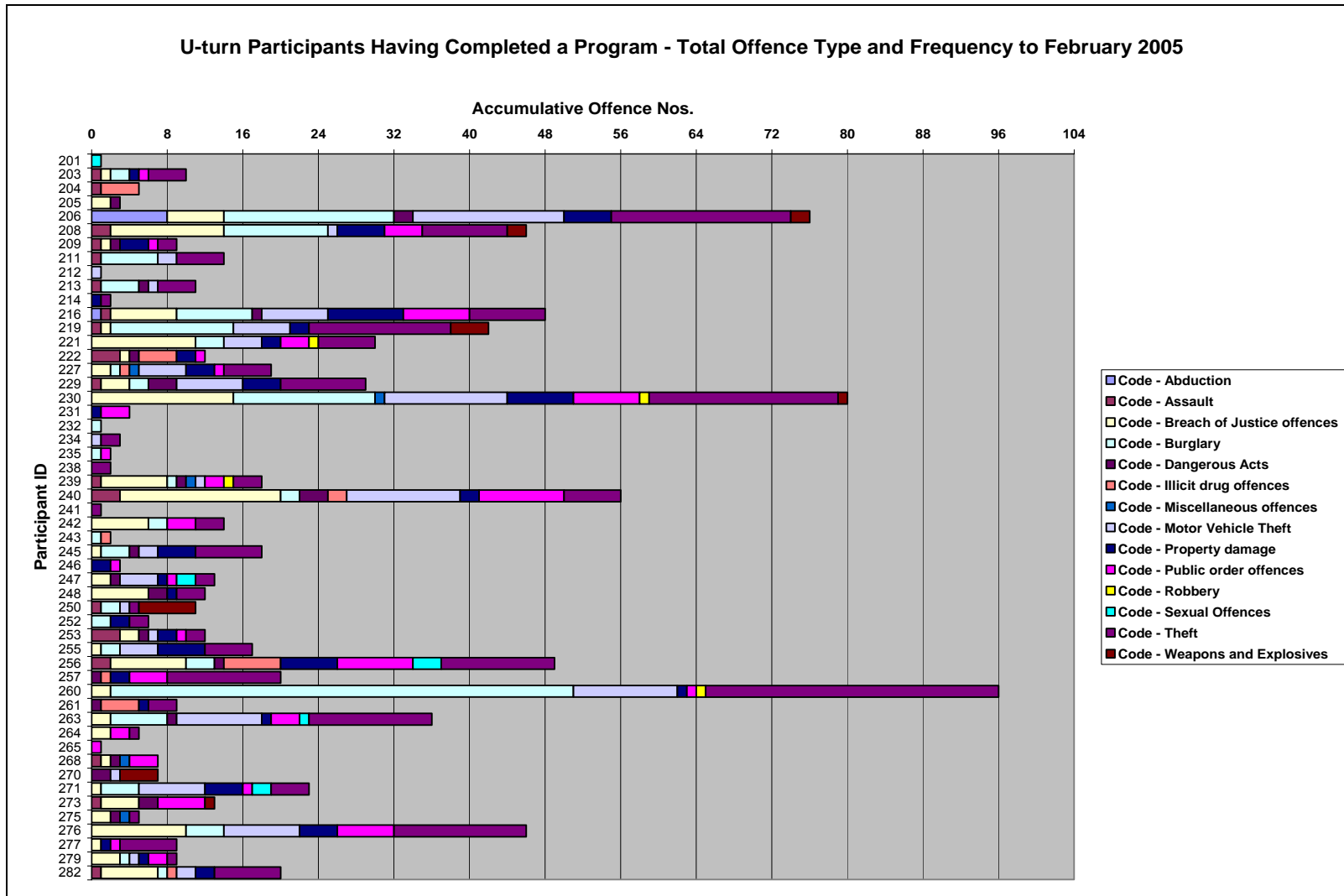
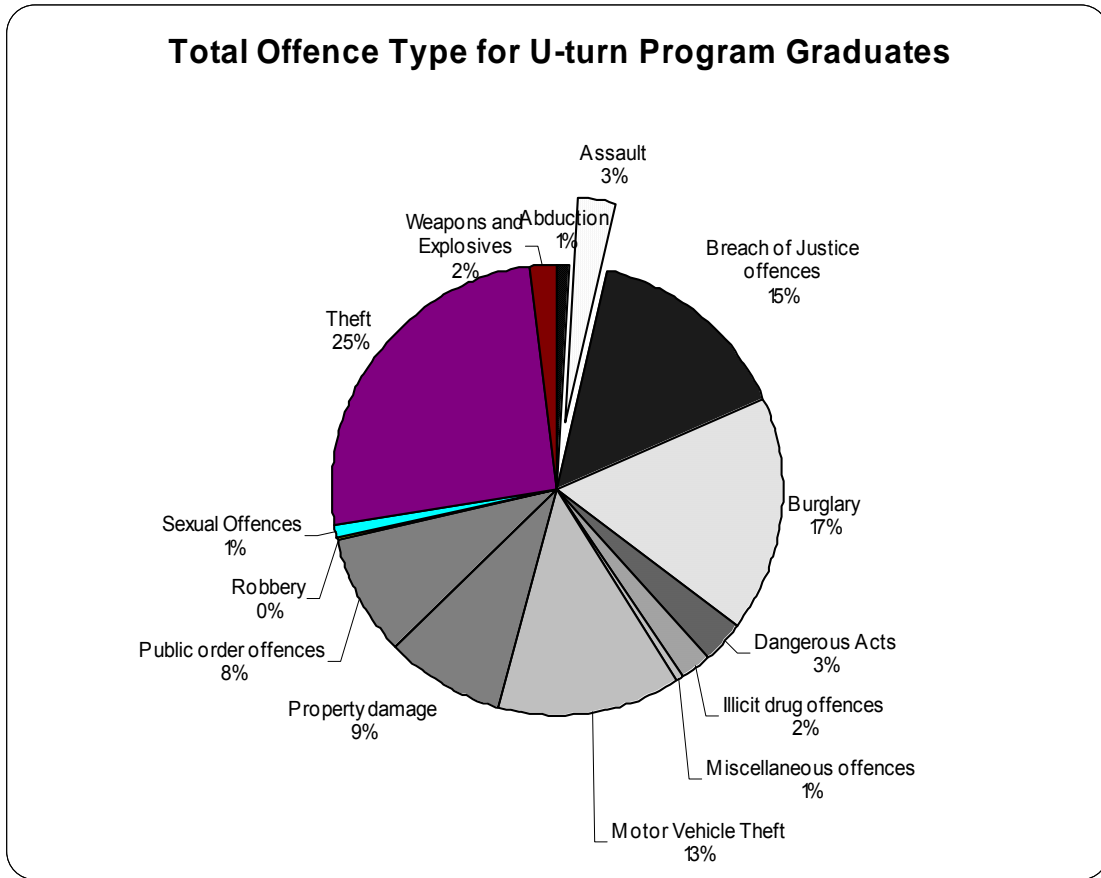


Fig 2: Percentage of Offence Types for the 52 U-Turn Graduates as at February 2005



5.5 Graduates Classified as Motor Vehicle Theft Offenders on Entry to the Program

Twenty-four of the U-Turn graduates had a history of involvement in motor vehicle theft at the time they commenced the Program and were classified as Motor Vehicle Theft offenders.

Offences Committed Prior to Commencing the Program

Prior to commencing the Program, these 24 offenders had recorded a total of 89 motor vehicle theft offences, 291 serious offences and 117 minor offences.

Offences Committed During the Program

During the program, the 24 Motor Vehicle Theft offenders recorded a total of 8 serious offences (all committed by one person) and 2 minor offences. Importantly, none of the offenders were charged with or convicted of a motor vehicle theft offence.

Offences Committed After the Program

After the completion of the Program and up until to 25 February 2005, the 24 Motor Vehicle Theft Offenders have recorded a total of 21 motor vehicle thefts (16 of these by *2 offenders only), 78 serious offences (48 of these by the same two *offenders as above) and 34 minor offences.

Significantly, 18 of the 24 motor vehicle theft offenders (75%) have not recorded a single motor vehicle theft following participation in the Program. Also, nine of the 24 motor vehicle theft offenders (38%) have recorded no offences of any kind since completing the Program.

Eight of the most prolific motor vehicle theft offenders have not committed a motor vehicle theft offence since completing the Program and the frequency with which they have committed serious and minor offences also appears to have significantly reduced.

5.6 Graduates Classified as 'At Risk' on Entry to the Program

Twenty-eight of the U-Turn graduates did not have any recorded involvement in motor vehicle theft on entry to the Program but were considered to be 'at risk' of becoming involved in motor vehicle theft.

Offences Committed Prior to Commencing the Program

All but one of the 'at risk' graduates had recorded at least one other type of offence prior to commencing the Program. The total offence history for the 'at risk' graduates comprised 132 serious offences and 54 minor offences.

Offences Committed During the Program

During the Program, 1 car theft and 4 serious offences were recorded for the 'at risk' group.

Offences Committed After the Program

Following completion of the Program, the 'at risk' group recorded a total of 17 motor vehicle thefts (all committed by two graduates*) 81 serious offences, (67 of these by the same two graduates) and 38 minor offences.

5.7 Comparison of the Offence Histories of Both Groups of Graduates

Tables 6 and 7 show the total offence history for each graduate (excluding road traffic offences) according to their classification as a Motor Vehicle Theft Offender or 'at risk'.

Table 6: Offence history of Motor Vehicle Theft Offenders prior to, during and after the Program (excluding road traffic offences)

Offence History - U-turn Participants with prior convictions for motor vehicle theft on commencing the Program													
Client ID	Pre Program				During Program				Post Program				TOTAL
	Car Theft	Serious Offence	Minor Offence	Sub-totals	Car Theft	Serious Offence	Minor Offence	Sub-totals	Car Theft	Serious Offence	Minor Offence	Sub-totals	
206	4	17	1	22	0	0	0	0	12	37	5	54	76
208	1	27	12	40	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	43
211	2	12	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
212	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
213	1	1	0	2	0	8	0	8	0	0	0	0	10
216	3	16	6	25	0	0	0	0	4	11	8	23	48
219	5	21	1	27	0	0	0	0	1	14	0	15	42
221	2	9	1	12	0	0	0	0	2	3	13	18	30
227	5	9	4	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	19
230	13	44	20	77	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	79
234	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
239	1	7	10	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
240	12	16	30	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	58
245	1	8	0	9	0	0	0	0	1	7	1	9	18
247	4	6	3	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
250	1	10	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
253	1	8	2	11	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	12
255	4	12	1	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
263	9	22	5	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	36
270	1	6	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
271	6	11	1	18	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	5	23
276	8	19	15	42	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	4	46
279	1	3	5	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
282	2	7	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Totals	89	291	117	497	0	8	2	10	21	78	34	133	640

Table 7: Offending history of 'at risk' Graduates prior to, during and after the Program (excluding road traffic offences)

Offence History - U-turn Participants At Risk of motor vehicle theft prior to commencing the Program													
Client ID	Pre Program				During Program				Post Program				TOTAL
	Car Theft	Serious Offence	Minor Offence	Sub-totals	Car Theft	Serious Offence	Minor Offence	Sub-totals	Car Theft	Serious Offence	Minor Offence	Sub-totals	
201	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
203	0	8	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
204	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	5
205	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
209	0	6	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	9
214	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
218	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
222	0	5	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	12
229	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	7	16	3	26	29
231	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	4
232	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
235	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
238	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
241	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
242	0	5	9	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	15
243	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
246	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
248	0	5	3	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	5	13
252	0	6	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
256	0	22	8	30	0	0	0	0	0	5	8	13	43
257	0	15	4	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	20
260	0	28	1	29	1	4	0	5	10	51	2	63	97
261	0	4	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	9
264	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	5
268	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	5	7
273	0	3	6	9	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	13
275	0	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	5
277	0	7	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Totals	0	132	54	186	1	4	0	5	17	81	38	136	327

5.8 Individual Examples of Program Effects for Recidivist Motor Vehicle Theft Offenders

The offending behaviour of each participant in the Program varies with respect to category of offence, type of offence and frequency of offence. However there are clear overall patterns of offending which show either a cessation of offending or a significant positive change in the frequency of offending during and following the Program. For example, there is a significant reduction in serious offences among the majority of the U-Turn graduates classified as Motor Vehicle Theft offenders. There is a similar reduction in motor vehicle theft offences.

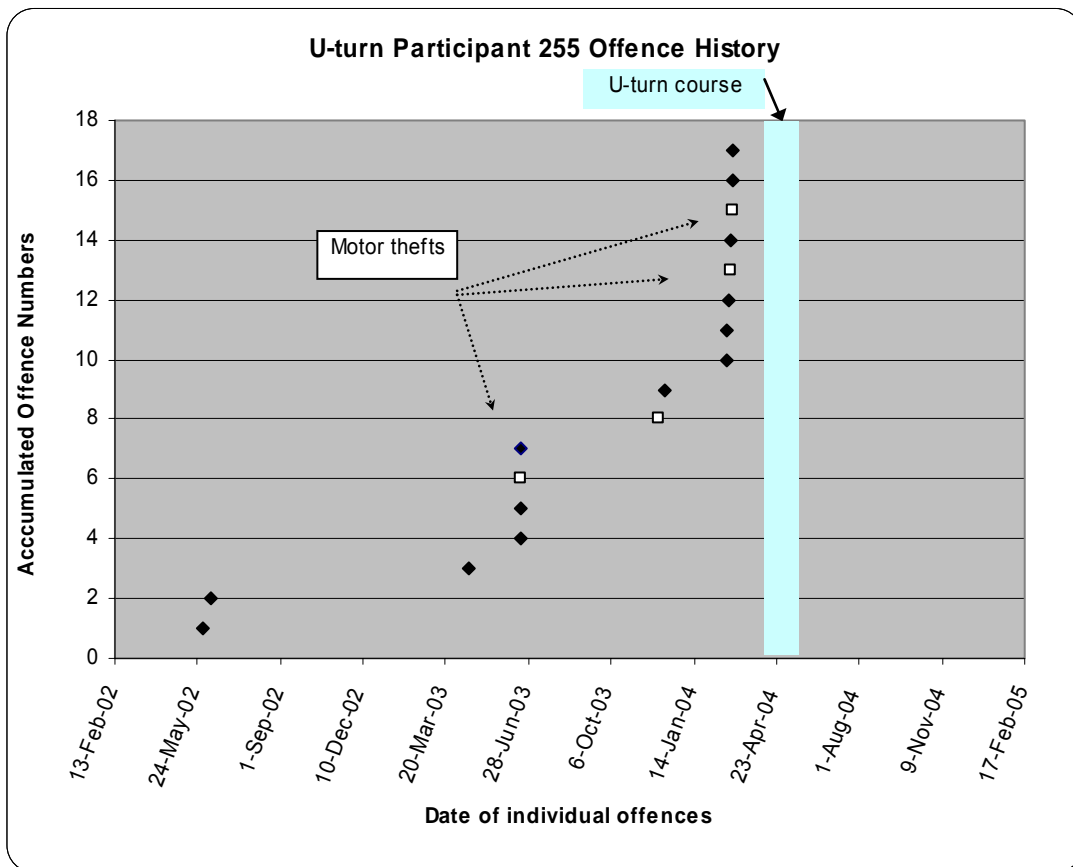
The following figures give examples of changes in individual participant offending behaviour for three U-Turn graduates classified as Motor Vehicle Theft offenders on entry to the Program. These clients had all committed more than one motor vehicle theft prior to commencing the Program.

Client No. 255

Client No. 255 had stolen 4 vehicles prior to completing the Program in May 2004. He also had a varied offence history of 12 serious offences and 1 minor offence.

This was reduced to 0 vehicle thefts, and 0 serious or minor offences during the 10 week program and in the 9 months following (to February 2005) (see Figure 5 below).

Figure 5: Offences for Participant 255

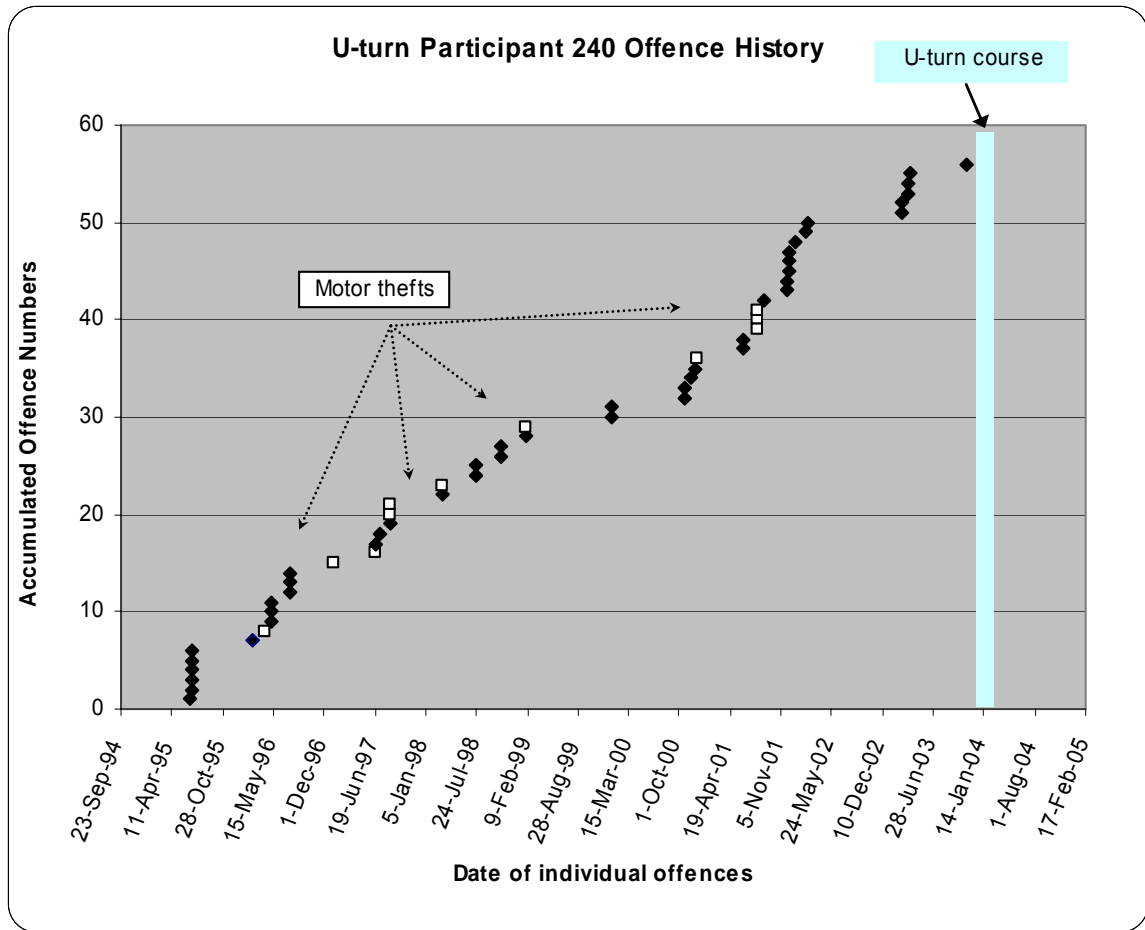


Client No. 240

Client No. 240 had stolen 12 vehicles, committed 16 serious offences and 30 minor offences prior to participating in the Program in March 2004.

During the Program and in the 11 months following its completion, he has committed no vehicle theft, serious or minor offences (see Figure 6 below).

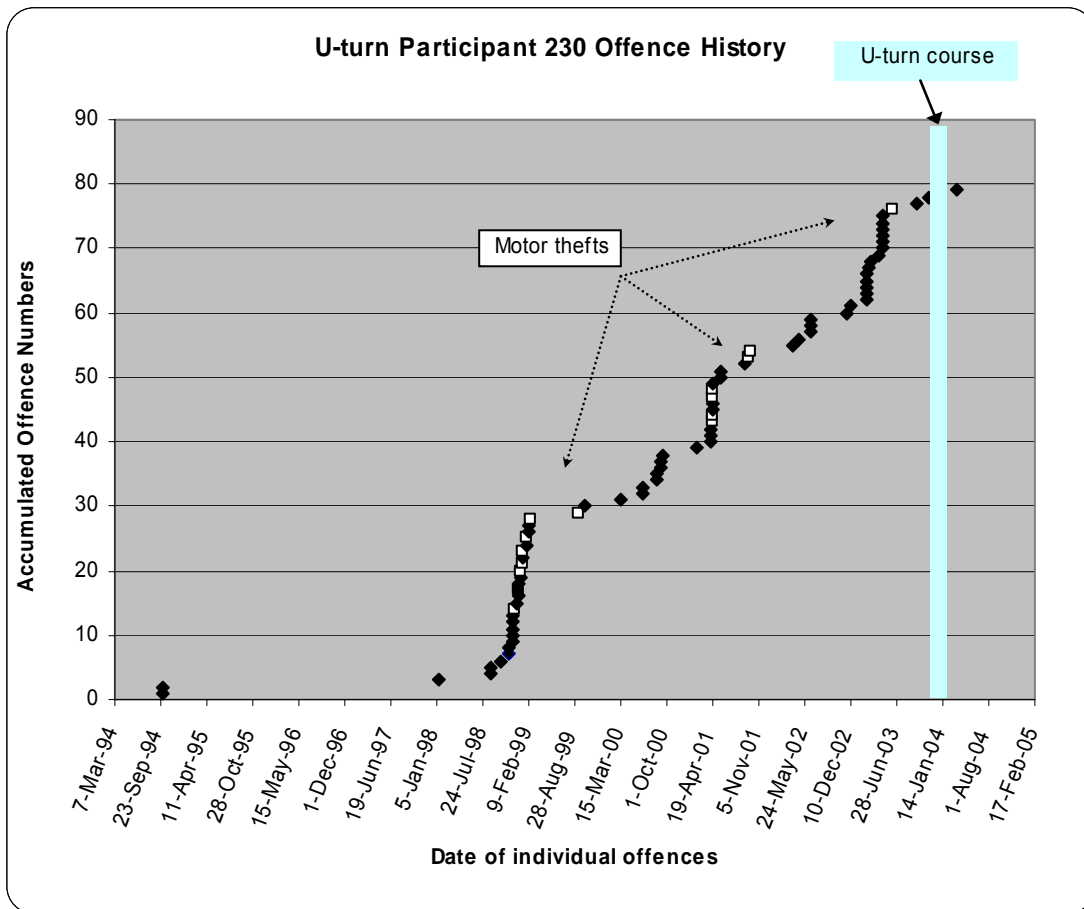
Figure 6: Offences for Participant 240



Client No. 230

Client No. 230 had stolen 13 vehicles and had recorded 44 serious offences and 20 minor offences prior to the Program. He committed 1 minor offence during the Program and 1 minor offence only during the 14 months since he completed the Program.

Figure 7: Offences for Participant 230



5.9 U-Turn Graduates in Supported Accommodation

The U-Turn Program provided supported accommodation for participants referred from outside the Hobart Metropolitan area. Twelve participants were placed in accommodation, and eight of these completed the Program.

Three of the graduates were Motor Vehicle Theft offenders, and the other 5 were classified as 'at risk' on entry to the Program.

As table 12 reveals, for seven of the eight participants who lived in supported accommodation the pattern of offending during and after the Program declined significantly. Client No. 206 was the exception.

Client No. 206 was one of 3 Motor Vehicle Theft Offenders whose pattern of offending continued after the Program. This offending pattern included motor vehicle theft and other serious and minor offences.

Consistent with the pattern for the majority of the 'at risk' graduates, those in Supported Accommodation did not commit a single motor vehicle theft during or after completing the Program.

Table 8: Offence history of U-Turn Graduates in Supported Accommodation

U-turn participants living in Supported Accommodation having completed the Program													
Client ID	Car Theft	Serious Offence	Minor Offence	Sub totals	Car Theft	Serious Offence	Minor Offence	Sub totals	Car Theft	Serious Offence	Minor Offence	Sub totals	TOTAL
Motor Vehicle Theft Offenders													
206	4	17	1	22	0	0	0	0	12	37	5	54	76
250	1	10	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
271	6	11	1	18	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	5	23
At Risk Offenders													
242	0	5	9	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	15
243	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
246	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
248	0	5	3	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	5	13
261	0	4	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	9

5.10 Road Traffic Offences

Tables 9 and 10 show the number of road traffic offences committed by the U-Turn graduates, prior to, during and after completion of the Program. Among those classified as Motor Vehicle Theft Offenders, there was a significant reduction in road traffic offences for the majority of the graduates, except for six graduates for whom there was an increase. The pattern was similar among those classified as 'at risk', with six graduates recording an increase in the number of road traffic offences recorded after they had completed the program compared to the number recorded prior to the program.

Table 9: Road traffic offences committed by U-Turn graduates classified as 'Motor Vehicle Theft Offenders'

<i>U-Turn graduates with prior convictions for motor vehicle theft</i>				
Road Traffic Offences				
Client ID	Pre Program	During Program	Post Program	TOTAL
206	1	0	5	6
208	2	0	0	2
211	0	0	0	0
212	4	0	14	18
213	61	0	1	62
216	1	0	1	2
219	23	5	0	28
221	3	0	8	11
227	3	2	4	9
230	58	0	0	58
234	2	0	0	2
239	7	0	1	8
240	18	0	1	19
245	3	0	5	8
247	10	0	0	10
250	8	0	0	8
253	4	0	0	4
255	2	0	0	2
263	16	0	1	17
270	2	0	0	2
271	3	0	1	4
276	2	0	0	2
279	2	0	0	2
282	11	0	0	11
Totals	246	7	42	295

Table 10: Road traffic offences committed by U-Turn Graduates classified as 'at risk'

<i>U-turn graduates classified as 'at risk' on entry to the program</i>				
Road Traffic Offences				
Client ID	Pre Program	During Program	Post Program	TOTAL
201	0	0	0	0
203	2	0	0	2
204	2	0	1	3
205	0	0	16	16
209	11	0	3	14
214	4	0	1	5
218	0	0	0	0
222	10	0	11	21
229	0	0	5	5
231	0	0	0	0
232	0	0	0	0
235	1	0	0	1
238	1	0	0	1
241	0	0	0	0
242	5	0	0	5
243	4	1	15	20
246	0	0	0	0
248	13	0	1	14
252	0	0	0	0
256	4	2	0	6
257	0	0	0	0
260	0	0	0	0
261	15	3	6	24
264	1	0	13	14
268	0	0	11	11
273	6	0	2	8
275	3	1	1	5
277	0	0	0	0
Totals	82	7	86	175

5.11 Mixing 'At Risk' Clients with Motor Vehicle Theft Offenders

For the majority of the 'at risk' participants there was no evidence that contact with motor vehicle theft offenders was problematic. However, it should be noted that two of the 'at risk' clients did go on to commit a significant number of motor vehicle theft offences after their participation in the program. Thus, for clients numbers 260 and 229 there appears to have been some adverse effect. Also, for six of the 'at risk' clients there appears to have been an increase in the number of road traffic offences recorded after the program compared to the number recorded prior to their involvement in the program.

5.12 Conclusion

The data analysis presented in this section demonstrates a positive outcome for the majority of U-Turn participants who completed the course.

In particular, the following findings are significant.

Motor vehicle theft offenders

- 18 of the 24 Motor Vehicle Theft offenders (75%) have not recorded a single motor theft following participation in the U-Turn Program;
- 9 of the 24 Motor Vehicle Theft offenders (38%) have not recorded any offences since completing the U-Turn Program;
- 8 of the most prolific motor vehicle theft offenders have not committed a motor vehicle theft offence since their course concluded and have significantly reduced records of other serious and minor offences; and
- only 1 of the 10 single motor vehicle theft offenders (i.e. those who had committed only one motor vehicle theft prior to the program) have recorded a car theft either during or after the program.

'At risk' clients

- 26 of the 28 'at risk' graduates (93%) have not recorded a single motor theft following participation in the U-Turn Program;
- only 1 graduate offended during the program;
- 13 graduates have not recorded any offences, and a further six graduates have only recorded minor offences, since completing the program.

Table 11: Quick Glance Summary of Statistics on Recidivism and Offence History*

	No.	%
Pre-Program		
U-Turn graduates with at least one motor vehicle theft conviction prior to entering the program	24	46
U-Turn graduates classified as 'recidivist car theft offenders' on entry to the program	14	27
U-Turn graduates with <i>no</i> prior convictions on entry to the program	1	2
U-Turn graduates with a conviction for a minor offence only on entry to the program	2	4
U-Turn graduates with a conviction for a serious offence (excluding motor vehicle theft) on entry to the program	47	90
During the Program		
U-Turn graduates who committed a motor vehicle theft during the program	1	2
U-Turn graduates who committed a minor offence only during the program	2	4
U-Turn graduates who committed a serious offence (excluding motor vehicle theft) during the program	2	4
U-Turn graduates who did not commit any offences during the program	48	92
After the Program (as at February 2005)		
U-Turn graduates who have recorded a motor vehicle theft since completing the program	8	15
U-Turn graduates who have recorded a minor offence only since completing the program	6	12
U-Turn graduates who have recorded a serious offence (excluding motor vehicle theft) since completing the program	19	37
U-Turn graduates who have not recorded <i>any</i> offences since completing the program	27	52

* Road traffic offences excluded

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The local evaluation of the U-Turn Program in Tasmania offers a positive picture. The implementation of U-Turn in Tasmania follows closely the BPM and there is a high level of success in achieving the aims and objectives of the program.

The key success factors emerging from the evaluation relate to:

- relationships
- post-course support
- empowerment
- the homogeneity of the client group
- the dynamics of the participants in each course
- developing pathways into mainstream community
- the 'culture of cars' as the 'glue' that makes it all work (with go-karting as a key component).

Problematic aspects of the program relate to:

- the state of the automotive industry in Tasmania;
- the resources for the delivery of literacy and numeracy courses; and
- the development of protocols and structures for formal inter-agency post-program support on a long-term (e.g. 2-year) basis.

6.2 Success Factors

Relationships

Mentoring and high-quality relationships are an important component of the participants' personal development that occurs while attending U-Turn. Participants value staff members and one even stated during his interview that he 'loves' everyone at U-Turn.

The relationships that are being built are based on trust and mutual respect. As participants reach the end of the program, many express regret at having to leave and move on - many to a very uncertain future - particularly if they have not been able to secure employment or a training place. Others are returning to the school system with great reluctance.

Given the apparent intensity of these relationships, consideration of how these participants can be encouraged to move on in a positive way is paramount. By

the same token, there also needs to be space for them to maintain these valuable relationships as long as they need to, and to the degree they wish. In short, it is imperative that, to ensure the gains made are not lost, these young people are provided with sustained individually-based case-management, rather than simply being moved through the revolving door of social programs. This is unfortunately often a consequence of the pilot program model.

In light of these concerns, it is very significant that the U-Turn Program has received funding from the Tasmanian Government to extend the program for a further 2.5 years. This is a positive development that should counter the potentially negative effects of having completed a pilot program which is discontinued.

Post-Course Support

The U-Turn Program is developing a strong program of post-course support that addresses this challenge. The Youth Worker contacts all clients between two and four weeks after completing the program. A significant number of past participants regularly visit the 'back shed' at U-Turn where they can continue to work on their own cars and maintain the positive relationships they have established with U-Turn staff and peers. Whether such post-course support can be maintained for a period of two years as required in the BPM remains to be seen.

Empowerment

The best practice model informing the U-Turn Program identifies 'empowerment' as a key component that is likely to contribute to its success. The literature review adds further support to the importance of this aspect in contributing to successful diversionary programs for young offenders. Empowerment involves a shift from a top-down approach in programming to a partnership which involves youth in an 'active enabling role'³. It has been found that such an approach is related to positive youth development and social integration into the community⁴, both of which are stated objectives of the U-Turn Program.

Empowerment strategies being implemented in the U-Turn Program include encouraging participants to take up a public role (for example, in events such as the hand-over of cars). The restorative justice component of the program, in particular, contributes to this outcome.

³ Cargo, M. Grams, G.D., Ottoson, J.M., Ward, P. and Green, L.W. 'Empowerment as Fostering Positive Youth Development and Citizenship', *American Journal of Health Behaviour*, 2003: 27 (Supplement): S66-S69.

⁴ Ibid.

Homogeneity of client group

The homogeneity of the client group is identified in the literature as a key variable in the success of diversionary programs for young offenders. However, there are competing views on its significance in producing positive outcomes. While the U-Turn participants have been homogenous in terms of gender, there has been heterogeneity in relation to age (school-age vs post-school age) and their offending history.

The experience of the U-Turn pilot indicates that including younger and older participants in the same course is a strength of the program. Case management strategies typically include 'partnering' younger participants with older participants. This has led to positive outcomes such as low levels of vandalism and anti-social behaviour at the U-Turn site.

In relation to the majority of participants, concerns expressed at the beginning of the pilot with respect to mixing motor vehicle theft offenders with an 'at risk' population were found to be spurious. Overall, positive outcomes in offending behaviour were apparent for both types of clients. Nevertheless, it appears that the program may have had an adverse effect on two of the 'at risk' graduates.

The extent to which the U-Turn Program can meet its goals with both young men and young women in a single cohort has yet to be tested.

Dynamics of the participants in each course

The issue of gender also highlights the significance of group dynamics as a key factor impacting on the success of the program. The Youth Worker has taken this factor into account in the selection of participants for each course. The evaluation has shown the importance of this factor in the outcomes for each course.

Developing pathways into mainstream community

This is a key objective of the U-Turn program. During the first few courses, this proved to be a difficult task. However, the positive media coverage and strong support from the Commissioner of Police and other Steering Committee members enabled the program to develop a very positive reputation in the Tasmanian community. This has enabled a strong program of work placements to be established and increasing interest from employees who indicate their willingness to recruit apprentices from U-Turn.

The culture of cars

Throughout the evaluation, the significance of the 'car culture' to the success of the U-Turn Program has been clear. It provides a common interest between

participants as well as between participants and program staff. This culture provides a shared language, a rationale for the development of new knowledge and skills, and a basis for respect among participants and staff who can demonstrate their knowledge and skills. It is the strength of this shared culture that enables the program to succeed with relatively high levels of heterogeneity based on age and/or gender.

A key aspect of this is the go-karting activity that is vital to the success of the program.

6.3 Program Outcomes

The BPM identifies the following outcomes as those which the program will aim to achieve:

- The elimination of re-offending and/or anti-social behaviour of individual young people during the program or in the six months afterwards;
- Young people are better skilled at resolving problems identified as contributing to their offending behaviour;
- Young people develop increased knowledge and skills in order to lessen the likelihood of engaging in anti-social behaviour;
- Young people are assisted to take responsibility for their own behaviour;
- Young people's participation in offending activities or activities that can lead to an increased risk of offending is reduced;
- Young people increase their participation in employment, training and educational, vocational and recreational activities;
- Young people's families are involved, where possible, in resolving family issues that contribute to young people's offending;
- Young people are involved in assessing their own needs and planning and monitoring their agreed case plans.

There is clear evidence throughout this report that these outcomes were achieved by the U-Turn program piloted in Tasmania.

6.4 Conclusion

This evaluation has demonstrated that:

- Mission Australia has implemented the BPM as fully as possible under local Tasmanian conditions;
- Mission Australia has implemented the BPM effectively in Tasmania;
- The BPM as implemented in Tasmania is effective as an intervention;
- The BPM as implemented in Tasmania is capable of meeting its intended outcomes.

6.5 Recommendations

U-Turn has successfully delivered a developmental pilot and in doing so has refined many of the program's 'teething problems' and shortcomings. It is now well placed to develop and respond to the local environment and clientele. This is a unique feature of a small and responsive program that has a very personal approach and commitment to service.

The following recommendations relate to key aspects of the Program and/or the Best Practice Model (BPM).

Recommendation 1- Best Practice Model

That the BPM be viewed as a framework open to evaluation and modification in local contexts.

Comment:

While the best practice model has been the dominant theme of the U-Turn project in Tasmania, it should be noted that demographic characteristics and issues of local culture and scale must be considered when decisions are made about the structure of a diversionary program such as this.

Recommendation 2 - Program Focus

That the U-Turn Program, while maintaining its focus as a motor project, ensures that modules in a range of life-skills are included; for example, modules in anger management, drug and alcohol abuse, social skills, household management.

Comment:

Although at first glance U-Turn is a skill enhancement course (a labour market program) it is actually intended to be much more than this. In practice, it is viewed as an opportunity for these young people to 'turn their lives around'. Such life-changing desired outcomes need to be addressed in how the program is resourced and structured. The focus on vehicle theft and 'car culture' should be viewed as an effective 'hook' to encourage participation in the program, but a focus on automotive training should not be viewed as the solution to the participants' problems.

The literature review supports the finding that the issues faced by young offenders are wide-ranging, occur in clusters of deficits in all basic areas (e.g. nutrition, health, education, social and psychological issues) and that the most pressing needs should be resolved first (see Attachment 1).

Recommendation 3 - Addressing the Offending Behaviour of Participants

That the U-Turn Program acknowledges the extensive and diverse offence histories of participants and addresses these in a transparent and direct manner.

Comment:

Participants need to face the gravity of their situation early in the program. The interviews indicated that many are in denial with respect to the seriousness of their offences. It appears that the program's focus on vehicles may contribute to this. Many of the participants were willing to acknowledge their vehicle-related offences and address these. However, the charge and conviction data clearly show that for the majority of participants, vehicle-related offences are a small proportion of their overall offence histories.

The literature review noted that many unsuccessful diversionary programs do not acknowledge the extent of criminal behaviour among the clients and do not deal directly with it. Not taking responsibility for criminal behaviour can mask the issues that really require attention (see Attachment 1).

Recommendation 4 - Literacy and Numeracy Education

That identification and referral be incorporated into the BPM as the most effective ways in which to address the literacy and numeracy problems of the majority of U-Turn clients. Alternatively, consideration should be given to the inclusion of an additional staff member with specialist skills in workplace literacy and numeracy training.

Comment:

The evaluation concluded that significant advances in literacy and numeracy were unlikely given the contact hours between clients and staff in a ten-week course and the severity of the literacy and numeracy problems typical of most course participants.

Recommendation 5 – Program Length

That consideration be given to extending the length of course to 6 months.

Comment:

A number of issues suggest the need to extend the length of the course. These include the following:

- it takes about 5 weeks for the participants to ‘settle’ into the program (e.g. moderating lifestyle so that they can arrive on time, impact of improved nutrition);
- the extensive range of life skills that need to be addressed among the client group before positive outcomes are likely to be sustained;
- the time needed for relationships of respect and trust to develop between clients and program staff that are crucial for sustained developmental change to occur.

The U-Turn Program Staff suggested that a 6-month course would be adequate to address the multiplicity of needs among the client group.

The literature indicates that the minimum timeframe for effective outcomes in diversionary programs is 3 months; conventional wisdom among program providers suggests that this should be doubled to 6 months; and research on successful programs often suggests that efficacy is greatest in programs that extend over 12 months (see Attachment 1).

On balance, a period of 6 months is recommended because it balances the need for more time expressed by program staff with the fact that extending the program has significant resource implications that would reduce the number of participants who would be able to benefit from the program.

Recommendation 6 – Supported Accommodation

That supported accommodation be included where issues of access and equity exist. The provision of this service must be accompanied by an active marketing campaign to ensure referrals from diverse sources.

Comment:

The provision of supported accommodation was found to address issues of access and equity among potential clients in various parts of the state.

Recommendation 7 – Evaluation of Supported Accommodation

That a more comprehensive evaluation of the supported accommodation be undertaken to determine its effectiveness in achieving the goals of U-Turn among residents.

Comment:

The evaluation of the supported accommodation was preliminary given the small number of participants involved and the small number of cohorts evaluated. The literature review revealed the unique nature of the supported accommodation service among this client group (see Attachment 1). This is one reason that a more comprehensive evaluation of the supported accommodation is warranted; it would contribute new insights into understandings of the efficacy of various types of diversionary program.

Recommendation 8 – Core Components

That consideration be given to including the following as ‘core’ components of the U-Turn BPM:

- ***go-karting as a recreational activity;***
- ***the restorative justice component (e.g. providing victims with restored cars); and***
- ***mixing age groups.***

Comment:

A number of features of the BPM were found to be central to its success. These included go-karting as a recreational activity, the restorative justice component (e.g. providing victims with restored cars), and mixing age groups.

Recommendation 9 – Female Participants

That efforts to increase the proportion of women in the U-Turn program be extended to include:

- ***recruitment of women through referral agencies;***
- ***marketing of the program to potential clients.***

Importantly, the inclusion of women into the program will need to be closely monitored and modification made quickly (for example, consideration may be given to employing a female youth worker).

Comment:

The inclusion of young women in the Program is a vexed question. While the number of potential clients who are female is less than the number who are male, the degree to which U-Turn might 'work' for young women is not yet known.

The key issue in relation to young women is that of equity. If the program appears to be effective (as this evaluation suggests) then it is important that both young men and young women are provided with access to the program. It is equally important to determine whether the program is effective for young men and young women. Given the lack of female participants to date, it has not been possible to establish whether the program 'works' for young women or not. The participation of young women in the program would address both these issues. At the same time, however, it is important to acknowledge that the majority of motor vehicle theft offenders are male. Thus, even with a concerted effort to include more women in the program, it would be expected that only a small number would be involved.

Recommendation 10 – Post-Course Support

That post-course support be enhanced via a collaborative case management model to ensure that the multiple needs of the participants (e.g. mental health, drug and alcohol, literacy, sexual abuse) are met.

Comment:

The U-Turn Program has begun the process of building real partnerships with other service delivery agencies. This now needs to be accelerated and formalised with formal partnerships and service delivery agreements built into U-Turn. This value adds to the program and also acknowledges that a multi-agency and community approach is required. The U-Turn Program cannot address all the needs of its clients and the U-Turn staff cannot be expected to have expertise in all these areas.

The literature review noted that successful diversionary programs have multi-faceted service delivery elements and are coordinated by a central case manager (see Attachment 1). It should be noted that the Inter-Agency Support Panels recently established in some areas in Tasmania have the potential to provide the infrastructure for this kind of collaborative case management.

Recommendation 11- Additional Youth Worker Position

That consideration be given to expanding the core program staff to include two youth workers.

The U-Turn evaluation has demonstrated that the establishment and maintenance of significant relationships with adults is crucial to the success of the program. Qualitative research has shown that respectful empathetic relationships give participants the opportunity to critically consider their lives and values. In the early stages of the program the interventions of the youth worker at U-Turn were critical components of the successes reported. As participants moved on from the program, the youth worker did his best to maintain support, but of course with an ever-increasing workload the maintenance of such comprehensive and intensive support becomes problematic.

The existence of another youth worker as a member of the core program staff would enhance the capacity for post-course support that builds on the trusting relationships already established at U-Turn. While enhanced post-course support could be provided by improving links with other agencies, the success of such referrals may be contingent on the client establishing new relationships with staff in these agencies.

Recommendation 12 – Indicators of Success

(a) That the BPM should acknowledge that there is no consistent definition of recidivism and that how it is defined may need to vary depending on what type of program is being evaluated.

(b) Given the difficulties associated with defining and measuring recidivism that greater weight be given to more subjectively-defined developmental outcomes as indicators of program success.

Comment:

Employment is a laudable goal, but it should be noted that the extent and depth of the problems facing these young people will be likely to prevent them gaining secure long-term employment without a great deal of support and negotiation on their behalf.

Together with difficulties associated with determining objective measures of recidivism, this suggests the need to carefully examine the criteria for program success in the Best Practice Model. Issues around the definition of recidivism could be elaborated on as part of a section on 'how is program success defined'. The literature review noted that social and personal indicators of success should be included in the evaluation of diversionary programs and not just those based on reconviction rates (see Attachment 1).

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ATTACHMENT 1 – LITERATURE REVIEW

A Youth Crime and Juvenile Justice

Juvenile crime is a significant issue in society and property crime contributes significantly to the fear of crime in the community. While some politicians and the media highlight juvenile crime and the experiences of crime victims to build support for increasingly severe penalties, the majority of researchers and youth practitioners suggest such penalties to be an inappropriate response to most young offenders.

A review of the literature on youth crime (e.g. Cunneen and White 2002; Tienda and Wilson 2002; White 2002, 2003) supports the following conclusions:

- Juvenile crime is a significant issue in society and property crime, including car theft, contributes significantly to the community's fear of crime.
- Detention alternatives and rehabilitative programs offer significant cost savings to the state and the community.
- Motor vehicle theft in young people is an indicator of a potentially serious escalation in offending behaviour.
- Successful youth programs require coordinated and comprehensive program development (Street Legal Evaluation 2001).

B Recidivism

Chang, Chen, and Brownson (2003) in their article for the *Journal of Adolescent Health* summarise the findings of research undertaken in the United States that was based on samples collected from between 16 000 to 18 000 high school seniors since 1975. The study examined ten different types of delinquency behaviours, including car theft, and it used a number of methods to explore the 'risk association between repeat victimization and delinquency recidivism'.

The authors report that for the period 1996 to 1999, 'a downward trend was observed for most types of delinquency behaviours', except, among a few others, car theft. The findings include: 'repeat victimization was found to be significantly associated with delinquency recidivism'; and 'other risk factors more frequently associated with delinquency recidivism included...conflicts with parents'.

The authors conclude by positing a strong association between repeat victimization and first-time delinquent behaviour, as well as delinquent recidivism.

C Crime Prevention

The Australian Government under the auspices of the Attorney General's Department is the corporate sponsor of a number of national crime prevention strategies designed as early interventions to short circuit crime, violence and community harm. One of the most influential reports published by National Crime Prevention is *Pathways to Prevention* (National Crime Prevention, 1999) which advocates strongly for the provision of appropriate services early and in a timely way to prevent 'at risk' children from becoming involved in crime.

The Australian Institute of Criminology has also sponsored work on crime prevention (Hill 1998, Gant and Grabosky 2000) specifically addressing the issues of youth offending and car theft.

The Crime Prevention and Community Safety Council is the corporate sponsor for U-Turn in Tasmania. The Council was established in January 1998 to develop an integrated approach to crime prevention from a whole-of-government perspective. The Council is chaired by the Commissioner of Police and consists of community and business members, and chief executive officers from leading government agencies such as Justice, Education, Health and Premier and Cabinet. The Council has implemented a range of strategies and projects focusing on issues such as fear of crime, truancy and juvenile crime, safety and security for older persons, burglary prevention and crime prevention for business.

D Youth Diversionary Programs

The literature review points to the following key findings that are relevant to the development, implementation and effectiveness of U-Turn as a youth diversionary program:

- A lengthy period of offending and the seriousness of the offences are predictors of significant difficulty for participants in rehabilitation programs that aim to effect sustained change. Attitudes and behaviours associated with offending behaviour (such as verbal and physical violence, family violence, poor attitudes toward women) indicate further entrenched behaviour which is extremely difficult to change even if the young people are motivated to do so (Lipsey and Wilson 1998).
- On the whole, the issues faced by young offenders occur in clusters of deficits in all basic areas: nutrition, health and development, education, attachment and bonding, abuse, and social and psychological issues (Ward and Brown 2004, Adler 1997).
- Multi Systems Therapy together with a comprehensive case management approach has proven to be the most effective in assisting repeat and serious offenders to effect changes; even so, change is slow and not high in numbers. Given that this kind of intensive approach is very expensive this type of intervention is usually recommended for high profile young

- offenders and even then it has a low success rate of sustained change over time (Redondo, Garido and Sanchez- Meca 1998, Weiss and Hawley 2002).
- Many young people begin their career in crime with relatively minor offences but by the time many of them have been referred to diversionary programs (such as U-Turn) their offending behaviour is entrenched and a central part of their lifestyle. Many programs do not acknowledge this as a problem and there is little or no attempt to directly address the offending behaviour or indeed even acknowledge that it has occurred. This failure to name, acknowledge and take responsibility for criminal behaviour can mask the issues that really require attention (Day and Howells 2002, Howells and Day 1999, Loeber and Farrington 1998, Hagell 2002, Hollin 1999).
 - Programs that appear to be effective are those that are compulsory and court ordered. These programs have multi-component and therapeutic services attached to them and consider the whole person. All aspects of the young person's life are assessed and the most pressing issues are resolved first e.g. health, shelter and nutrition. Other aspects of the young persons needs are assessed and plans made to deal with them (Lyon, Dennison and Wilson 2000, Nacro 2001, Moffit 1993, 1994).
 - Programs that work well have multi-faceted service delivery elements and are delivered in a variety of settings. These include family therapy, individual counselling, social and life skills training that are coordinated by a central case manager in close collaboration with the young person (Department of Human Services 2001, Anderson, Cottle, Lee and Heilbrun 2001, Farrel Meyer, King and Sulliman 2001).
 - Research indicates that there is a need for a coordinated approach to delivery of services to young people and their families (Weiss and Hawley 2002).
 - Initial accurate assessment is important to enable a good quality and realistic plan to be put together at the beginning of an intervention and one that has the best chance of success i.e. one that is realistic and achievable within real time frames (Redondo, Garrido, Sanchez–Meca 1998, Ward and Brown 2004).
 - Good quality assessment also allows decisions to be made and then supported by evidence (e.g. for the entry or non-entry into rehabilitation programs for some young people and entry to the custodial system for others) (Ward and Brown 2004).
 - There is evidence that some young people benefit from custodial sentences that are then followed up with entry into distinct and regimented programs designed to deal with recidivism and at the same time make progress toward dealing with personal and life issues for the participants (Howells and Day 1999, Day and Howells 2002).

- Research and evaluations in Australia, the UK, United States and Canada all point to the need for restorative justice and diversionary programs for young people to be highly structured and directive, have strong program integrity, are able to be replicated, have highly trained staff and access to adequate funding (Lipsey and Wilson 1998, Moffit 1994, Redondo et al 1998).

E Supported Housing Programs

A review of the literature indicates that there are no other programs in Australia for young offenders that offer supported accommodation outside the formal juvenile justice or shelter systems. The literature suggests that there are no discrete programs offering a supported housing component as implemented in the U-Turn Program in Tasmania.

Literature and program searches have turned up little about the value and effectiveness or otherwise of a supported housing component within a model delivering diversionary, educational and task-focused programs to young offenders and or potential offenders. There is some evidence that a case management model of service delivery (which incorporates residential, mentoring and life skills elements) has been effective in youth programs with this target group and within indigenous communities. This model is also often used in caring for young people who are the subject of child protection or youth justice orders and who have a cluster of needs requiring them to live away from home while they attend programs or courses designed to assist them to function within the community rather than outside it.

The Victorian Juvenile Justice Rehabilitation Review conducted in 2003 looked at 'what works' in juvenile offending programs. In the extensive literature review the point is made that a model of wraparound services that includes education, mentoring, modelling of relationships and the provision of supportive and safe accommodation most often meets the needs of this vulnerable group of young people. This is in contrast to stand alone programs which are sessional and where there is a higher drop-out rate among participants.

The Australian Child Welfare Association, at its 2004 conference entitled 'Effective Practice for Child & Family Services', showcased innovative programs for young people. At this conference the Noosa Youth Service Inc presented a paper titled 'Future Directions Responsive Placement Options Trial 24/7 Accommodation Project'. Noosa Youth Service Inc (NYS) is an integrated youth service located on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. NYS provides a variety of preventative and intervention-based programs and activities for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in the Noosa, Maroochydore and Cooloola Shire areas. The program menu includes: Community/Schools Partnerships Program (Youth Support Program, Supported Work Experience, Flexible Learning and Mobile Education, TransEd); Jobs Placement Employment

and Training (JPET); and a Supported Accommodation Assistance Program. Many of the clients in the programs are involved with both youth justice and child protection agencies.

The support and guidance offered by the already established live-in volunteer model at NYS has been very successful for young people who require some guidance, direction and assistance in non-family-based accommodation. The aim of the project, which is neither a foster nor a residential care model but draws on and adds to components of both, is to identify models of quality care for young people with complex needs by providing accommodation combined with intensive support to achieve case plan goals

The referral and assessment process which occurs between the Department of Communities and NYS is a critical component in ensuring appropriate placement. Research into 'Caring for Children Away from Home' (1998) identifies the question of the 'mix' of young people as critical to those requesting services and those providing services:

There needs to be discussion about the groups of young people that can be brought together under the same roof without risk of undermining the aims and objectives of the intervention. The consequences of getting the 'mix' wrong can be serious indeed including bullying and abuse of young people and staff (by young people), placement breakdown, high staff turnover amongst others. *Department of Health (1998) Caring for Children Away From Home: Messages from Research, London, HMSO.*

The project is based on a client-focused model valuing the empowerment of young people and encouraging participation in decision-making and planning. Live-in carers and other members of staff work towards establishing a relationship with the young people based on mutual trust. Openness and transparency are encouraged in client-related matters. Continuity of youth worker contact with clients is achieved through a negotiated rostering system. Live-in carers, youth workers and the program coordinator operate as a team.

Currently there is considerable interest being shown by the government and community groups in community partnerships as a way of responding to many of the human issues that exist in our communities. Jim Ife (1996) considers that this is due to the 'crisis in the welfare state'. He argues that with the cost of welfare services increasing while economic growth is declining there is a need for new ways to be developed. In their work with juvenile offenders practitioners have been well aware that to reduce the risk factors associated with a young person's offending one needs to deal not only with the offending behaviour but also attend to the support needs or underlying issues impacting upon the young person. A recent New Zealand publication, *Tough is not Enough* by Kaye McLaren (2000), that summarised research into effective ways to prevent young offending, supports this. McLaren's review of the literature concluded that 'the most effective approach in changing these risk factors for the better is to target more than one of them and use a variety of techniques to change them'.

ATTACHMENT 2 – EXPERIENCES OF PROGRAM STAFF

Interviews were conducted with program staff during 2004 in the second full year of the program. The data is drawn from two series of interviews in early and late 2004. Six staff members were interviewed. Over the two-year pilot, there were three changes to the manager's position, as well as changes to the Administrative Officer and the Panel Beater. The interviews were conducted at the U-Turn office and lasted for up to an hour.

The interviews were transcribed and analysed. A number of themes emerged as central to the implementation and success of the U-Turn program.

A Objectives of U-Turn – Outcomes

The staff members were asked to comment on their views of the objectives of the program. There was a great deal of uniformity in their views which centred on giving vulnerable young people a chance to succeed at something and work toward a positive future.

This comment is typical:

'Our main objectives are to give these guys the competencies they need to fit them into a work environment, so into a workplace or further education'.

And:

'Outcomes vary a great deal from personal growth and less aggression to a job'.

Or:

'we cannot always see outcomes, mostly it involves attitudinal shifts and that's not always tangible'.

And in reality:

'If we're going to say we've got ten guys here and we're going to sort the whole ten out it's being unrealistic. It's really impossible, but I think to get two or three guys out of that group of ten and to have them guys turn some stuff around -- that's the success that we need'.

Some staff noted that as they do not see post-program recidivist data they are not really aware of these longer-term outcomes of the program.

B Participant Characteristics

The program participants are referred primarily through their involvement in car theft in some way. Other factors such as problematic family life, anti-social behaviour, interrupted education and drug-related issues are present when they enter the U-Turn Program. All of these factors pose challenges for the staff:

'They are a difficult target group, we need special skills and they need a lot of pastoral care'.

And:

'We do look for motor vehicle theft recidivists who have pretty much stolen more than one car. Also a desire to change and a desire to be in the motor vehicle industry - to gain employment in that industry'.

All staff acknowledged that there is a wide range of needs within the group who are referred to the course and a lot of time is spent trying to meet individual needs:

'I suppose everybody's different that comes on the course. A lot of our guys come from low socio-economic areas. Their parents have been unemployed for years and it's getting to the stage where they're second and third generation unemployment benefits, most have little education and they feel pretty hopeless'

Or:

'I think definitely with a lot of the guys that come on with multiple issues, some of them want to sort some of them out and some of them don't'.

And this comment from a staff member:

'Each course is different. We have one clown usually every course [lots of laughter]. But you sort of see them when they come in and they're very quiet the first few days and then they open up and you get to see the person that they really are, you see a big change in 'em. They're a little bit more polite. They get friendlier. They're a little bit scared I think when they first come here, I sort of pick one usually out of each group and try and get a smile out of 'em. Some kids have the saddest faces'.

The following comment signals the different nature of this target group:

'A lot of 'em have been used to doing stuff by themselves, making decisions about their life and where they're going to get their next feed from, dealing with Centrelink themselves and I suppose they find it hard

either to work with someone or I suppose to accept help from other people as well. They're a little bit proud or they're fairly independent'.

C Cars

A strong link to 'car culture' and all things to do with cars seems to hold the key to bonding and communication within the group and with the staff. If someone doesn't 'get it' about cars then they are unlikely to succeed.

'But the guys -- which are a bit of a scallywag -- they've knocked off cars because they like driving and they like cars, but they haven't got an avenue to do it because of their poor social background where money basically goes on food and rent and that's about it.'

And:

'Yeah you'll find some of the older guys, yeah; they're full on petrol heads. Some of the younger guys they probably don't know what motors fit into what and stuff like that because they haven't done it but they are keen and want to learn. But the majority of the guys here they've pulled motors in and out, everything to do with cars – it's their life, for some the only good thing'

It is essential that the staff know all about cars too:

'So it's important for the staff to have a fairly good working knowledge of cars and modifying cars and basically the car culture in Australia as well. What gains the respect with the guys straight up is if they start talking about a certain car and we know about it and we can basically have our credibility by talking the lingo'

Or:

'We shoot the breeze about cars and what they've seen and who does what and what fits into stuff'.

D Respect and Trust

'Respect' as a term and as a concept recurred in all interviews both with staff and participants and their families. This thread of respect as an attitude and a practice seemed particularly strong and gave the program a coherence and attitudinal quality of valuing others:

'Some of the kids have had no respect shown to them and they show little for others to begin with but we say that respect is where we start and that's a rule, after a bit they all try real hard and they get it.'

Trust is something that the staff feel is important to work on at the beginning:

'Talking the talk I suppose. So that breaks down a lot of barriers 'cause they think "Gee I just had a normal conversation with this guy and he didn't try to stand over the top of me. He hasn't tried to get anything out of me. He's actually just talked to me." So little things like that, which we probably take every day for granted where these guys are always looking at someone -- "Why is he talking to me? What is he trying to get out of me? When is he going to rip me off?"'

Or:

'They view us as a bit like -- I suppose they put us in the same category as like social workers, the police, where we're authority figures. We're there to tell them what to do. So for the first two weeks they're looking at us going "Well what are they on about? When are they going to bite us?"'

'So there's a fair bit of suspicion, so that's why we work at breaking down that wall and getting them so they can trust us. Basically treat them like a human being. We don't -- we don't say, "Right, we're a worker and you're the student" and stuff like that.'

Or as one staff member said:

'I suppose the care providers -- other community services in Hobart or Launceston haven't quite built that relationship with 'em because they're not offering them anything to do or anything they're interested in. So it's more sort of like an authority structure which they're trying to rebel against. Where when they come here, umm, we try and steer clear of that.'

E Individual Programs

Individual programs, teams and mentors are set up for all participants and each individual is assessed by the staff. Needs and skills are identified and a case management approach, coordinated by the youth worker, has been adopted as the most effective way to assist the young people and for the staff to manage:

'We've found that a lot of the younger boys that come on they're probably a little bit immature and so we need to have a mix of the older guys and younger guys to sort of lift their maturity up a little bit and the older guys lead them along and help look after them.'

And:

'There's still a structure and there's still authority, but it's more relaxed. It's basically tailoring the course to suit their needs. What's the best way in which we can achieve where they can get the most out of it? We have to set that into line. So the guys, who come on the course I suppose the first two weeks, are sitting back basically all looking at us and going "What are these guys up to? Who are these guys? What are they trying to do to me?"'

Staff identified the need for individual mentoring and literacy-based skills on a one to one basis delivered in short timeframes.

As one said:

'These kids can't read a lot – they need someone patient to sit with them and put up with it if they storm out sometimes, you need a lot of patience.'

F Course Outcomes

Some of the comments from staff about the program:

'They've got a lot more respect for themselves because we -- we always like even if they do a little bit better we say "Well look what you've done. Look what you've achieved. You've achieved this." You can always see from when a guy first starts to the end of the course he's totally different and with our influence and what they've learned here as well'.

An interesting comment about some of the side benefits of the program concerned the diet and eating habits of the young people:

'A really important part of it is their diet as well. Like probably the lunch, which we provide, is basically their main meal for the day. So I suppose you can see the change -- the diet comes in when you see they haven't got that much concentration and they're a bit malnourished, by about five weeks when we've started to give them some good food, their attention starts coming up and they lift their head up a bit and they start putting on a bit of weight as well and that improves the way they learn as well'.

Other staff spoke of the motivation of the young people:

'They want to learn how to fix cars. They want to work in a workshop. They want to be mechanics. I suppose like a lot of people which worked here say "What do you do?"... these guys to have a qualification as a motor mechanic it's the Holy Grail. It's what they wanna do -- their karma you know. You know they want to become professional mechanics.'

That's what their chosen profession is supposed to be. So once we give them a step closer to that that's when they start getting a lot of respect for us as well.'

All staff agreed that the range of skills that were learned at U-Turn was much wider than automotive trade skills. Some of the most positive outcomes of the program for the young people were an increased tolerance of others and an ability to cooperate.

G Drugs

Drugs and substance use were identified as an ongoing issue for the program. The program has guidelines around drug use in the workplace and these are stringently adhered to. Any person who is suspected of being drug-affected is removed from the premises by the youth worker, counselled and taken home. They are not permitted to return until given permission to do so.

Drugs are part of the culture of this group and there is usually much talk around it:

'Oh yeah. We do like informal drug counselling if you can call it that, where they talk about bongos and deals and stuff like that and they ask us. They say "Oh you guys wouldn't know about that" and we say, "Well, yeah, we do actually." Since it's informal we can start doing a bit of harm minimisation with drugs and alcohol with them as well. If we were trying to get them to stop it altogether it wouldn't work. But if we can explain to them the dangers of it and say "Yeah well try not to do it to excess". Well that's better than nothing.'

It was acknowledged that this is a very difficult area to assist the young people with:

'Drug and alcohol is certainly an issue, although a lot of guys don't want to change their drug and alcohol use. They're quite happy with it. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink -- that's it.'

H Job Placements

The job placement challenge has posed difficulties for the program but staff report that this is changing:

'The Automotive Industry in Tasmania is a funny beast. It's fairly small and close-knit. They're slowly starting to accept us. You know all the colleges which have got an automotive campus -- they've got a clean record; they've got good grades. They're up against those kinds of guys,

so they've got to work hard. It's not just yeah apply for a job -- yeah I get it. They've got to prove themselves to these guys.'

The staff try to be realistic in working with the young people about expectations of employment:

'You know we try not to fluff it up and make them feel good and say "Oh since you've done this course you'll be able to get a job no worries." We say "Well what you've done before, yeah, you've done, but people are going to know that because you done U-Turn. The thing, which is going to prove to them, is what you do when you're there. That's what they'll see and what we say as well.'

However, as the program becomes better known and the staff are able to get out and talk to industry people, progress is positive:

'Yeah, but breaking down that barrier with industry we're slowly chipping it away. We got a lot of help with TACC and there are a few other businesses as well and most of them want to give these kids a go.'

I Public Perception

The program staff feel proud of the program's achievements and of the participants and have enjoyed the public recognition in the media. They recognise the importance of this publicity for the future of the program:

'The restorative justice cars being given back... that really helps.'

And:

'At the end of the course he gave away the car in front of the media and everything like that. That's when you see how far they come and we are all proud of them.'

Other positives too:

'The positives -- umm, we've built some really good relationships out in the community with motor mechanics, panel beaters -- just having stuff donated to us through auto wreckers and places like that. That's been very positive. We've had a lot of good support there.'

J Self-Esteem

A key principle in working with the young people is the necessity of building self-esteem, often from a very low base. The staff does this in a variety of ways:

'Through talking to 'em and being very positive. Just reinforcing to the guys that they are good people. You know a lot of these guys come here with low self-esteem. They don't feel too good about themselves. So, yeah, just reinforcing that they are good people and they can do stuff and giving them the opportunity to do it I think is very positive for them'.

And:

'Yeah a lot of them have low self-esteem. I think probably 80% of the guys who come in and although we don't turn all of them around, but the few that we do turn around are a success.'

The building of relationships and self-esteem is seen as integral to the program:

'It's pretty much worked into the whole course. The self-esteem stuff that more comes out in the workshops with the trainers and the trainers make them feel confident about themselves and they can feel they are a good person and they can do the task'.

K Teamwork

The staff all feel that they make a good team and that this is essential in working with young people:

'That's one thing that I suppose every program like this when you're dealing with guys where you've using all your skills to manage them you've gotta have good back up and your back-up is your staff and your management as well'

'I suppose to set the groundwork the only reason this place is successful is because there has to be a good strong team and a lot of teamwork with the staff. There can't be any lone wolves. There can't be anybody working just for themselves and everybody has to lean on everybody else. So that means all the different skills, which we've got – We let them have their own destiny with a bit of control in it. It's still structured. So we step them up straight away and say yeah he's a bit experienced, he's pulled motors out before, we'll team him with him. So that forms -- that gets 'em used to a bit of teamwork. It's like working in a team'.

And a sense of humour is helpful too:

'All the staff seem to get on with each other. We haven't had any cranky words with each other yet. I mean I threaten 'em with the fry pan every so often. That's what keeps 'em in line. It's all about their age, not their shoe size'.

L Teething troubles

U-Turn in Tasmania experienced its share of ‘teething troubles’ and all staff agreed that these primarily revolved around the following:

- Training - not sufficient;
- Budget - not sufficient initially;
- Management issues and changes as the program developed;
- The Best Practice Model and how to implement this;
- Lack of equipment initially; and
- Communication and expectations between Tasmanian Police and Mission.

These have largely been resolved and are recognised as developmental issues over the life of the program. As one staff member comments:

‘As we’ve gone along we’ve learned to deal with what’s gone wrong in the past course and so we fix it up for the next course and so now we’re getting to a stage where we do know what we’re doing’.

M Staff satisfaction

All staff expressed a high level of satisfaction with their jobs at U-Turn. One staff member said:

‘Best job in the world.’

And another:

‘I love this job and would like to see programs like it in other industries to give young people with different needs a better start.’

N Conclusion

U-Turn staff members have a positive view of the program. They acknowledge the difficulties and stresses associated with working with the target group and recognise the importance of good teamwork in achieving both a high level of job satisfaction and good client outcomes. They highlight the importance of establishing positive relationships based on respect and trust with the clients, and emphasise that significant outcomes are often intangible: increased self-esteem and confidence; a more positive outlook on life; a willingness to get up in the mornings; and an increased desire to get a job. Given the level of disadvantage of the majority of the clients, however, the staff view an emphasis on objective outcomes such as reduced offending as unrealistic given the limited length of the program.

The staff also emphasise the importance of acknowledging the 'pilot' status of the program to date. There were a number of problems in the early stages of the program that related to management and resource issues. They stress the need to view the program as developmental; in their view, the first eighteen months of the pilot involved much trial and error. It is only in the final six months of the program that they feel they are now working effectively to achieve the goals of the program.

ATTACHMENT 3 – STAKEHOLDERS VIEWS OF U-TURN

A The First Stakeholder Survey

The first U-Turn Stakeholder Survey was conducted in January 2004. This was mailed to people and organisations who were identified as having had interaction with the U-Turn Program including Tasmania Police, correctional services, probation officers, youth health workers, community organisations, relevant sections of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Department of Education, and non-government organisations.

Methods and Response Rate

A 16-item questionnaire was constructed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on the U-Turn Program from the stakeholders' perspective. It was mailed to 44 recipients from 13 different organisations. A postage paid self-addressed envelope was included with the survey form to facilitate returns. Three weeks following the initial mail out, a reminder letter was sent to all original recipients. Two survey forms were returned labelled 'recipient not known' and a recipient who had no knowledge of the program also returned an uncompleted survey form. Eighteen completed surveys were returned as well as one emailed commentary on the program giving an overall response rate of 44%⁵. 50% of returns were from Southern Tasmania, 22.2% from the North and 5.6% from the Northwest of the state. The origin of 22.2% of returns was unknown.

Results

Q1. Position of the Person Completing the Survey

44.4% of questionnaires were completed by the manager of the service or organisation, 44.4% by an 'other staff member' and 11.1% by an 'other' person, one being the referring police officer and the other a probation officer.

Q2. Consultation with Others

77.8% of respondents did *not* consult with others in completing the survey, 16.7% did consult with others and 5.6 % (1 respondent) did not answer the question.

Q3. Viability of the U-Turn Model

The vast majority of respondents felt that the U-Turn program was a positive and viable 'best practice model'. Comments included 'extremely viable', 'very viable'

⁵ 41 'valid' stakeholders and 18 completed survey forms. If the emailed commentary is included as a valid return the response rate becomes 46%

and 'viable and effective'. It was seen to provide a legitimate avenue for young men to express their interest in automobiles and gain skills in the motor vehicle industry. The only negative reply came from a North-West respondent and this was due to the program not being available in that region.

However there were some caveats on the general enthusiasm for the program. One respondent noted there were as yet, no statistics available on re-offending rates for participants and another noted the difficulty in assessing outcomes for participants who did not complete the course. Yet another stakeholder expressed a need for more emphasis on what happened after completion of the program.

Q4. Change of Views on Viability of U-Turn Model

None of the respondents said their views on the viability of U-Turn had changed since becoming involved with the program. One respondent did not answer this question.

Q5. Perceived Objectives of U-Turn

Respondents were asked to list up to five objectives of the U-Turn program. Respondents were not asked specifically to rank objectives in any order of importance nor did all respondents identify five objectives. While responses were varied, they fell into a number of broad categories: learning practical skills, personal growth and engagement and reducing motor vehicle crime and recidivism.

Most respondents identified objectives across all of these categories but some respondents identified different aspects of a category as separate objectives. For example one respondent identified one objective as 'to engage young people at risk' and separately identified 'to increase connectedness of young people', both of which are related to personal growth and engagement.

Table A1 below shows the number of times an objective in each category was identified. It appears that stakeholders clearly identify personal growth and engagement as major objectives of the U-Turn program, being named more than twice as often as learning practical skills and nearly three times as often as reducing crime and recidivism.

Table A1: Incidence of Perceived Objectives of U-Turn (Survey 1)

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5	Total
Practical skills	4	8	1	2	1	16
Personal growth and engagement	6	6	12	7	3	34
Reduce crime and recidivism	6	1	3	2	0	12
Other	1	1	0	1	1	4

33% of respondents identified reducing crime and recidivism in their first objective, 33% identified engagement and personal growth while 22% identified learning practical skills related to motor vehicles.

Learning practical skills dominated the second objective (44%) but again 33% identified personal growth and engagement as objective two.

Personal growth and engagement dominated the third objective with 75% of responses in this category.

Q6. Meeting Perceived Objectives

Table A2 below shows how well respondents believed U-Turn met the identified objectives. 50% believed U-Turn had met objectives 'quite well' and 16.7% 'very well'. 22.2% of responses were neutral and 2 respondents (11.1%) did not answer this question.

Table A2: Capacity of U-Turn to Meet Identified Objectives (Survey 1)

Response	%
Very well	16.7
Quite well	50.0
Neutral	22.2
Not very well	0
Not at all well	0
Missing	11.1

One respondent commented that U-Turn was:

'Not meeting the needs of northern clients at this stage due to difficulties in engaging northern youth justice clients.'

The respondents who gave neutral responses on the program felt they had not had enough involvement to comment.

Q7. Referrals FROM U-Turn to Other Services

11.1% of respondents said U-Turn had referred clients to their service, 55.6% had no referrals from U-Turn and 27.8% said this was 'not applicable'. One respondent did not answer this question. In total, only two clients were identified as being referred to other services by U-Turn. One of these clients was 'remanded in custody' and the other 'involved in motor vehicle stealing' at the time of referral.

Q8. Referrals TO U-Turn from Other Services

83% of respondents said they had referred clients to U-Turn, 11.1% had not and 1 respondent did not answer the question. In total, respondents had referred 53 to 55 plus⁶ clients to the program.

Reasons for referral fell into two main categories. The clients had actually committed offences involving motor vehicles and/or they were deeply interested in cars and the program was seen as a positive outlet for this interest.

Both non-referring organisations were located in the north of the state and location was the issue. The reasons given for non-referral were:

'clients need to travel to Hobart to participate which means leaving their family or support networks' and 'problems with accommodation for northern clients'.

Q9. Impact of U-Turn on Organisations

Stakeholders were asked what impact U-Turn had on their organisation in terms of referrals, workload, resources and training/training needs. Table 4 below shows the percentage impact in each of these categories. 16.7% of respondents reported a 'significant impact' and 27.8% 'some impact' on referrals. However 38.9% reported little or no impact on referrals.

22.2% of respondents reported 'some impact' on workload but more than 60% reported little or no impact on workload. Similarly there was little or no perceived impact on resources or training for the majority of respondents.

One respondent commented '*...[the] referral process has been a problem and created additional workload, until we had it better sorted out*', while another said '*U-Turn has increased the number of referrals we do and follow up ... but has decreased some day to day case management of clients*'.

⁶ A number of respondents did not specify an exact number of clients. For example one respondent said 10+ clients were referred and another estimated 2-4 referrals.

Table A3: Impact of U-Turn on Organisations' Practices and Resources (Survey 1)

	Referrals %	Workload %	Resources %	Training/ Training needs %
Significant impact	16.7	0	0	0
Some impact	27.8	22.2	5.6	11.1
Little impact	16.7	33.3	27.8	27.8
No impact	22.2	27.8	44.4	38.9
Missing	16.7	16.7	22.2	22.2

Q10. Implementation and Development of U-Turn

Stakeholders were asked how their organisation had contributed to the implementation and development of the U-Turn program. 33% of respondents identified 'referrals' as their contribution. One respondent indicated involvement in the Steering Committee and making a funding contribution and another said they had

'...offered referred clients extra and ongoing support of the JPET program.'

Q11. Working Relationships with Other Organisations

No respondents said U-Turn had led them to work more closely with other organisation.

Q12. Implementation, Management And Service Delivery Problems

27.8% of respondents said they had problems related to the program's management, implementation or service delivery. 61.1% had no problems and 11.1% did not answer this question.

One stakeholder identified the following problems:

'no practical considerations for referrals by police to the program. Expectation for police to make referrals when they are not qualified to assess candidate's suitability/eligibility and the circumstances of the police/young person contact (i.e. arrest) when the referral form is filled in.'

and

'no practical considerations for how participants from outside Hobart were to travel to Hobart.'

Another stakeholder also identified location as presenting problems because:

'there is no U-Turn program available in the north and northern clients are unwilling to travel to Hobart to participate.'

The gendered nature of U-Turn was also identified as a problem. One stakeholder claimed:

'...there is some difficulty in referring girls due to the large proportion of males which may mean that girls feel threatened. Perhaps a minimum intake policy would be useful.'

Two stakeholders identified communication with U-Turn as problematic. One claimed there was *'...not much in the way of U-Turn staff interacting or networking with our agency'* while another said *'...there was a change of management which brought about some communications difficulties briefly.'*

Q13. Significant Achievements

Stakeholders were asked what they thought the most significant achievements of U-Turn were. Responses were generally positive but one stakeholder said there was *'little or no effect I am aware of in north'*. Five stakeholders either did not answer the question or felt unable to comment.

Achievements listed were securing the program funding and setting the program up, the personal achievements of the young men involved, particularly the experience of graduation and completion of certificates. Channelling the interests of young men into a positive outcome was also seen as an achievement. One stakeholder recognized the completion and return of a car to a victim as a significant outcome while another identified the capacity of the program to engage young offenders who were otherwise difficult to engage.

Q14. Perceptions of U-Turn Program

Stakeholders were asked how they thought the program was viewed by other organisations and as can be seen by Table A4, the responses were largely positive. 38.9% thought the program was *'highly respected'* while 33.3% perceived it as *'somewhat respected'* by other organisations. 16.7% were neutral and 11.1% did not answer the question. No-one said the program was *'not very respected'* or *'not respected at all'*.

Table A4: Perceived Respect for the U-Turn Program by Other Organisations (Survey 1)

Response	% Respondents
Highly respected	38.9
Somewhat respected	33.3
Neutral	16.7
Not very respected	0
Not at all respected	0
Missing	11.1

One respondent commented:

'[the] police have a real ownership of the program. Also it seems to have a fairly high profile amongst other services.'

In what could be perceived as negative, another said:

'I have heard the comment "why do all the bad kids get all the fun stuff to do?"'

Q15. Suggestions for Improvement

Stakeholders were asked if they had any suggestions for improving the program and 55.5% said 'No'. However there were a range of suggestions for improvement such as offering the program in the north of the state, making it more open to girls and creating a program for young offenders aged 10 to 15 years.

One stakeholder suggested providing *'...opportunities for go carting to 'at risk' high school students as a way of introducing them to the positive culture of U-Turn before [they started] car stealing.'*

Another felt the referral process needed review, suggesting that police were in the best position to *'...identify potential eligible young people from their propensity to get involved in motor vehicle stealing'* and then forward names to *'...a central agency for referral, assessment and eligibility.'*

Making the Mission Australia house available to rural clients was suggested, as these clients were perceived as being *'...hampered because of distance and costs of attending.'*

Follow-up and continuing contact on completion of the program and help in finding jobs was also seen as a need.

Q16. *Other Comments*

One stakeholder made the additional comments:

'...very positive result with my client.'

B The Second Stakeholder Survey

The final U-Turn Stakeholder Survey was conducted in November 2004. Results for the November survey are provided below.

Methods and Response Rate

The 16-item questionnaire utilised for the first survey in January 2004 was mailed to 40 recipients, 4 less than in the original survey as it was not sent to those who had indicated that it was not relevant to their organisation. As per the first survey a postage paid self-addressed envelope was included. A follow-up email and/or telephone reminder call was made a week after the closing date for replies.

Of the final responses one envelope was marked 'return to sender'. One survey was returned but not completed due to lack of knowledge of the program.

Three emailed responses indicated that the recipients had not been involved in the program. One emailed response indicated that the recipient had not had any further clients in the program since the last evaluation.

Seven completed surveys were returned; of these, one respondent had had minimal involvement with the program. Given the low number of respondents, results are reported as frequencies rather than percentages.

Results

Q1. *Position of Person Completing the Survey*

Of the seven respondents, 3 staff members, 3 managers and 1 police officer completed this survey.

Q2. *Consultation with Others*

One respondent out of the seven consulted with others in the completion of the survey.

Q3. *Viability of the U-Turn Model*

The majority of respondents were very supportive of the project; two respondents did not have enough involvement with the program to comment; one felt it was

'reasonably viable' and had seen *'positive results in clients'*. Most mentioned it was a solid model of practice: *'very effective for disadvantaged young people'*.

Q4. Change of views on viability of U-Turn Model

Six of the seven respondents said that they had not changed their views on the viability of the program. One said that they had changed their views in that the program *'had reinforced their support for the model'*.

Q5. Perceived Objectives of U-Turn

Respondents were asked to list up to five objectives of the U-Turn program and rank them in order of importance.

The responses to this second survey closely matched those from the initial survey in January. A similar table of responses (B1) reflects the views of the respondents in this second survey.

Respondents in this survey chose *'personal growth and engagement'* as the most commonly perceived objective. *'Practical skills'* and *'reduction in crime and recidivism'* were equally chosen as the second most common objectives.

Table B1: Incidence of Perceived Objectives of U-Turn (Survey 2)

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5	Totals
Practical skills	1	1	2	3		7
Personal growth and engagement	4	2		2	4	12
Reduce crime and Recidivism	3	2	1		1	7
Other		1	1			2

Q6. Meeting Perceived Objectives

Two of the seven respondents felt that the program met the identified objectives of the U-Turn program *'very well'*; two felt it did so *'quite well'* and three were *'neutral'*. The two respondents providing a *'neutral'* response were from the north of the state with very few clients and the third respondent did not know about the program.

Those responding positively felt *that 'there will simply always be that small % of young people who don't fit, refuse to engage or who are completely disillusioned'*

with life'. However, they noted that the program met its objectives for a *'majority of participants'*.

Q7. Referrals FROM U-Turn to Other Services

Six respondents said that did not have referrals from U-Turn to their service. One stated that it was not applicable to their service.

Q8. Referrals TO U-Turn from Other Services

Six of the seven respondents said they had referred clients to the U-Turn Program. In total 57+ clients were referred to this program by the seven respondents. Notably one respondent had referred 23 clients. One respondent had referred 15+ clients.

Clients referred were those who 'had committed motor vehicle theft' and 'those at risk of offending in this area'. One respondent noted that the *'program has been running for a while and some clients are asking to be referred having heard about the program from friends'*.

Q9. Impact of U-Turn on Organisations

Stakeholders were asked what impact U-turn had on their organisation in terms of referrals, workload, resources and training /training needs. The results are depicted in Table B2 (below).

Table B2 Impact of U-Turn on Organisations' Practices and Resources (Survey 2)

	Referrals	Workload	Resources	Training/needs
Significant impact		1		
Some impact	1	2	1	
Little impact	2		1	1
No impact	2	1	2	3
Missing	1	2	2	2

One respondent commented that the impact of the program had *'taken the police closer to the kids and brought the kids to the point where they treat the police as not only booking them but helping as well'*. Another respondent commented that *'the program assisted in our workload'* as the program had addressed a need that otherwise they would not have been able to address: *'that is education training and providing opportunities'*.

Q10. Implementation and Development of U-Turn

Stakeholders were asked how their organisation had contributed to the implementation and development of the U-Turn program. One had been a

'partner' in the establishment of the program, two identified their contribution as 'referrals' and one had assisted in the evaluation. One stated that the police had significant involvement.

Q11. Working Relationships with Other Organisations

Two respondents said that U-Turn had led them to work more closely with other organisations, nominating Youth Justice and Whitelion Tasmania as two of those organisations. One respondent said 'yes and no' and commented '*because of a new direction in policing we have close ties and working relationships with many organisations especially through our Youth Justice work*'.

Q12. Implementation, Management and Service Delivery Problems

Two respondents stated that they had had problems related to the program's management, implementation or service delivery. One stated that there was a '*need for the program to be available in the north of the State*'. They saw it as '*too problematic to send young people to the south for such a long period: it was disruptive of family connections and there were transport issues also*'. The other felt that there had been '*feedback issues*' in the past; however they felt that these '*seemed to be being addressed now*'.

Q13. Significant Achievements

Stakeholders were asked what they thought the most significant achievements of U-Turn were. Five of the seven respondents were very positive about the achievements of the program. Comments such as '*to see individually the increased enthusiasm, self-esteem and achievements of young people, who have largely until now had very little to be proud of*'. Another cited '*reduction of criminal activity in many young people*'. And another cited some boys gaining employment (although only a handful). One respondent of the seven 'did not know' and the other had 'little involvement' in the program.

Q14. Perceptions of U-Turn Program

Stakeholders were asked how they thought the program was viewed by other organisations. The majority of the respondents thought that the program was 'highly respected'. One commented that while there had been no negative comments, in the past there had been '*frustrations with Youth Justice over feedback issues*'. The neutral assessment came from the respondent who had no direct involvement with the program.

Table B3: Perceived Respect for the U-Turn Program by Other Organisations (Survey 2)

Response	No of respondents
Highly respected	5
Somewhat respected	1
Neutral	1
Not very respected	
Not at all respected	
Missing	

Q15. Suggestions for Improvement

Stakeholders were asked if they had any suggestions for improving the program. Of the seven respondents three made the following comments:

... 'make the program available in the north of the State'

... 'Youth Justice needs to have very regular feedback on our clients, especially those on court orders. We are mandated to feedback to the court etc. on their progress when asked, and need to supervise their progress under the Youth Justice Act'

'... Consideration to be given to the implementation of the program in Launceston. Young people are put off by the location in Hobart. This stops us from referring many, many more'

Q16. Other Comments

One respondent made the comment that they *'would like to see a more proactive approach to possible job opportunities for the boys. Often they are built up to only be let down in this area'*.

C Magistrate's views

While magistrate's views on the U-Turn program were not canvassed systematically, the views expressed by one magistrate are worth noting as they demonstrate the potential impact of the program in the criminal justice system.

When asked to identify the most significant achievements of the program, one magistrate stated:

'...at the Youth Justice presentation ... I was most impressed with the program participant who spoke. I think the progress he seems to have made was significant. In court situations we rarely get feedback on how a young person goes on the course; merely that he is either considering it or participating in it'

This magistrate also viewed positively the fact that participants present restored cars to victims of crime:

'I think this would be most positive not just from a restorative justice point of view but also from the offender's view. It gives insights into just how owners feel when their vehicles are stolen. This act should provide positives also from the community point of view in that real compensation is being effected. The flow-ons I feel are all positive...'

The magistrate was asked if involvement on the program is something that is taken into consideration in sentencing and/or recommended by the court. The response was:

'...Both, I think, depending on the circumstances. Involvement shows the offender is prepared to attempt to address some problems in his/her life and if they are already in it by the time of sentencing it adds strength to the proposition they are prepared to change their attitude. Sometimes promises to be involved are just that and don't develop any further. The court would I think in most cases direct participation if the offender is assessed as being someone who would benefit from the program.'

This magistrate recommended that participation in the program should be voluntary as *'from experience unwilling participation is not always positive'*. The final comment: *'it ought expand to take more participants!'*

D Comparison between Stakeholder Surveys

In the 10 months between the administration of the first and second stakeholder surveys, a general trend towards a more positive view of the U-Turn program is apparent. In particular, this is reflected in the following results:

- identification of better relations developing between police and the young people in the program;
- closer working relationships developing between U-Turn and other organisations (in the context of closer ties being developed between police and other agencies in Tasmania);
- acknowledgement that earlier problems with feedback issues were being resolved;
- identification of more concrete outcomes of the program e.g. increased enthusiasm and self-esteem among participants, gaining employment, and reduction of criminal activity; and
- a shift towards the majority of respondents stating that the program was 'highly respected' by other organisations.

At the same time, however, it is apparent that referrals to U-Turn continue to be from a relatively small number of sources (i.e. two) and that these are located in the South of the state. Concerns continue to be expressed over the location of the program in Hobart and the additional problems this poses for potential clients from the North and North-West of the state.

ATTACHMENT 4 – U-TURN PARTICIPANTS

A Profile of Participants

There were 83 participants in the U-Turn Program in Tasmania covering 8 courses. The U-Turn service database records details of each participant. Only one participant was female; she attended the course for one day and then dropped out for personal reasons.

The data presented below is taken from the U-Turn database and supplements the information provided in the mid-point data collection results for Tasmania undertaken by Urbis Keys Young (Fourth Progress Report). TILES has requested and been granted permission to include some of the Tasmanian data in this final report for the local evaluation.

Table A1: Profile of Participants – Tasmania

Characteristics prior to U-Turn commencement	Tasmania 2003-2004	Total n=83	Participants living in the House =13
Age of participants			
14 –15 years	23	28%	1
16-17 years	29	35%	6
18-20 years	27	32%	5
21 years plus	4	5%	1
Total	83	100%	13
Educational attainment			
Year 7-8	22	27%	1
Year 9	22	27%	2
Year 10	26	31%	6
Year 11	5	6%	1
No data	8	9%	3
Total	83	100%	13
Living arrangements			
Live with both parents	16	19%	5
Live with one parent	26	31%	1
Live blended family	10	12%	1
Live with extended family	14	17%	0
Live with foster parents	1	1%	0
Live with friends	9	11%	2
Live with partner	6	7%	2
No fixed address	1	1%	2
Total	83	100%	13
Stability of living arrangements			
Very stable	46	55%	7
Fairly stable	19	23%	3
Not very stable	7	8%	0
Very unstable	4	5%	1
Unknown	7	8%	2
Total	83	100%	13

Characteristics prior to U-Turn	Tasmania 2003-2004	Total n=83	Participants living in the house =13
Literacy as a problem			
A big problem	19	23%	4
A small problem	27	32%	3
Not a problem	32	39%	5
Unknown	5	6%	1
Total	83	100%	13
Family history of offending			
A big problem	17	21%	4
A small problem	17	21%	3
Not a problem	36	43%	4
Unknown	13	15%	2
Total	83	100%	13
Use of illicit drugs			
A big problem	11	13%	2
A small problem	19	23%	4
Not a problem	44	53%	5
Unknown	9	11%	2
Total	83	100%	13
Alcohol consumption			
A big problem	10	12%	2
A small problem	21	25%	3
Not a problem	43	52%	6
Unknown	10	12%	2
Total	83	100%	13
Household income			
A big problem	46	55%	7
A small problem	11	13%	2
Not a problem	20	24%	2
Unknown	6	7%	2
Total	83	100%	13
Anger management			
A big problem	13	16%	3
A small problem	36	43%	4
Not a problem	26	31%	4
Unknown	8	10%	2
Total	83	100%	13
Social Skills			
A big problem	6	7%	2
A small problem	18	22%	6
Not a problem	51	61%	3
Unknown	8	10%	2
Total	83	100%	13
Low self-esteem			
A big problem	6	7%	1
A small problem	33	40%	6
Not a problem	35	42%	4
Unknown	9	11%	2
Total	83	100%	13

Characteristics prior to U-Turn	Tasmania 2003-2004	Total n=83	Participants living in the house =13
Source of referral			
Tasmania Police	18	21%	6
Community	35	42%	1
Corrections/Youth Justice			
Community Organisations	20	24%	2
Government Departments	6	7%	1
Self referrals	4	5%	3
Total	83	100%	13

B U-Turn courses evaluated

The evaluation encompassed each of the U-Turn courses that were delivered in 2003 and 2004. Table B1 (below) lists the number and type of interviews that have been conducted for each U-Turn course.

Table B1: Number and type of interview conducted for each U-Turn Course

<i>COURSE</i>	Interview A (Initial)	Interview B (Program Completion)	Interview C (Post-Program)	Interview E* (Significant Others)
First (Pilot)		3		
Second	7	3		0
Third	7	5		3
Fourth	7	5		1
Fifth	7	3		1
Sixth	6	4		2
Seventh	8	3		
Eighth	7	4		
TOTAL	49	30	10	7

***Interview D = Key Informant Interviews with Program Staff (see Section 4)**

The qualitative analysis presented in this attachment is based on data collected via interviews with participants and their 'significant others' as well as via observations recorded by the researchers. It has involved deductive and inductive processes: it has been informed by themes identified in the literature review of youth diversionary programs as well as involving the identification and coding of themes that have emerged from the data itself.

As well as addressing the main aims of the U-Turn program, this attachment also aims to address the 'Additional Information Required' as specified in the contract for the local evaluation. This additional information includes:

- participants' family, educational and employment history;
- participants' offending history, including how they came to be involved in crime and their motivation for offending;
- participants' drug and alcohol usage and the extent to which this is related to their involvement in crime;
- participants' views on the effectiveness of motor vehicle security measures; and
- the precautions taken by participants to avoid detection.

C Participant Interviews – Courses 1 - 5

The following discussion is based on the analysis of the interviews with participants which were held at the beginning and the end of each course. It should be noted here that no interviews have been conducted with participants who dropped out of the program because they have been difficult to contact and/or unwilling to participate in the interviews.

Characteristics of the participants

The participants that have been interviewed have all been male and were aged between 14 and 21 with the average age being 17.

The average age of the participants in Course 5 was younger and this proved problematic. It contributed to high rates of vandalism at the U-Turn site, negative attitudes on the part of participants, and difficulties in developing relationships of respect between participants and program staff. It was noted by one of the program staff, that the strategy of 'pairing' younger participants with older participants (that had worked well in previous courses) could not be adopted in this course due to the younger ages of the majority of participants.

Interviews with program staff revealed that common problems among participants include anti-social and offending behaviour, poor educational attainment, truancy and school exclusion, as well as issues surrounding anger management and drug and alcohol use. A significant proportion were victims of sexual abuse.

Participants' offending history

Two-thirds of the participants interviewed identified themselves as car thieves. One-third of the participants interviewed said that they had never been involved in car theft. (See Section 5 of the Final report for an examination of the

correlation between these self-reported rates of car theft and the official police data).

A significant number indicated that they had been caught in a car that was stolen but stated that they had not actually stolen the car.

For example, one client said:

'No haven't stolen a car. I've only just got into 'em... just like got in to have a look around.'

And another:

'I've not [stolen a car] -- I never actually stole it. I was just in it'.

And again:

'I was walking to school once ...and there was two cars down near the oval, so we got into one each and we was thrashing around down near the school oval and got caught for that.'

In this case the cars were already stolen and dumped by someone else therefore apparently considered 'fair game'.

The fact that participants *perceive* and *label* their behaviour differently to the way it is perceived and labelled by law enforcers is significant. The identification of these differences opens up an opportunity for further phenomenological analysis of the meaning systems and worldviews of young recidivist car theft offenders. An understanding of the participants' meaning systems can enhance our understanding of the *motivations* for car theft.

Participants gave a variety of reasons (and often more than one) for why they were involved in car theft. Common reasons were:

- Boredom
- I like driving
- For money (to buy drugs, cigarettes, alcohol)
- For the thrill
- To support a drug habit
- To get places
- As payback.

The following quotations illustrate these various motivations:

“I wasn’t really into stealing cars I was just me own person really. I just, yeah I stole a couple of cars every now and than. I didn’t do it every day. So it is really adrenaline that’s all it is. It’s just like getting in one of them go karts and driving it around and after you get off that you still feel the same.”

“Yeah I, I never liked it anyway. I never liked it. It was only to get places, you know what I mean, it wasn’t ever nothing, we weren’t doing it for fun if you know what I mean.”

‘Just boredom and I needed the money, like for the parts, what I was doing was going out getting a car and whatever was good in it ...’

‘I just like driving ‘em, ... [fast] if I get silly enough’

‘Just to say, “I can drive cars” I guess. I’ve always had a thing for cars.’

‘I just got in a bad temper. Just got shitty with him for some reason and decided to take his car.’

Participants’ drug and alcohol usage

A third of the participants interviewed stated that they were currently on medication for mental health problems. Some of these participants stated that they had been diagnosed with ADD and/or another mental illness.

The majority of participants stated that they drank alcohol. This ranged from high levels of binge drinking, especially at the weekends, to the occasional drink for special occasions. One third of the participants said they did not touch any other drugs. In terms of drug use, the majority of participants used cannabis exclusively. This ranged from the occasional smoke to participants who reported very high rates of smoking. There was little use of harder drugs; in most instances this had been experimental and there only a small number of participants who discussed long-term use of harder drugs. The latter included amphetamines, morphine and heroin.

For some participants, there appeared to be a link between drug use and mental health, as illustrated in the followed quotations:

“I’ve gotta give up me drug habit first. That’s what I’m going to try and do because I’ve been smoking probably, I don’t know, probably 6 grams everyday of dope. I just can’t help it like. That just makes me normal now. When I’m not on it I feel like I’m going off me head.”

“It’s very hard to get me on the piss ‘cause I fucking get too grumpy. I just don’t do it any more. I’m on fucking medication to stop it, but fucking I still get, when I get pissed I’m still fucking grumpy. I don’t like being told no.”

When asked if the use of alcohol and drugs was related to car theft, half of the participants who had been involved in this activity said it was, a further quarter said it sometimes contributed and the other quarter never used drugs or alcohol when stealing cars.

Recidivism and anti-social behaviour

There were many reported incidences of car theft where participants had not been caught. These self-reported incidents ranged from one to one hundred cars. One client claimed to have ‘taken a look’ at around ten cars while others admitted to previous multiple offences but did not specify how many. Almost all of the clients admitted to other crimes and anti-social behaviour at the beginning of the course. These included theft, burglary and stealing, assault and wounding, break and enter, shop lifting, vandalism, illicit drug use, harassment and aggressive behaviour, driving without a licence and drink driving.

Of those participants who said that they had been involved in car theft, two thirds stated that they had not stolen a car during the course, while the other third stated that they had done so.

Over a third reported that they had not been involved in any anti-social behaviour during the course. However the majority stated that they had maintained these types of behaviours although at lower rates of frequency and severity.

Problem solving and responsibility

Participants appear to be developing problem-solving skills and taking more responsibility for their behaviour. When asked about changes that had occurred by the end of the course, the following themes emerged as common:

- Reduced drug and alcohol use;
- Increased motivation and better attitudes toward life;
- Getting their life back on track;
- Driving safely;
- Better relationships with family and friends;
- Not hanging around the streets as much; and
- Not wanting to steal cars and commit other types of anti-social behaviour.

The following quotations illustrate these changes:

"I definitely want a job now. Like before I didn't feel like getting up every morning, couldn't, Couldn't see myself going to work, but now, now doing this course I can see myself doing that."

"Yeah well anger management was another goal. Phil's helped me out with that and given me a few things to remedy it and ah, things to keep me out, so I don't get bored. Things I can do so I don't get bored 'cause a lot of, a lot of times when I get in trouble I'm bored and I don't have anything to do ..."

"I wanna try and make 'em proud and I haven't even caught myself speeding yet. I'm driving pretty, pretty safe."

"I haven't been doing any stealing or anything since, um, that other car I stole from ... It's kept me out of trouble being here."

"Yeah well I don't really drink in town anymore 'cause that's where most of the problems happen. So we've been going, me and me mate have been going down to my shack at ... and having a party down there and if you want to smash something I go out into the bush and break stuff because there's nothing much to break. Go cutting down wood or something."

'Yeah, I feel like I actually want to go out and do it now [work]. Before I just couldn't be bothered. Like I just wanted to go out to town and smoke bongos and sit in town with me mates and that. Now I actually want to go out and get a job....I might as well go out and get a job and do everything and then by the time I'm eighteen I'll have a nice car and I'll be able to have enough money to go out and that.'

'I don't want to rob houses, you know, it's just stupid. I know how I'd feel if someone did it to me. I just want to stop it. I want to go out and get a job and that and make me own way and do things for myself. 'Cause I know I'd be pretty fucked -- I'd be pretty upset and pretty angry if someone robbed my home'

'Yeah like I don't reckon I'd like it too much if someone came and jumped in my car and nicked it.'

Education and employment

Only one of the participants stated that they had had a good experience in the educational system and all but one had been suspended from school, usually on multiple occasions. Nearly half of the participants stated that they had been excluded from the traditional educational system. Some participants reported that

they had left school early because they found it intolerable. A quarter of the participants reported having difficulties with other students and a third with the teachers. Questions about participants' education elicited statements indicating that at least half of the participants have difficulty dealing with authority. This is evident in the following quotation:

"... it's hard to explain. Like it sounds funny when you say I can't handle people telling me what to do, it's just I can't. You know just teachers, you know like they're doing their job, but I can't handle it. You know I can't handle 'em, like I don't, like can't handle me mum telling me what to do, but I put up with it 'cause I have to live with her."

Only three of the participants stated that they had no long-term life plans. All the other participants stated that they could see themselves employed in the future, the majority working with cars in some form. A significant number of the participants also saw themselves as owning their own house.

Tasmania is a state with a high unemployment rate and a small automotive industry. This makes work placements a significant challenge for the program.

Families

When asked about their current living arrangements, the majority were in a family-based situation while a small number were living 'on their own' or 'with friends'. The majority were in single parent families although a few were living in a nuclear family or a blended family. The overwhelming majority of single-parent families included the participant's mother. It was also significant to note that nearly a third of the participants had had no relationship with their fathers for over 10 years.

Significantly, the majority of participants had had a long-term interest in cars, since early childhood. The family culture seems to have contributed to this, where an 'obsession' with cars can be described as a way of life. Importantly, many stated that their first driving experience, and working on cars, occurred with their father or another significant male in their family circle at an early age:

"Yeah always in my life. I started working on 'em when I was young with me Dad when I was living at ... and haven't stopped since."

"I don't know I've just got a thing with cars and driving. I like it, which is good. Dad got me into it when I was real young, bikes and cars and that, yeah."

This is an area in which the program has had a significant influence. Interviews with participants demonstrate that the program staff provide them with important positive male role models. Most participants report having had few (if any)

positive relationships with men. They respond extremely well to the relationships developed between staff and the participants at U-Turn.

It is interesting to note here that the literature review revealed that one of the reasons often given for the fact that motor programs typically have little effect on reconviction rates is that they tend to reinforce traditional ideals of masculinity especially in relation to motor vehicles. The results of the U-Turn evaluation, however, suggest that such conclusions are overly simplistic. Homogenous notions of 'traditional masculinity' need to be unpacked and examined in local contexts if understandings of how masculinity is reproduced and changed over time are to be developed.

Views on the program and staff

Participants' views on the program were extremely positive and they found it difficult to suggest aspects that could be improved. Some of the general positive features identified by participants were:

- The staff and their manner in dealing with participants;
- It gave them something to look forward to every day;
- Go-karting;
- Learning about mechanics and body work;
- Working on the motors;
- Passing exams; and
- Working on their own cars.

The following sentiment was not uncommon:

"I wanna come back to the course I liked it so much."

When probed for any problems with the program the most common themes were:

- It would be better if it was 5 days a week;
- Split the group who go go-karting, with half one week and half the following week;
- Want to continue coming when they have completed their course; and
- They had hoped to end up with a job.

The following quotation is illustrative of participants' views:

"Just the people like. They're not your teachers, they're me mates type. You think you'd come out here and them trying to tell you what to do, but you're all mates. That's what I liked best about it I reckon."

D Participant interviews – Courses 6 – 8

All participants interviewed were male and aged between 13 and 22 with the average age being 17. The majority reported ownership of cars, even those too young to possess drivers' licences. The majority of these vehicles were unregistered and in many cases unroadworthy.

Many of the participants reported having learned to drive a car at an early age; one claimed to have learned to drive at the age of four. Most, however, claimed to have learned to drive between the ages of 10 and 16. Almost without exception the participants claimed to have been taught by their fathers or another significant male, such as their stepfather or uncle.

Hobbies and Interests

When asked whether they had any hobbies or interests, most participants responded that their prime interest was car-related. The responses offered varied from 'working on cars' to 'driving cars' or a combination of both. The variety of responses given can be seen in the following quotes:

'Working on cars.'

'Bush bashing cars on my uncles property.'

'Oh just cars mainly. I just like working around cars.'

'Spare time just hanging round with me mates or muck around with cars.'

'Oh I've got a Sony II and I play that when I'm bored, go and hang round with me mates and that, stuff about with cars – that's about it.'

While one reported:

Spotlighting, running over animals- 'Just up the bush like. When we're bush bashing and nighttime comes we get all the spotlights on it and we'd hunt rabbits and kangaroos. Like just knock 'em so they're, you know, just shaken a bit and jump out the car and grab 'em and yeah.'

Many reported past participation in sports such as football and cricket when at school. None were still involved in sporting activities. Reasons given for no longer participating generally related to a 'loss of interest'. Some examples of responses are:

'Couldn't be bothered. It took too much energy out of me.'

'Can't be stuffed anymore.'

'Too unfit now.'

'I used to play football, but I grew out of it.'

Some participants claimed that they could not afford hobbies or interests. This view is typified in the following response:

'Nothing nice unless you've got a bit of money.'

Many participants reported boredom as being a motivational influence on their choice of activities: Examples are:

'Nothing to do in X- hang out with mates, play computer games.'

Picking fights *'within own group'* to alleviate boredom.

Families and Living Arrangements

The vast majority of participants were from blended families. The majority of these were living with their biological mothers and either stepfathers or their mother's boyfriends. There were some, however, who had little or no contact with either their biological mother or father. Other participants (five) were living with their grandparents while others (four) were living with girlfriends. Two participants had children to a girlfriend: one had one child, the other had one child with another 'on the way'. Approximately half of the participants reported leaving their parents' homes due to poor relationships with their mother, father or stepfather.

Education and Employment

With the exception of two participants, all participants expressed negative attitudes to their experiences at school and teachers. Almost all participants, except three, were expelled from school, and many of these after multiple suspensions from multiple schools.

When asked to nominate areas of their schooling experiences they found positive, those who could nominate positive experiences generally nominated subjects such as 'metalwork', 'woodwork', 'sports' or other manual skill-based subject areas. In addition, these same participants claimed positive interactions with the teachers of those same subject areas.

When asked to give reasons for why they believed that they were expelled many stated difficulties dealing with authority. Most were able to nominate specific behaviours and actions that resulted in their expulsion. The following quotations

are examples:

'I told the Vice-Principal to go fuck himself to his face.'

'Running amuck – being stupid.'

'Smashing lights out and breaking into classrooms and stuff.'

'Fighting, hit teacher over girlfriend.'

'Oh I got in a fight with some kid up there and just didn't bother going back.'

'I was a bully.'

'I just couldn't hack it.'

'Fighting and abusive language towards teachers and that.'

'Yeah I got expelled for chasing a kid into the principal's office and I was going to stab him with a pen.'

Approximately half of the participants claimed that their poor schooling record had not left them with any difficulties in the areas of literacy or numeracy. The other half admitted to varying degrees of difficulty.

None of the participants reported ever having had any fulltime employment. Only a few reported having had any employment at all. Those who had worked did so usually for 'cash in hand' for a relative. This work usually entailed assisting in a workshop environment. Almost all participants expressed an interest in working with, or on, cars as their preferred field of employment. A minority said that they would consider further education if it would increase the likelihood of them obtaining mechanical apprenticeships.

Offending History

Most participants reported having been involved in either car theft or stealing from cars. Some, however, claimed to have never stolen a car, or from a car. Many claimed to have been involved in criminal activity at a far greater level than their police records would indicate. Several reported that they had been involved in the theft of over 100 cars.

The motives proffered by participants as an explanation of their activities varied from boredom, transport and 'joy riding' to the dealing and selling of parts for money. Some of these participants claimed to have spent the proceeds on drugs. One participant claimed that he would steal cars to acquire specific car parts

requested by acquaintances for their own vehicles. The following responses demonstrate the range and variety of answers to the question of motivation:

'I used to knock off cars a bit. I never used to burn them out or anything like that. I just used to do it to get a lift home and stuff. But, yeah, I never burnt 'em out or anything.'

'I got too lazy (laughs). Couldn't be bothered walking anywhere knowing me and usually I used to do it like just to get a lift home. I'd go to a party and get pissed off me head and drive home.'

'Yeah we'd smash windows in the school and smash car windows out and stuff like that, burn shit down. Yeah I was a bastard of a kid.'

'Yeah pretty much a drug issue and – I don't know – the rush and the fact that it was pretty much illegal.'

'Yeah my idea. Just 'cause I loved doing it.'

'I used to have a lot of people come to me and ask to steal particular cars so they get parts for 'em – to a 'stolen car dealer'

'No one gives a shit.'

'Because I could.'

'Umm, I haven't been caught for anything really, but I'm more of a chop shop sort of thing – I take the motors out and sell them.'

Some car theft to support habit on 'speed, morphine, Rohypnol, Valium and dexamphetamines.'

'People steal cars for the fun of it 'cause they're not their cars and they can thrash 'em and do wheelies and whatnot. They don't own 'em and they don't have to pay for the damages.'

'It's a bit of fun.'

'Cause there's nothing in Tasmanian life that's fun unless you've got money. For everything in life these days you need money – everything.'

'Sometimes to pay for pot.'

'... the adrenaline rush when you get chased by the cops and stuff like that is hard to beat and the adrenaline starts pumping through your body'

and you think, "I'm getting away from here. No way am I getting caught". Yeah the blood rush – the adrenaline rush.'

' . . it's like – it's sorta like if someone says to me "Oh I wouldn't mind that. The parts off that or I'll buy the motor off you." Say "Oh yeah." Just go get it – take it out the bush and take it out and bulldoze.'

'Well if they had something worth getting we'd get it. Otherwise we'd just go for a drive in 'em and just dump 'em and go.'

'Yeah well a lot of the theft is because they want drugs or alcohol or something.'

'Yeah just the rush. Just so you can do it and get away with it and have the adrenaline rush.'

A couple of the participants claimed that they burned the cars as a way of eliminating fingerprints and DNA traces.

Drug and Alcohol Use

The vast majority of participants reported the regular use of marijuana and/or alcohol. Some reported experimentation with other drugs such as speed and various prescription drugs such as Valium, Rohypnol and dexamphetamine. The majority reported the regular use and consumption of alcohol. Responses given concerning the use of illicit drugs and alcohol included:

'Yeah I need my beer. It's a necessity.'

'Yeah I do them. I'm allowed to.' (His parents don't stop him)

'Well I started pot way before I ever got paid so – just growing it and everything. I know too much about it, which makes it the hardest thing to get away from sort of thing.'

'Yeah probably a bit of alcohol was one of the main causes. The chuff usually slows me down. I'm real hyperactive without it you know what I mean. I just run around and do heaps of shit.'

'When I get drunk I get completely fucked.'

'Yeah every day (smokes marijuana) – flat out – addictive shit.'

Started smoking marijuana at 13 – 'I could get it all the time 'cause there was a person dealing it where I was living'

'I used to be very hard into drugs'

'I tried to keep out of the whites as much as possible. I've done a bit of whiz and that . . . mushies and opium'

'I don't drink very often at all. I just smoke me bongos and it keeps me quiet and calm.'

'Sometimes I just sit on my arse and smoke drugs all day and watch TV.'

'Every time I got on the piss I was in trouble.'

Some participants reported a decrease in their involvement with, and use of, drugs for the duration of the course; for example:

'I've cut back a shit like. Yeah I cut back in the first place before I came here, so I sort of wanted to.'

'I think it's decreased a bit lately. I don't see me mates as much so yeah.'

'Everyone I know smokes pot. And the pot, you know, just calms me down – just keeps me occupied and whatnot. I can do things better. I wouldn't come here stoned just in case I drop a tool or burn something then, you know, it's not fair on all the others.'

'Well it slowed me chuffing down 'cause I haven't been at home just sitting there all day.'

One participant claimed that smoking pot 'slowed him down' which resulted in a decrease in the likelihood that he would steal cars whereas the consumption of alcohol was likely to increase his tendency to steal cars.

Five participants stated that they had previously been diagnosed with ADHD and had been prescribed either Ritalin or dexamphetamine. Four participants claimed to be no longer taking medication while one was still taking Ritalin.

Recidivism and Anti-Social Behaviour

The vast majority of participants reported having committed multiple offences prior to the commencement of the course. Most participants reported that they had not been detected for much of their illegal or 'anti-social' activities. These activities ranged from:

- Multiple car theft;
- Stealing;
- Burglary;

- Shoplifting;
- Assault/Assault police;
- Speeding;
- Drink driving;
- Drug use and selling; and
- Drunk and disorderly.

Many claimed to have not re-offended while participating in the course while a few claimed to have been charged with relatively minor driving offences; such as driving unregistered and unroadworthy vehicles. Those who admitted to drug use generally reported an ongoing and continued involvement in the consumption of drugs; the illicit drug most often used was marijuana. Some participants, however, reported a reduced level of both involvement and use of marijuana for the duration of, and as a consequence of, participating in the course. One participant who does not have a drivers licence claimed to have driven to the course itself.

Another participant, who had previously been to Ashley Detention Centre, when asked whether that experience had deterred him from future car theft replied:

'No. The night I got out I done it again and again and again and they caught up with me this year.'

In the Future

When asked what they see themselves doing in the future, most participants saw themselves working with cars in either apprenticeships or as mechanics. Some of the participants expressed the belief that the course would assist them in achieving their preferred career choice. This belief is evident in the following statements:

'Oh if I get my certificate maybe I can get a job or an apprenticeship – an apprenticeship job in mechanics.'

'I want to get a job and that'

'Yeah I think about that a lot lately. Yeah that's why I'm here. I want to start something that I'm proud of.'

'I'd like to get an automotive trade when I leave.'

'I'll hopefully get a job at the end of this.'

'I'll get a job out of it. After ten weeks I'll have a job straight up.'

However, many participants were uncertain of what their futures might be and were vague and noncommittal in responding to the question both at the beginning of the course and upon its completion. Many participants did not describe a job as such, most described an activity which was usually – ‘something to do with cars’. Others nominated an occupation such as ‘designing cars’ or ‘building boats’ without appearing to have a clear idea about how they would achieve their objective.

In addition, many participants seemed unaware of how their behaviour to date may adversely effect their potential to achieve their goals. Those participants who were asked whether they felt that their criminal behaviour might inhibit their opportunities almost all answered ‘No’.

Problem Solving and Responsibility

Many participants expressed the view that they had developed skills during the course which assisted them in problem solving and enabled them to take greater responsibility for their own circumstances. The following quotations are indicators of this change:

‘I don’t do it no more.’

‘I kept getting away with it, so I kept doing it – I’m starting to grow up, so I’ll start needing something in life.’

‘ They (parents) tried to teach me right from wrong, I just didn’t listen.’

‘ . . . because I’ve got kids and that I’ve gotta get out of that area and into a bit more legal I guess you could say.’

‘ . . . I ignored my pars (parents) most of the time. Didn’t see the point in what they were saying. Yeah I just didn’t see the point in what they were saying until I was a bit older and thought about it. Had my own kids basically.’

‘I at least have respect for police and what they’re doing sort of thing rather than just telling ‘em to get stuffed and to fuck off and whatever.’

‘Oh well I was growing up with me mother – like she was a drug addict and like all her friends were – and I was growing up around people that hated police and I was told that they were nothing and they were dumb and no good. It doesn’t really matter to me, they’re just people doing their job.’

'Yeah well you've gotta feel sorry for the poor buggers (victims), but, yeah I suppose – well I sort of had a respect for 'em in the first place. I felt sorry for 'em when they lost out anyway.'

'Yeah well I've been here for a while and it sort of changed the idea of it, but I just don't wanna get locked up.'

'... yeah, it doesn't worry me now when people laugh at me.'

'... attitude change, picking up a lot of skills and, easier to get a job now.'

'I don't want to do it (steal cars) again – a waste of fucking time.'

'I still hang out with the same people, I just don't do as much as what I used to. I don't do anything like I used to now.'

However, the attitudes of some participants to the police did not change during, or as a consequence of the course. The following statements illustrate this point:

'I think now they're dogs. I hate their guts.'

'Oh 'cause they're scums. That's my opinion. They just don't like it – they just don't like to see us having a bit of fun. That's all there is to it – yeah.'

'They're scumbags to us. They don't even want us – none of them.'

A few of the participants stated that doing the course had assisted them in making life changes by keeping them occupied and away from their peers. For example:

'Ah probably only just when I see my mates and that 'cause I'm down here most of the time and that and by the time I go home I just feel stuffed, so I just go home.'

'Oh yeah it has changed me mind a bit, but it's mostly 'cause I'm here and not up there mucking 'round with mates and getting into trouble.'

'It's (the program) kept me out of heaps of trouble 'cause I have to come here every day. It's given me something to do 'cause before I come here I wasn't doing nothing 'cause I don't go to school now.'

'It gives me something to do with me spare time, 'cause usually I'm just sitting at home, but now I've got something to do.'

Views on the Program and Staff

The participants' impressions of the program and staff were unanimously positive. Some comments exemplifying this are included below:

The Staff

'They're all pretty good people – yeah they're like trying to help you and stuff.'

'Pretty good.'

'They're all pretty laid back. It's not like school.'

'Oh good. Yeah they're nice and friendly. Yeah, pretty much – yeah really straight forward people.'

'When we're up there and if I get stuck with something I just put up me hand and they come over and help me. No they're really good.'

'I get along well with staff members.'

'Good people, easy to get along with, have a good joke around with them.'

The Program

'Well I know for sure now, before it was just guessing sort of thing. Now I definitely know certain things, but yeah there's other stuff I've learnt definitely.'

'... it's come together pretty bloody well – yeah it's done everyone that's been on this course well.'

'If anything this course will stop 'em knocking cars off 'cause they know how the people are feeling, because there's a car out there that's gotta be given to a lady or man whose had their car knocked off before – to give to 'em – they can't afford another one.'

'Yeah I met one (past participant) that's got a certificate in panel beating, automotive – in the whole lot we do here – and he's got a job'

'Yeah well now I've got that doctor's certificate thing, for doing that, I might be able to get a job easier – yeah – and then when I get me certificate for doing the mechanics and the panel beating and all that I'll probably get a job easy.'

'Well I know a bit about cars now. I know a lot more than I did.'

'... the course does do people good. I've learnt a fair few things while I've been here – about cars and probably staying over at the house and looking after myself and that – cleaning up after myself.'

'Everything's pretty smooth running. It's good actually.'

'It's great this course.'

'I feel heaps confident at doing everything now.'

'It's helped me pick up a lot more – heaps of skills.'

'... it's just helped me along and just sort of gave me more skills and confidence in getting along with other people and – yeah, having a laugh.'

'I reckon it's good for young people.'

'I've got more manners than what I used to.'

'Very good. It's helping me out heaps. Kept me out of trouble.'

Suggested Improvements

Most participants were unable to recommend improvements to the course. Some of the suggestions made were:

- The opportunity to work on diesel engines;
- More tools;
- Knee pads for kneeling;
- A skateboard ramp for use during breaks; and
- Increase the duration of the course.

E Overview of participant interviews

A strong and consistent theme throughout interviews with participants is the overwhelming obsession with cars and the reliance on cars as an identity marker. Many of the participants learned to drive at a very young age.

Many of the interviews indicate an underlying sadness and hopelessness among participants. Stealing cars was the only thing that made them feel better – similar to a drug 'hit'.

Many of the participants said all the 'right' things about wanting to get a job and to learn; however, they had little idea of the level of activity and commitment required to achieve this.

Common themes are:

- the predominance of early and persistent drug use;
- poor engagement with parents/family and community;
- being overly hopeful about the outcomes that are possible in a ten-week program (there was a lot of pressure on the Youth Worker 'to deliver');
- a feeling that many were using the program as a 'holiday' from reality (which is often very bleak);
- knowing other participants prior to commencing the program (mentioned by quite a few participants);
- experience of family violence and trauma in many cases;
- lack of empathy with the plight of others or the harm their actions may cause;
- real issues with literacy that undermine any progress;
- a lack of willingness to risk moving out of their comfort zone without a great deal of support;
- being afraid of looking or seeming foolish or 'dumb';
- being extremely sensitive to the tone and mood of others in the course (relies a great deal on a very strong leader in the course); and
- residual and remaining antagonism toward authority (including police).

F Post-Program Interviews

A generally positive picture emerged from the 10 post-program interviews conducted. All but one of the participants saw the course as being useful and felt they had gained new skills in a number of areas including mechanics, electrical wiring, panel beating, welding and spray painting. Four said they were more confident as a result of U-Turn and that they had better interpersonal and communication skills largely as a result of the 'customer relations' component of the course.

Drug and alcohol usage

Half of the participants were not using illicit drugs at all however three reported heavy use of cannabis and one client said he still smoked cannabis occasionally.

Likewise half reported only occasional or moderate use of alcohol and one client did not drink at all. The remainder made no reference to alcohol use.

Views on the program and staff

The vast majority of clients said they found the staff at U-Turn supportive both during the course and after the course. The informal ongoing support and freedom to return regularly appears to be an important aspect of the program for the participants.

As one said:

'Yeah like they always -- they told us all to come back in. Like we were all welcome back, you know'

Recidivism and anti-social behaviour

Only two clients had offended since completing the course. One was arrested for disorderly conduct and another for drug related offences.

Education and employment

One client had secured an apprenticeship in the automotive industry, two were still at school and one had returned to school since completing the program. Two clients had completed work experience placements organised by U-Turn and one had a casual job picking fruit. Four clients remained unemployed or had not participated in any further training or education.

G Interviews with Significant Others

The recruitment of significant others has been a very difficult process throughout the evaluation period. In order to adhere to ethical guidelines, it was not possible to contact significant others directly. The method adopted was to ask participants who had agreed to be interviewed to forward information sheets and consent forms to a significant other. The significant other would then contact one of the local evaluators to arrange for the interview to be conducted. This method of recruitment did not prove to be very effective. A very small number of significant others were recruited in this manner.

After consultation with a referral agency, an additional method of recruitment was trialled. This involved asking the referral agency to inform significant others of the evaluation and to provide them with information sheets and consent forms. Unfortunately, this method of recruitment proved to be even less successful than the original.

Consequently, it is important to acknowledge that the data collected from significant others is drawn from a very small sample (n=7) and that these respondents are likely to be those who have positive views of the program rather than those who have negative views of the program. The following analysis of the data collected from significant others confirm this view.

Telephone interviews were conducted with seven significant others: five female and two male, during March, April and November 2004. Five were natural parents of U-Turn clients and two were the grandparents of a participant. Each interview lasted between 40 minutes and one hour.

Information

The information received by parents was varied and there appears to be no formal process whereby significant others are informed of the program. Four parents received information from a local council-based youth worker, one from a probation officer, one from the family lawyer and one was referred by a youth justice worker. Five received written information from U-Turn or were given it by the young people after they had been interviewed.

The parents felt information was freely available from U-Turn staff after commencement of the program. As one parent said:

'We spoke to Phil a lot and that gave us all the information we really needed'.

And another:

'I got lots of info from PULSE in Glenorchy and they said it [U-Turn] was really good, so we trusted them'.

However, one did comment:

'I would have liked more information on what would happen after the course and if they had any suggestions what could be done after. Like how we could help more and support them. We felt that he was really flat after the course because we couldn't help him much with where to go. Phil is good because we can always ring him and ask him things'.

Overall the significant others felt the information they received was 'adequate' or 'good'.

Relationship between U-Turn Participants and Significant Others.

The significant others reported varying degrees of strain in their relationships with their sons, at different times, prior to the U-Turn program. Poor communication,

resentment of authority (both parental and police), anger management and unacceptable behaviour were all identified as issues. One set of parents said they were on 'eggshells' all the time with their son because they couldn't get him to get out of bed and when he did he would just 'blow up' often with no provocation. Most report communication with the young people as unstable and often unreliable, of a volatile and difficult nature.

As one family said:

'You never knew what you would get, so we stopped asking questions and he thought everything would just go away then'.

Others said that they had good communication with their sons and U-Turn gave them good things to talk about:

'He was so excited all the time and we talked lots about his day, but we had always talked lots, now we had good stuff to talk about'.

And yet another said:

'I could always talk to him and if he has a problem he always comes to me and talks about it. He's not one of those who clams up. He doesn't dodge issues. If he's done something wrong he'll admit it. Communication was good'.

Significant others were asked to grade their overall relationship before the U-Turn program, on a scale from 'very poor' to 'very good'. As can be seen in Table 11 (below) no parent defined their relationship as 'very poor' and there was one client in each of the other categories.

All significant others reported an improvement in their relationships as a result of U-Turn, particularly in terms of communication, attitude, responsibility and anger management.

As one parent put it:

'He is sleeping properly again, he gets out of bed and he smiles all the time, he has something to look forward to, we are all a lot happier and we get on well'.

Another said:

'I think we talk more about the future now. He turned around before he got in too far and he can see that now. He has respect for people now and he can see that what he does affects other people, he didn't care before'.

And another:

'We can talk to each other better now and when he gets angry he can control it better, we can see him trying really hard to stay calm. He talks better now; before he used to talk rubbish and now he can talk sense. He still has bad days and he can see he has wasted time being stupid with other kids, but we just say to him that's all in the past'.

Table G1: Relationship between Significant Other and Client Before and After U-Turn

Relationship	Before	After
Very good		4
Good	3	3
Neither good nor poor		
Poor	4	
Very poor		

Contact with Participants

Five of the participants were living at home during the program where significant others had daily contact. Two were living away from home in the supported accommodation house and they travelled home every weekend. By the completion of the program six participants were living at home and one had gone to live with his father who had wanted this for some time.

Attitude

All significant others said they had observed a change in attitude due to the U-Turn Program. Parents identified overall improvements in confidence, anger management, willingness to see other points of view, patience and willingness to ask others for help.

As can be seen in G2 below, there were attitude changes in specific areas investigated. Attitudes to driving had improved or remained the same. Attitudes to offending, including motor vehicle theft had improved for all clients. In terms of drug use all participants smoked cigarettes and the parents reported alcohol as the most used substance. Most reported that their sons consumed alcohol at home now where in the past they had gone out drinking (n=5 of 7). Attitudes to authority had improved overall. Self-esteem had improved in all cases. Significant others attributed changes in self-esteem to the skills gained in the program, the sense of achievement in obtaining the certificate, the respect that they had been taught and had modelled by staff and the realisation that there was now the potential to get a job and earn some money.

As one put it:

'He's got more skills now and this is the first time he has felt he could do something. He feels like there is something to look forward to. Fingers crossed he can stay out of trouble and what he has learned turns into something real like a job, that would be the best thing'.

Table G2: Changes in Attitude

	Improved	The Same	Worse	Not applicable
Driving	5	1		1
Offending	5	2		
Drug Use	4	3		
Alcohol Use	2	4	1	
Authority	3	4		
Self-esteem	7			

Values

Similarly all significant others said they had observed a change in participants' values as a result of the program. These changes included taking responsibility for actions and realising the consequences of actions on other people.

As well as change in values, significant others detected a change in general behaviour of participants such as helping around the home and being more willing to listen to reason. Changes were noted in behaviour in specific areas. These are described in Table G3 (below).

Table G3: Changes in Behaviour in Specific Areas

	Improved	The Same	Worse	Not applicable
<i>Driving</i>	4	2		1
Offending	5	2		
Drug Use	4	3		
Alcohol Use	2	4	1*	

* One reported higher use of cannabis and one had started smoking tobacco

Skills

All significant others observed a change in participants' skills as a result of U-Turn. These included both practical and social skills. See Table G4 (below).

Table G4: Changes in Skills in Specific Areas

	Improved	The Same	Worse
<i>Goal setting</i>	7		
Goal achievement	7		
Self awareness	5	2	
Awareness of others	7		
Awareness of broader community	6	1	

Interests and Hobbies

Four significant others said they had observed changes in participants' interests, hobbies and activities. Their interests were still primarily related to cars but because of new skills, they felt able to help and teach others more about cars. Three family members reported an increased level of motivation to do things and this had led the boys to be more interested in what others in the family were doing and to participate generally in the family.

All significant others said they had observed changes in participants' social relationships and peer groups. In some cases this was having a whole new circle of friends and in others it was reconnecting with old friends and family.

All significant others reported an improvement in the participants' anti-social behaviour and particularly in their language and attitudes to others.

Five significant others said there had been changes in the social support networks, two of them citing ongoing support from U-Turn and two from a youth worker and one from his new employer. For all of the families this was important as the young people had had negative contact with authority figures in the past and their involvement in U-Turn has marked a drastic change in the young people's attitudes and interactions with adults in general.

Five out of seven significant others thought their sons had felt isolated or excluded from society before the program. There were concerns that interactions with any social services had previously left participants feeling belittled and marginalised and this had affected them adversely. There were other concerns over depression, aggression and the isolation of not being connected to anyone or any formal services or educational activities. Most parents expressed concern about what would happen to the young people after the program had finished and two parents said that their sons were already beginning to feel hopeless again because they did not know what to do after the program finished.

One parent thought participants needed on-going psychological support after the program saying:

'They needs lots of follow up support. When the program finished he was OK for a while and then he started to go downhill again because he didn't have a job. So I rang Phil and he invited him back. It is something they need to think about. What will the kids do after the high of being in the program, we need to plan better for afterwards?'

Changes in social life and relationships in the form of girlfriends were noted by two parents. In one case this involved a new relationship with a young woman and this had led to an improvement in attitude and personal presentation:

'He's got a girlfriend and she's nice, he used to talk about girls as if they were dirt and now he is very different, it is great.'

Future Vocational Prospects

Table G5 (below) shows significant others' perceptions of U-Turn participants' future vocational prospects.

Four parents believed participants had very good prospects within the automotive industry. One had secured an apprenticeship while the other was doing work experience and looking for an apprenticeship. The five others had gone back to U-Turn to learn more skills and were feeling better about the future. One parent said they would be happy if there were more practical opportunities for the young people as they were not good at school, they had had bad experiences at school and did not want to return.

'... I can see him doing well on the practical side in an apprenticeship but not on the theory side. He's good with his hands but not at sitting still all day at a desk. He gets impatient and he causes trouble then. He likes being shown how to do things with practical stuff like cars and engines or paint'

One young person had returned to school for the first time in two years because he could see the point in learning English and Maths so he could go on to TAFE and then work with cars.

'He has seen that he needs an education, he has a plan now and he can do it, he is smart and now he can see a point to finishing grade ten, we are so happy and we tell him all the time'

In terms of vocational prospects outside the automotive industry, only two significant other saw these as 'good'. For the others, working with cars remains the main interest. One parent was concerned that learning difficulties would be a general disadvantage in securing any job and thought the U-Turn program may

be able to tackle this saying:

'You need academic and practical skills and these kids don't see the point in learning boring things, it has to be about cars and things they like but the people who teach them have to be so tactful because they are all at different levels, they need lots of patience.'

Table G5: Future Vocational Prospects

	Very Good	Good	Neither Good Nor Poor	Poor	Very Poor
Within automotive industry	2	1	4		
Outside automotive industry		3	4		

Five out of seven significant others believed the participants would not engage in future criminal activities. They believed their sons had 'seen the light' or 'turned around just in time' and realised what was at risk if they continued their former ways. One parent was not quite as confident but nevertheless hopeful, saying:

'...Fingers crossed he stays out of trouble, he has had us worried for a while, now he has something to live for and plan for, we have U-Turn to thank for that.'

All significant others interviewed expressed their gratitude for the U-Turn program; firmly believing it offered young offenders a chance to see their future differently.

As one said:

'They do call it U-Turn and that's what it's done for him. He has turned around. It's given him something to focus on. I believe they could not have done a better job. I think it's a great thing. I don't know what he would have done without it. I think he would have been in a downward spiral.'

But for another it was much more than that:

'... I cannot thank them enough. I believe he would not be with us. When we moved I found four suicide notes when clearing out his old room... U-Turn has turned him into a person who is very likeable, very acceptable...The U-Turn program shows them that they don't have to do crime or go to prison, that they have choices. They can see themselves in a different light.'

Yet another family expressed thanks to the program as they all had a new pride in not only the young people but in their families and a 'sense of looking forward'

and having some purpose:

'They have a sense of going somewhere now, we can't thank the staff enough, they are wonderful, they are genuinely interested in the young people and that has made all the difference, they care, they really do'.

In terms of improving the program five issues were identified:

- Need to publicise its availability;
- Need for some ongoing formal support after the program.
- Need for a support group for parents;
- The need for the course to be longer;
- The need for more formal educational skills to be taught on an individually assessed basis.

Conclusion

The interview data reported in this chapter indicate that the U-Turn Program in Tasmania has achieved a high level of success in addressing the key aims and objectives of the program.

ATTACHMENT 5 – SUPPORTED HOUSING PROGRAM

A Establishment of the Supported Housing Program

The U-Turn workshop is located in the capital city, Hobart, in the south of Tasmania. In October 2003, with funding provided by the Tasmanian Community Fund, Mission Australia established a supported housing service to enable young people from the North and North West of the state to participate in the program. Three young people per course can be accommodated in the group home with a paid carer. Participants travel to Hobart each Monday of the course, live in the group home while they attend U-Turn from Tuesday-Friday, and then return home again each Friday afternoon for the weekend (Goodwin and Julian, 2004:3-4).

B Evaluation of the Supported Housing Program

The objective of the evaluation of the Supported Housing Program is to identify and analyse aspects of the residential component that impact on the outcomes of the U-Turn program.

It is known that whether one remains in, or is removed from, one's usual environment can have a major impact on the success of programs aimed at behavioural change. The addition of the Supported Housing program allows for comparative analysis of those in a residential program and those who are not. This addition to the U-Turn Project provides an exciting opportunity to investigate these wider environmental and social factors. These include:

The impact of peer relationships on:

- young people's experience with U-Turn;
- re-offending and/or anti-social behaviour;
- resolving problems identified as contributing to their offending behaviour;
- taking responsibility for their own behaviour;
- participation in offending activities or activities that can lead to an increased risk of offending;
- participation in employment, training and educational, vocational and recreational activities;
- the involvement of families in resolving family issues that contribute to young people's offending; and
- young people's involvement in assessing their own needs and planning and monitoring their agreed case plans.

The impact of removal from the usual social environment on:

- young people's experience with U-Turn;
- re-offending and/or anti-social behaviour;
- resolving problems identified as contributing to their offending behaviour;
- taking responsibility for their own behaviour;
- participation in offending activities or activities that can lead to an increased risk of offending;
- participation in employment, training and educational, vocational and recreational activities;
- the involvement of families in resolving family issues that contribute to young people's offending; and
- young people's involvement in assessing their own needs and planning and monitoring their agreed case plans.

The impact of this relocation on sustained behaviour change when the young person returns to their original environment

The young people in supported housing accommodation were invited, along with the other U-Turn participants, to participate in one-on-one interviews. This enabled comparative analysis of those who were in supported housing care and those who were not. However, given the small number of participants in each course who were in supported housing care (i.e. 2-3) and the fact that additional data needed to be collected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the way in which the supported housing care is experienced by the young people living there, some additional data collection processes were included. These were:

- collection of quantitative data on residents;
- interviews with the supported housing care worker;
- a focus group with each cycle of residents in the form of a pizza night held at the residence.

C Focus Group Interviews with Supported Housing Residents

Two focus groups sessions were held, one in December 2003 at the end of the fourth cycle and the other in March 2004, at the end of the fifth cycle. Attempts were made to hold a third focus group in September 2004 and a fourth in November 2004. However, the evaluation team was unable to conduct a focus group with the last two rounds of participants who were living in the supported accommodation program. The difficulties included being able to find a time suitable for all participants and the cancellation of some scheduled visits to the house. It should be noted that the nature of this type of program makes it difficult

to work with the young people after program hours as their participation is on a voluntary basis.

Two residents participated in Focus Group 1 and three in Focus Group 2. Each session explored a number of thematic questions aimed at identifying the impact of the residential program on participants' experiences of the U-Turn program.

These themes included:

- Living arrangements;
- Physical comfort;
- Respect;
- Work experience (especially at U-Turn site);
- Leisure activities ;
- Impact of residential program on relationships at home and with peers;
- Impact of residential program on behaviour in the weekends; and
- Perceptions of good and bad aspects of the residential program.

Living Arrangements

All of the five residents lived 'at home' (three with parents/step-parents and siblings, one with his 'step-dad' and another with an aunt) and returned home on the weekends.

Physical Comfort

Residents in both groups reported being comfortable and satisfied with the living conditions. The house was described as warm and comfortable and they had enough to eat as well as choices over their food. While they ate out infrequently, special occasions like birthdays were celebrated with a special meal.

Respect

Two separate aspects of respect were explored in the focus groups. The first related to the relationship between the residents and the housing support worker while the second related to relationships between the residents themselves.

Respondents in both groups reported a very good and mutually respectful relationship with their regular support worker. While there were rules, they were applied fairly and residents felt no excessive demands were placed on them in terms of chores or restriction of activities. If they wanted to do things or go places the support worker would accommodate their needs where possible.

In terms of respect for each other, all residents said they got on well together and their relationship was one of mates or brothers. The two residents in Group 1 admitted there had been some difficulties when they had a third resident.

Activities and Leisure

Participants in both groups reported that days followed a regular pattern. They would get up and have breakfast and the support worker would drive them to the U-Turn workshop. In the evening they came home with the worker, had dinner and watched TV/videos or played with the computer or play station.

They generally found it a little boring being at the house because there was nowhere to go and the public transport was not that good, which meant they could not go out by themselves and just hang out like their peers. They felt this was a major difference between themselves and the Hobart-based participants in the program who could see their friends at night and go places when they wanted to.

The younger residents in Group 2 felt they weren't given 'enough options' over such activities as hiring video games. They had a limit on how many they could hire at any one time so got tired of the games pretty quickly. They thought this was a cost-saving exercise on the part of the housing worker.

Again these younger residents wanted more action-oriented activities like paint ball games, motorbike riding or going round the motocross track. They missed doing the sort of activities they could do at home. In essence they were bored with being restricted to television, videos and video games. When asked how they would solve this issue, the residents gave a number of half-serious responses including the housing worker driving them 'home' at night and having unlimited resources for exciting and extreme activities, for example, helicopter rides.

The Work Experience

During the day the residents would work on a car and participate in the same workplace activities as the non-residential U-Turn participants. However, the different focus groups reported different experiences of work at U-Turn. Group 1 felt they were treated well by the tradesmen/instructors and appeared to really admire these men as positive role models. In general they felt the people in the program made them feel part of the workplace.

The residents in Group 2 did not report the same positive experience. One described U-Turn as '...bludge work... not real work like working on someone's car for money'. Further, they claimed the repair techniques used were just to 'bodge it up', and got no satisfaction from doing this. Further they stated that when these concerns were raised they were ignored. Basically they felt they

knew as much as their teachers but this knowledge was not being validated nor were they learning new skills. They felt they could not talk to anyone at U-Turn about this nor did they feel anyone could do anything about it.

One resident said a particular staff member thought they were 'dickheads' and treated them '... like three-year-olds, as if they have never been in a workshop before.' They were resentful that that they had to work to the pace of the slowest participant, but did admit that some of the other participants were learning new skills.

This was completely different to the perceptions of Group 1 residents, one of whom said he liked the way things were handled when there was a 'foul up' in a task. Nobody made him feel stupid or clumsy. Rather someone took the time to explain the task and show him the right way to do it.

Leisure Activities

The residents in Group 1 enjoyed the full range of leisure activities including go-karting and going to the skid pan at the Police Academy, where they spent time learning driving skills and generally having a very good time driving very fast. They appeared to be very positive about the police officer who conducted these sessions and felt they learned very useful practical driving skills.

However these activities were not available to the residents in Group 2 due to insurance issues and this was a source of disappointment. Consequently Friday, which was leisure activity day, became just another workday. These residents felt that their reward had been removed and this lowered their overall satisfaction with the U-Turn experience. Specifically they felt that something that had been a 'right' for other groups had been unfairly withdrawn.

Effect of Residential Program on Relationships at Home and with Peers

No residents reported any impact on their relationships with friends or mates or changes to their activities on the weekends when they went home. All found the long bus journey tedious but still enjoyed going home at weekends. One resident said he called his mates by mobile from the bus so they could pick him up and take him out on a Friday night where they would 'hang out' and do the things they always did on a Friday night.

One resident (Group 2), who had a steady girlfriend, felt the strain of being away from her and thought it would be less stressful if he could see her through the week or if she could come and visit with him. The two other younger residents agreed it would be better if they could have their friends over at the house to visit or perhaps to stay overnight or for a weekend.

Both Group 1 residents reported improved and positive relationships with their parents as an overall result of being in the U-Turn program itself. They said their parents were supportive and proud of them for taking part in the program.

Group 1 residents said they would recommend both U-Turn and the residential program to others. The two younger Group 2 residents did not agree. However they were feeling angry and confused on the night of the Focus Group. Earlier that day they had been told they would not be receiving their full certificates and blamed the new manager for this. One of them felt this was unfair because he had passed all his tests and received only positive feedback from his teachers.

Potential Improvements

In terms of the actual U-Turn program, Group 1 residents felt it should be longer, perhaps up to four months. They felt that just when they were achieving things the program was over. For example, they only got to respray one car but felt they would like to do another, to see how their skills improved with practice. Group 2 residents felt the need for more challenging tasks and would have preferred to bring their own cars to the 'shop' to work on during the course.

Group 2 residents also suggested an advanced skills program would be useful for boys who already had some mechanical and automotive industry skills. They thought a skill assessment prior to the course would be an improvement. That way those without even basic skills would not keep those with some skills from progressing.

In terms of the residential program, Group 1 felt the location of the house was a problem. It was too far out of town and the public transport too inadequate for them to independently participate in leisure activities like other young people. For example, going to a movie without the support worker. It was also difficult for other people to visit them unless they had their own transport. A house closer to town or on a good transport route would have been preferable. Location of the house was not an issue for Group 2. They did not want it to be closer to town or to public transport, saying, 'it makes no difference to us'. However they did think that age was an issue, and all agreed it would be better in the future if the residents were closer in age.

Both groups suggested having a course located in the North or the North-West would be an improvement.

Perceptions of the U-Turn Residential Program

For Group 1, the residential program gave them the chance to participate in the U-Turn program which they were very positive about. They hoped this would help their chances of avoiding a custodial sentence when they appeared in court over vehicle-related crimes.

Overall, Group 2 said it was 'pretty good...but you should be able to bring your mates over as long as nothing goes missing.' For these younger boys, 'going home on the weekends was the best part ... all your mates want to see you.'

Concluding Comments

In general the Group 1 participants seemed very positive about their experience both in the house and in the program. They felt their new skills would be useful in gaining an apprenticeship and were pleased about the credits received on the program being recognised by TAFE. The sense of achievement and recognition seemed an important aspect of the U-Turn experience.

It was clear they liked and respected their support worker and they liked being part of the work culture. They missed being able to hang out with their friends and felt somewhat socially isolated by the location of the house but also appeared quite pragmatic about it. Neither reported any emotional distress or loneliness about being away from home. Perhaps the camaraderie of the workshop, the positive relationship with the support worker and the weekend home visits contributed to this.

The experience of the Group 2 residents was demonstrably different and there may have been a number of contributing factors. First, two of the residents were quite young (15 and 16 yrs) and relatively immature while the other was older, more mature, and in a serious long-term relationship. Secondly, this group came to the U-Turn program during a time of management change and changes to the program content, both of which were viewed from a negative perspective. They did not appear to establish the same relationships with the U-Turn staff as the residents in the previous group. Whereas Group 1 residents embraced the work culture, gained valuable skills and felt they were treated with respect, Group 2 did not. They appeared to have little respect for the knowledge and skills of their U-Turn teachers and in turn felt their own knowledge and skills were not validated.

Not receiving full accreditation was a big issue, particularly when they felt they had done the work and fulfilled the demands placed on them. Later discussions revealed that this was a resource issue rather than a competency issue but this was not how the participants perceived it. They felt they were being punished for something they did not do. Likewise being denied the 'fun' aspects of the program, for example, go-karting, was misinterpreted by residents. This was essentially an insurance problem but residents saw it as a management decision to curtail a pleasurable activity and again perceived it in terms of punishment.

However the Group 2 residents appeared to have a friendly camaraderie with their support worker and did not appear to be stressed by living away from home. Like the first group, they hated the long bus journey but looked forward to their weekends at home with friends and family. Relationships with friends appeared

to be unaffected by the residential program, though this may be a characteristic of coming from a relatively small, close-knit community.

It is important to identify these differences between the Group 1 and Group 2 focus groups as they highlight the complexities associated with any attempt to compare residential and non-residential U-Turn participants.

The information included above, while focusing on aspects of the supported housing program, is important for explaining any differences in outcomes that emerge between residential and non-residential participants in the comparative analysis that follows.

D Comparison of Residents and Non-Residents

The U-Turn service database contains quantitative data that can be used to compare experiences and outcome of participants who were residents at the supported housing with those who were not. These have been presented in Table 9 (Chapter 8).

In general, the profile of participants who were resident in the supported accommodation reflected those of the participants overall.

E Conclusion

The key advantages of the Housing Care Program are:

- it addresses issues of access and equity for young offenders from the North and North-West of the state;
- it adds value to the U-Turn Program by:
 - providing stability in the participant's experience of the program;
 - allowing participants to build on skills gained within the program by requiring them to live independently (e.g. literacy and numeracy skills, problem-solving skills); and
 - allowing the participants to learn and practise life skills in a safe and supported environment.

The interview data clearly indicate the tension between independence and dependence that is experienced by the participants of the housing program. As with the U-Turn program more generally, they are challenged to undertake tasks that take them outside their comfort zone. However, they are offered an opportunity to do so in a supportive and safe environment.

The impact of the housing program on sustained behaviour change could be examined more directly though post-program interviews in the North and/or North-West of the state. However, pure logistics and distance have meant that

the evaluation team has been unable to interview past participants from these regional areas. One set of parents from a remote rural area made themselves available and this was very much appreciated. Many others were not able to be contacted after the program was completed making follow-up interviews impossible.

This has not significantly impacted on the data presented in the final report.

APPENDIX A: Research Instruments



UNIVERSITY
OF TASMANIA

Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies
(TILES)

YOUNG RECIDIVIST CAR THEFT OFFENDER PROGRAM (U-TURN)

Research Instruments

March 2003

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Overview

The following theme areas have been developed to reflect the issues identified in the best practice aims, objectives and guiding principles, and to encompass the additional information requirements outlined in the request for quotation document. The table below links each theme area with an aim, objective or additional requirement. Guiding principles will be evaluated using all the data sources available. Where possible the meta-evaluator's questions have been used. Themes have been organised using the data collection structure of: group A initial participant interviews, group B participant interviews at program conclusion, group C participant post-program monitoring interviews, group D key informant interviews and group E significant other interviews. In addition, a postal survey of stakeholders will also be conducted. The survey instrument is currently being designed. The data collected will address the program aims, objectives and guidelines.

Consistent with the ethical requirements of the University of Tasmania, all program participants will be fully informed both in writing and orally about the interview objectives, the kinds of questions that will be asked, how the data will be used and by whom. They will then be invited to participate in the evaluation. A stratified sample will be selected from those who volunteer.

Participant volunteers will be provided with detailed information on the evaluation process to give to significant others, such as parents, friends and partners. This package will include a consent form in which the significant others can provide a telephone contact number and signed permission for the evaluators to contact them.

Relationship between theme areas and program structure

Each aim, objective and additional requirement has been listed with an alphanumeric code indicating where data for this will be drawn from. Theme areas have been organised to reflect the sequence in which the interviews will be conducted.

Table 1: Aims, objectives and additional requirements by Theme areas

Aim 1: reduce the rate of motor vehicle theft by young people;	A3, B3, B4, B5, C3, C5, D, E.
Aim 2: prevent recidivism and chronic career offending by young people;	A3, A7, A8, B3, B4, B5, B8, C3, C5, D,E.
Aim 3: address anti-social behaviour;	A2, A3, A5, A6, A7, A8, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, C2, C4, C5, C6, D, E.
Aim 4: address life issues of participants and link participants to a comprehensive network of support;	B3, B5, C3, C7, C8, D, E.
Aim 5: assist young people to maximise their potential so that they can offer a positive contribution to society.	B2, B3, B4, B5, B7, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, D, E.
Objective 1: equip young people with practical vocational training and experience specifically within the automotive field;	A4, B5, B8, C7, D.
Objective 2: create pathways for further education, training, and jobs;	A4, B4, B5, B8, C7, C8, D.
Objective 3: develop the life and personal skills of participants, with support for them in re-entering mainstream community;	B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B9, C2, C3, C4, %, C6, D, E.
Objective 4: redirect the energies of young people before they become entrenched in unsafe or illegal behaviour;	B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, C2, C4, C6, E.
Objective 5: break the cycle of risk-taking behaviour and self-abuse by offering participants a positive and supportive environment that can assist them to make positive life changes;	B2, B4, B6, B7, C2, C3, C5, C6, D.
Objective 6: redirect the thrill-seeking associated with offending behaviour into positive, legal, safe and fun motor sport activities;	B2, B7, C2, C3, C5, C6, D.
Objective 7: identify, affirm and build on young people's existing skills;	B3, B4, B5, B6, B8, B9, C2, C3, C4, C6, E.
Objective 8: provide participants with workplace skills;	B3, B5, B8, B9, C3, C7, D.
Objective 9: foster self-esteem and confidence;	B3, B4, B5, B6, C2, C3, C4, C5, E.
Objective 10: develop participants' social skills and self-awareness;	B2, B3, B4, B6, B7, C2, C4, C5, C8.
Objective 11: provide young people with emotional support, advocacy and referral via a case management approach;	B3, B4, B8, B9, C3, C4, C6, C8, D.
Objective 12: provide participants with interview and job skills training and motivation that will foster regular employment or further educational opportunities;	B5, B8, B9, C3, C7, D.
Objective 13: promote values that encourage an awareness of others and the broader community.	B3, B5, C2, C3, C5, C6, D.
Additional requirement 1: participants' family, educational and employment history;	A1, A2, A4, B1, B5, B8, C1, E.
Additional requirement 2: participants' offending history, including how they became involved in crime and their motivation for offending;	A3, A6, A7, A8
Additional requirement 3: participants' drug and alcohol usage and the extent to which this is related to their involvement in crime;	A2, A3, A5, A6
Additional requirement 4: participants' view on the effectiveness of motor vehicle security measures;	A6, A7, A8
Additional requirement 5: the precautions taken by participants to avoid detection.	A6, A7, A8

Theme Areas for Interviews **Information Sheet and Consent Form**

- these will provide information on the aims and conduct of the evaluation as well as details of the ethical aspects of the evaluation

Interview A – Participants (Initial)

(to be undertaken at the START of the 10-week program)

Theme List

1. Introduction

- Name (to be recorded separately from the data)
- Age
- How did you get into this program?

2. Household structure and stability

- Who are you currently living with?
- Is this always the case?
- (If parents not mentioned ask specifically about them, where they live, why not living with)
- Any brothers or sisters? (Birth order of the interviewee)
- Relationship with parents and siblings

3. Life planning

- Do you think about what you'll be doing 10 years from now?

4. Social life

- interests, hobbies, activities
- social relationships and peer groups
- What do you and your mates get up to? (sports, computer games, do drugs, misbehave)
- Probe for risk taking and/or thrill seeking behaviour

5. Educational background/vocational or employment background

- Where did you go to school?
- What subjects did you like, what were you good at?
- Did your parents care about how you did at school?
- How did you get on with the teachers?
- How did you get on with the other students?
- How 's your reading and writing?
- Age left school
- Highest grade completed
- Ever suspended/expelled? (prompt for details)

- Ever been employed? (prompt for details)

6. Participant's biographical perspectives

- When did you first drive a car? Age, who with
- Tell me about the first time you stole a car
- What made you do it again
- About how many have you stolen?
- Whose idea was it (are they leading or following)
- Probe for social context of motor vehicle offending, alcohol, other drugs
- probe for attitudes towards, and reasons for, offending, e.g. lift home, thrill, for parts
- Don't want to know the details, but any other crimes that you have not been caught for?
- Have you done any of these things, including car theft, recently?

7. Risk-taking and self-esteem

- attitudes to driving: speeding, breaking road rules, independence, risk-taking, masculinity
- what kind of drugs do you get into? (Probe re alcohol)
- relationship between drug/alcohol use and involvement in crime
- Are you on any medication? (ADD probe how long, why, do they sell their medication)

8. Motor vehicle theft*

- participants' views on the effectiveness of motor vehicle security measures
- the precautions taken by participants to avoid detection

* The 'Request for Quotation' states that 'The data collection process for the additional information must complement the evaluation process and in no way jeopardise the program or the future prospects of the program participants'. In accordance with this statement the questions relating to motor vehicle theft (Theme 8) will be explored (possibly in some detail) if they emerge in the context of the interviews. Interviewers will not probe these matters directly as they are not consistent with the objectives of the evaluation and if introduced out of context they are likely to jeopardize the validity of data collected in any subsequent interviews.

Interview B – Participants (Program Completion)

(to be undertaken at the END of the 10 week program)

NB: Read through first interview so can personalise e.g. are you still living with your Nan?

Theme List

1. **Household structure and stability**
 - current
 - any changes while in the program
 - any changes in relationships with parents/guardians/siblings since starting the U-Turn program (e.g. contact)

2. **Social life**
 - Any changes to the following:
 - social relationships and peer groups
 - what do you and your mates get up to? (sports, computer games, do drugs, misbehave)
 - Probe for risk taking and/or thrill seeking behaviour
 - Involvement in non-criminal activities

3. **Perspectives on the program**
 - thoughts about the program overall
 - has the program made a difference? If so, how?
(Probe for any positive changes)
 - best/worst aspects
 - view of staff
 - views on personal goals, what did they hope to get out of the course and did they get this (case management)
 - probe for whether any offences have been committed while in the program
 - mentor relationships
e.g. Would you say that the program workers were supportive of you during the 10-week workshop program?

4. **Life planning**
 - Have you changed your view about what you'll be doing 10 years from now?

5. **Perceived outcomes of the program**
 - prospects for employment/training
e.g. Has the program made it *easier* for you to get into further education, training or employment?
Has the program made you more *interested or motivated* you to do into any of these things?

Have you *actually started or do you plan to start* any education, training or employment since starting in the U-Turn program?

- changes in social relationships (e.g. contact with parents)
- involvement in non-criminal activities
- Has the program left you better equipped to:
 - (i) get work and keep the job (eg interview and other job-seeking skills, vocational skills/knowledge)
 - (ii) undertake training/study (eg how to do an application to study, study skills)
- Do you think the program helped you to identify, make you feel good about and/or build on the skills you already had (employment/training/education/ personal/other skills)?

6. **Risk-taking and self-esteem**

- Has the program helped you to stay out of trouble with the law, both with motor vehicle thefts and with other things?
- activities positive, legal, safe, fun?
- Did the program help you with other problems you might have had (e.g. substance abuse, attitudes to driving, psychiatric disorders, family problems, literacy etc)?

7. **General skills**

- Has the program had any effect on your confidence, and how good you feel about yourself? [PROBE: increase self-awareness?]
- Has the program helped you to get on better with other people? IF YES, who (friends, family, people in the community generally)?
- Has your attitude to car theft and the effect it has on people changed?

8. **Referrals, advocacy, follow-up**

- Did the program workers work with or on your behalf in talking to other services about what you wanted or needed? Can you give me any examples?
- Did the program link you up with any other services or people to help with issues?
 - IF YES, what services were these, and how did they do this [PROBE: active versus passive referrals] and
 - were these links helpful?
- Are there any other services you would have liked to have been linked to but weren't?

Interview C – Participants (Post-program)

(to be undertaken 3-6 months after the completion of the 10-week program)

Theme List

1. **Household structure and stability**
 - since completion of the program
2. **Social life**
 - interests, hobbies, activities
 - social relationships and peer groups
 - probe for anti-social behaviour
3. **Outcomes of the program**
 - employment/training experiences (if any)
 - changes in social relationships (e.g. contact with parents)
 - involvement in non-criminal activities
4. **Life planning**
 - do you think about what you'll be doing 10 years from now?
5. **Risk-taking and self-esteem**
 - attitudes to driving
 - drug and alcohol usage
 - probe for whether any offences have been committed since the completion of the program
 - relationship between drug/alcohol use and involvement in crime (if any)
6. **General skills**
 - Do you think the program helped you to identify, make you feel good about and/or build on the skills you already had (employment/training/education/ personal/other skills)?
 - Has the program had any effect on your confidence, and how good you feel about yourself? [PROBE: increase self-awareness?]
 - Has the program helped you to get on better with other people? IF YES, who (friends, family, people in the community generally)?
 - Has the program helped you to become more aware of other people's needs or views?
 - Overall has the program helped you to get on better in the mainstream community than you used to?
7. **Referrals, advocacy, follow-up**
 - Did the program link you up with any other organisations?

IF YES, what organisations were these, and how did they do this [PROBE: active versus passive referrals] and were these links helpful?

- Are there any other organisations you would have liked to have been linked to but weren't?
- Would you say that the program workers were supportive of you during the 10-week workshop program?
- What about afterwards – were the program workers supportive of you after the 10-week workshop program had finished?
[If time has elapsed since the participant completed the program]
- Was it a good idea having support available after you had finished the formal part of the program?
- Did the program workers work with or on your behalf in talking to other organisations about what you wanted or needed? Can you give me any examples?

8. Special needs

- Did you have any special needs that were relevant for the U-Turn service to know about to help you (eg Indigenous, non-English speaking background, psychiatric/intellectual/physical disability, substance abuse, literacy problems etc)?
IF YES, did the service ask you about these needs and/or do anything specific to try to meet those needs?
- Overall do you feel that the program was tailored to meet your individual needs?

Interview D – Key Informant Interviews with Program Staff

Part A - Knowledge/perceptions of participants

1. **Educational/vocational prospects**
 - inside/outside the automotive field
 - other workplace skills
 - interview and jobs skills

2. **Attitudinal and behavioural changes**
 - driving
 - offending (including motor vehicle theft)
 - drug and alcohol usage
 - authority
 - self-esteem/confidence
 - values

3. **Life skills**
 - goal setting
 - goal achievement
 - self-awareness
 - awareness of others and the broader community

4. **Social life**
 - interests, hobbies, activities
 - social relationships and peer groups
 - probe for anti-social behaviour
 - support networks in mainstream community

Part B - Perspectives on the program

- structure and course content
- interview and job skills training
- provision of a supportive environment
- case management
- referral
- capacity to assist participants to re-enter mainstream community

Interview E – Interviews with Significant Others

Knowledge/perceptions of participants at the completion of the program.

1. **Relationship with participant**
 - previous/current
 - changes since participant has been involved in the program

2. **Attitudinal and behavioural changes**
 - driving
 - offending (including motor vehicle theft)
 - drug and alcohol usage
 - authority
 - self-esteem/confidence
 - values

3. **Life skills**
 - goal setting
 - goal achievement
 - self-awareness
 - awareness of others and the broader community

4. **Social life**
 - interests, hobbies, activities
 - social relationships and peer groups
 - probe for anti-social behaviour
 - support networks in mainstream community

5. **Future prospects**
 - vocational (inside/outside the automotive field)
 - criminal/non-criminal careers
 - re-entry into mainstream community

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TILES, University of Tasmania
U-Turn Evaluation

January 2004

Questionnaire: Stakeholders

1. Position of the person who completed this questionnaire?

- | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Coordinator/Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Chairperson of the Board Of Management | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Other staff member | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Other member of the BOM/Collective | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Other _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |

Please specify

2. Did you consult with anyone else when completing this questionnaire?

- yes 1 no 2 (go to question 3)

2.1 Management Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Consultation with committee	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Staff meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Consultation with staff/volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Collective meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

3. How viable do you believe the U-Turn best-practice model to be?

Diverting recidivist car thieves through a community-based training program in mechanical and personal skills

4. Have your views on this changed since your involvement in the U-Turn Program?

yes 1

no 2 (go to question 5)



4. Please describe how your views have changed
1

5. What do you perceive to be the objectives of the U-Turn Program? Please list.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

6. In general, how well do you think the program is meeting these objectives? Please circle the appropriate number.

Very Well

Quite well

Neutral

Not very well

Not at all well

1

2

3

4

5

7. Has U-Turn made any referrals to your service?

yes 1 no 2 (go to question 8) not applicable 3 (go to question 8)

7.1 How many referrals have they made (number of individuals)? _____

7.2 What were the reasons for the referrals?

8. Have you made any referrals to the U-Turn program?

yes 1 no 2

8.1 Why not?

8.2 How many referrals have you made (number of individuals)? _____

8.3 Why did you refer these clients to the U-Turn Program?

9. So far, what impact has the U-Turn program had on your organisation in relation to the following factors?

Please circle the appropriate number

	Significant impact	Some impact	Little impact	No impact
Referrals	1	2	3	4
Workload	1	2	3	4
Resources	1	2	3	4
Training/training needs	1	2	3	4
Other <i>(please specify)</i>	1	2	3	4

10. How has your organisation contributed to the implementation and development of the U-Turn Program?

11. Has the program led you to work more closely with other organisations and services generally?

yes 1 no 2

11.1 Which ones?

12. Have you had any problems related to the program's management, implementation or service delivery?

yes 1 no 2

12.1 Please describe?

13. To date, what do you think have been the most significant achievements of the program, if any?

14. From your observations, how do you feel the program is viewed by other services?

Please circle the appropriate number

Highly respected	Somewhat respected	Neutral	Not very respected	Not at all respected
1	2	3	4	5

15. Do you have any suggestions for improving any aspect of the program?

16. Please feel free to offer any more of your views on the U-Turn Program (attach more paper if required).

Thank you for your assistance

...oo0oo...

Please return questionnaire in reply paid envelope included by:
19th January 2004

For assistance call

Associate Professor Roberta Julian: 62262217

Dr Megan Alessandrini: 62262336

TILES, School of Government

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