Youth Have Your Say

in

Wingecarribee Shire

A Report from the Youth Forum Consultation

November 2015

Andrew Cummings
Training & Consultancy

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Executive Summary

Wingecarribee Shire Council held a full-day consultation event on 12th November 2015, involving approximately 170 young people, representing schools and youth services from across the shire.

The day involved the following elements:

- Introduction, acknowledgement of country and ice breaker exercise
- Roundtable discussions on ten key issues identified by young people prior to the event
- Workshops on five topics of interest to young people, run by local service providers
- Whole group discussion of issues raised and ideas for prioritising needs
- Young people identifying additional issues and writing these on post-it notes to display around the room
- A Q&A session with two young people involved in local services
- Discussion about next steps, and how the information will be used

The day focused on ten topics that formed the basis of the roundtable discussions. These were:

- Events and festivals
- After school and school holiday activities
- Sports and recreation
- Transport
- Teen hangout spaces
- Arts and culture
- Stress
- Peer pressure
- Sex and sexuality
- Intergenerational issues

Arising from these discussions, the following recommendations are made to Wingecarribee Shire Council:

1. That Council works with local service providers to ensure that there are youth-specific spaces which house a wide range of youth services, programs and activities
2. That Council lobbies for a range of services which address the issues raised by young people, including stress and anxiety, peer pressure and sexuality
3. That Council explores a range of youth-focused events and activities suggested by young people at this forum
4. That Council works with key stakeholders to explore more effective ways of promoting the existing services and recreational opportunities for young people
5. That Council works with local services and stakeholders to explore ways to reduce inter-generational conflict and to increase inter-generational understanding and cooperation
6. That Council works with key stakeholders to address concerns raised by young people about gaps in public transport, and look at ways to increase accessibility within and between towns and villages
7. That Council works with key stakeholders to explore ways to increase employment opportunities for young people
8. That Council continues to offer regular forums and consultations similar to this event, in order to promote and encourage consultation, information sharing and collaboration
9. That Council establishes a group / committee charged with responsibility for further investigating and developing the ideas put forward during this forum.

More details concerning these recommendations are included in the full report.

Background

On November 12th 2015, Wingecarribee Shire Council held a full-day consultation event at the Mittagong RSL, involving approximately 170 young people ranging from Year 6 through to Year 11 from schools across the LGA, along with a range of youth service providers. The day was organised by Michelle Williams, Council's Youth Liaison Officer, who worked closely with a steering group comprised of St Vincent de Paul, UnitingCare Burnside, Sector Connect, Youth Solutions, Agryle Housing, Essential Personnel, Barnardos, local service providers, school teachers and young people who worked together to share skills, expertise and knowledge.

Prior to the day, young people across the shire were surveyed in order to help select the themes for the round table discussions, and to choose workshop topics.

The day began with a welcome by the Mayor of Wingecarribee, Larry Whipper, followed by an acknowledgement of country by Melissa Wiya. The introductions were followed by an ice breaker exercise. Young people were then invited to join round table discussions on a range of topics:

- Events and festivals
- After school and school holiday activities
- Sports and recreation
- Transport
- Teen hangout spaces
- Arts and culture
- Stress
- Peer pressure
- Sex and sexuality
- Intergenerational issues

Young people from the steering group facilitated the conversations at the tables, with youth services workers and Council staff from the Community Development Team, Community Engagement, Community Facilities and Parks and Recreation co-facilitating, These people were also on hand to guide and support the young people. Young people were given the opportunity to choose three issues they were interested in discussing, and spent approximately 20 minutes in each of the three discussion groups. During the roundtable discussions, young people's ideas, concerns and issues were recorded, and are captured in this report.

Following the round table discussions, young people had the opportunity to take part in one of five issue-based workshops. Each workshop was facilitated by a service provider with expertise in that area. The workshop topics were:

- Mental Health
- Body Image
- Personal safety (cyber bullying, bullying, conflict resolution and abuse)
- Education and Employment
- Team work and team building

After lunch, the students were invited to "pitch" their ideas for improving Wingecarribee to other young people, in order to build a ground-swell of support for the most popular ideas. This involved students sharing their ideas with the whole group. More than 20 young people took to the microphone to share their top issue or concern.

Following this, the young people were once again sent into small groups to discuss the ideas raised, and to make any final comments or recommendations by writing their ideas on post-it notes

and adding these to the posters produced in the round table discussions, which had now been placed around the hall.

The final session of the day included a Q&A session with two local young people who have been involved in influencing change in local youth services and programs - Alessandro Donagh-De Marchi and Heath Elford. The young men shared ideas and experiences, and their top tips for other young people interested in changing their community for the better.

At the conclusion of the day, Michelle Williams explained how the information gathered from the day's discussions will be used. The aim of this report is to summarise and prioritise the recommendations and feedback from the day, in order to develop a shire-wide Youth Strategic Plan complete with actions to guide the Youth Liaison Officer's work plan for the next five years.

Council commissioned Andrew Cummings to facilitate the day. Andrew has nearly 30 years experience in working with young people in a wide range of organisations and settings, including running national and international youth organisations in Australia, the UK and Europe.

As well as planning and hosting the event, Council supported the involvement of young people on the day by covering transport costs for schools to bus the students in and out of the forum.

The program for the day is included as Appendix 1. Examples of the posters produced in each of the discussion groups are included as Appendix 2.

WINGECARRIBEE
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Summary of the Roundtable Discussions

The roundtable discussions were framed around ten key themes, selected from survey responses completed by young people prior to the event. The young people had the opportunity to join three roundtable discussions, each for approximately 20 minutes. Each theme had a series of questions aimed at exploring the issues under that theme for young people in Wingecarribee, and provide opportunities for young people to discuss ideas and suggest solutions to improve these issues.

The ten themes discussed were:

- Events and festivals
- After school and school holiday activities
- Sports and recreation
- Transport
- Teen hangout spaces
- Arts and culture
- Stress
- Peer pressure
- Sex and sexuality
- Intergenerational issues

Below is a summary of the key issues and suggestions made by young people in each of these ten discussion groups. It's important to note that the comments and issues included are those of the young people themselves, with as little interpretation as possible by the adults involved. This has been done in order to ensure that the report genuinely captures the views and opinions of the young people who attended the day. This means that at times, some comments may appear out of context, or appear to be included under the wrong theme, as the comments have been included in the discussion groups in which they were raised by the young people.

1. Events and Festivals

a) Types of Events and Festivals

When asked the types of events and festivals they would like to have available in the local area, young people mentioned the following things:

Bowral bash
Food trucks
Markets and merchant stalls
Inter-school socials
Blue Light Discos
Drive in movies
Open mic nights
Live music
Battle of the bands
Colour runs / fun runs
Sports events
Tough Mudder
School fetes
Dive in movies
Celebrity appearances
Amusement rides
Tulip festival
Long lunch
Relay for Life
Circus
Camping festivals
Ice skating rink

b) Issues and Concerns

The main issues and concerns about what is currently available are:

- The current events being run in the community are not being well attended by young people
- Young people are either not aware of current events or unable to attend them due to a range of issues. These include safety issues, curfews, the costs involved, self esteem issues, parental concerns and lack of transport
- Young people also mentioned judgement by others as a reason for not going to current events

Suggested Outcomes by Young People

Young people made the following suggestions with regards to future events and festivals:

- Young people would like to see more events that are tailored specifically to young people. Suggestions included fun runs such as the Colour Run, live music, mobile water slides, dances, bubble runs and paint ball
- Better promotion of events is needed. Young people recommended promoting events early - at least two months in advance - using a variety of medium including posters, flyers, letter box drops, schools, TV, radio and social media
- “More markets like Glebe Markets in Sydney”
- “I think it would be a good idea to have a youth festival”

2. After School and School Holiday Activities

a) Issues and Concerns

The following issues were raised concerning after school and school holiday activities available in Wingecarribee:

- Limited activities available
- Lack of affordable activities
- Location
- Timing
- Competing commitments
- Not being aware of the activities that are available
- Lack of consistent promotion of available activities
- The need for age-appropriate activities - activities aimed at different ages across the “youth” age range
- The need for welcoming, youth-friendly environments
- Supervision of activities
- Issues with other young people who attend the activities

b) Impact on Young People

The impact of these issues includes:

- The need for more activities apart from sporting activities. Currently the focus is mostly on organised sports. A range of activities such as short courses, movie nights etc were suggested
- Activities are expensive and often not centrally located
- There is a lack of information available well in advance of the activities that are available, and they are not promoted well
- There is too much focus on older age groups, including older teens. Not enough for younger teens
- Concerns about being judged by other young people who attend

Suggested Outcomes by Young People

The following suggestions were made to improve after school and school holiday activities in the area:

- More youth-specific activities, including age appropriate activities that are offered across the full age range of young people
- Young people are keen for a range of affordable activities, including activities that are accessible to public transport, held in central locations in towns and villages, as well as being offered outings to places outside the local area
- Activities need to be promoted well ahead of time, using a wide range of promotional options including posters, flyers, social media, youth workers promoting things at schools
- A range of short courses should be available for young people on various topics such as first aid, mental health, bullying, barista skills, fitness etc
- There was support by young people for youth-specific spaces for them to “hang out” after school, with a range of activity and venue options suggested - such as youth hubs and games arcades

3. Sports and Recreation

a) Types of Activities

When asked what types of sports and recreational activities they would like, young people came up with a wide range of ideas. These included:

Indoor and outdoor rock climbing
Laser tag
Paint ball
Go karting
Mountain biking
Futsal
Social soccer
Dodge ball
Drive in cinema
Oz tag
Archery
Trampolining
Bubble soccer
Youth dances
Bubble soccer
Youth sports festivals
Futsal
Dancing
Swimming
Gymnastics
Sumo wrestling
Gym for teens
Cooking
Youth colour run
Badminton
Cross country
Hiking
Wave pool
Tough mudder
Motocross
Orienteering
Marathons
Ultimate frisbee
Human soccer
Zorbs

b) Location of Activities

When asked about the best locations for sports and recreational activities, young people were keen to ensure that the locations were easily accessible, and involved a variety of indoor and outdoor options. Comments included:

- Indoor and outdoor
- Consideration of the location - how to get there?
- Needs transport to and from
- Should be close to public transport
- Should have happy, bubbly staff
- Could use school halls
- Outside activities should have wet weather options in case it rains

c) Timing of Activities

With regards to when these activities should be available, young people want variety. Comments included:

- Weekends
- School holidays
- After school (with transport provided)
- Friday and Saturday nights
- During school time - include activities as part of school sport, eg archery, indoor climbing, laser tag

d) Cost

A range of questions and comments were made concerning costs. These included:

- “We can fundraise” (for funding to help cover costs)

- The more people who do it the cheaper it will be
- Parents will be paying for it most of the time
- Do we need to buy equipment?
- Can we be a member (of a sports club or activity centre, in order to reduce costs)?
- Costs will vary depending on how long / often an activity runs

Suggested Outcomes by Young People

There was strong support from young people who took part in this discussion for a wide range of sport and recreation activities. Suggestions included:

- Establishing a youth sports centre with a wide range of structured and unstructured activities, offering cheap entry and including sports, games, bean bags, “hang out stations”, a pool etc*
- Building a relationship with local transport companies to get young people to and from activities
- Offering a variety of opening times including after school, weekends, school holiday and late evenings
- Young people are happy to pay for activities, providing prices are reasonable. $10 - 20 was suggested as reasonable, especially if this included transport
- Offering special deals, so that the more often young people go the cheaper it is
- Sports businesses / venues need to have good, friendly, approachable staff
- Programs and activities should be promoted through social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, as well as through flyers at school, and targeting parents.

***Note: Following the recent opening of the PCYC, many of these suggestions can be met by the new centre. It’s important to ensure that the PCYC is promoted well to young people in order to maximise its potential.*

4. Transport

a) Issues

The issues identified regarding transport were discussed under the following sub-headings:

Buses:
- Limited routes and services
- Bad behaviour on buses - swearing, bullying etc
- Crowding
- Students having to stand for long distances on school buses
- Limited number of bus shelters
- Lack of information about non-school buses
- Long journey times on buses
- Limited number of direct services

Trains:
- Personal safety
- Unreliable - are often late or don't arrive at all
- Connections to alternative transport are poor - especially if a service is cancelled

Travelling alone:
- Personal safety - shady characters at train stations and elsewhere
- Disconnected footpaths and cycle paths - create safety issues
- You can't walk between towns

b) Impact on Young People

One of the main impacts of these issues us that young people rely heavily on others for transport. Comments included:
- "Out of towners" rely heavily on parents for transport
- Friends and family help but can't always be relied on
- Feeling unsafe when other young people are driving you - e.g. brothers

Suggested Outcomes by Young People

The following recommendations were made concerning these issues:
- Better promotion of public transport options, using transport apps, social media etc
- Timetables at bus stops need to be well maintained, larger, easier to read and regularly updated
- Increased reporting of bad behaviour amongst travellers
- Youth discounts should be provided when using local taxis
- Improved security is needed on trains and buses
- Wifi hotspots should be available on trains and buses, with designated seats for young people to do homework or read
- Increase bus routes, and decrease travel times by having express buses for longer distances with limited pick-ups
- Specific buses for students / young people to enable them to get to work, sporting activities etc outside of school hours
- Bus companies should research young people's needs in the afternoon and outside of school hours
- A free shuttle bus network is needed that connects various transport options (like in Wollongong)

5. Teen Hangout Spaces

a) Current Options

When asked where they currently hang out, young people mentioned the following places/ spaces:

Cafes
Movies
Skate parks
Sporting areas
Bowral town centre
We just walk around
Friends places
Corbett Gardens
Internet cafes
Gloria Jeans
Youth groups
Pools
McDonalds
Bowling alley
Laser Skirmish
Macarthur Square
Library
Youth hub
Beach
Church
Sydney
Home
Bundanoon
Mt Gibraltar
Basketball stadium
Water holes

b) Issues and Concerns

Young people mentioned a number of concerns and issues with the current options for spaces to hang out. These included:

- Lack of knowledge about available teen hang out spaces
- Money / cost
- Opening hours
- Judgements and stereotyping from others in the community
- Transport issues
- Lack of suitable space / land for use by and with young people

c) Impact on Young People

The impact of these issues includes:

- Lack of information / knowledge about the available spaces and how to find them means that these places are often under-utilised
- The cost of things like movies and cafes are expensive, which makes them hard to do regularly
- Cafes and shops close too early. There is nothing to do once they are closed
- Young people feel intimidated by adults, and often feel looked down upon and judged. Parents are often concerned about what their children are getting up to
- More transport options are needed, especially for out-of-towners, as well as better bike paths and walking tracks, with better links between towns. Some transport options are also too expensive

Suggested Outcomes by Young People

Young people made the following suggestions to improve the teen hang out options:

- A multi-purpose arcade / gaming house where you can pay to use machines etc, or just go and sit down for free with your mates. These could have vending machines and membership cards
- Earlier notice of what's available, and better promotion, such as developing a "Youth News" space
- Cheap and free options for activities - such as free events with cheap food and drinks
- A mobile cafe or teen cafe open after school and on weekends
- Youth hub provided with longer opening hours
- Youth focused facilities such as youth shops, cafes, movie nights, dance parties, music events, winter hang outs, camps, paintball and laser skirmish
- More buses and connections into and between towns. More good quality bike tracks

6. Arts and Culture

a) Types of Arts and Cultural Experiences

When asked what types of arts and cultural experiences young people would like, the following things were discussed:

- Street art - murals, permanent and temporary
- Theatre
- Dance
- More foods - diversity
- Live music and busking
- More workshops / courses for arts and music
- More designated walls to spray-paint legally
- Spray painting workshops
- A shed where you can paint or do artsy stuff, write poetry
- Be able to hear bands with a wide range of music styles - metal, folk, classical, pop, jazz

b) Barriers

When asked what stops young people from doing these things, the following issues were raised:

- Cost - needs to be free or cheap …up to $20
- Transport - not enough options
- Location - not having the right areas to do things in
- People, businesses stopping you
- Stereotyping of young people from others in the community
- Timing - not being available on weekends
- “The mentality in Wingecarribee Shire seems to be focused around more “older” ideas. From the perspective of youth living here, this idea seems to prevent young people from trying new things and discovering ideas and concerns”

c) Improving Access

These barriers could be reduced or overcome through the following things:

- Central locations
- Welcoming venues
- Close to public transport
- Designated teen spaces
- Having materials provided
- Having workshops available during the day
- Get young people, parents and teachers involved
- Provide these at or near schools
- Donations to help cover costs

Suggested Outcomes by Young People

There was strong support for more arts and cultural experiences for young people. Their suggestions and recommendations included:

- “Close the main street one day and have everyone have a go at chalk art. Have stalls as well”
- Get everyone involved - young people, teachers, parents, community members
- “We should learn about other cultures, not just Australian and Aboriginal”
- Advertise and promote activities through banners, social media, word of mouth, signs around Bowral (and other towns and villages) and in schools
- Provide more opportunities for young people to try new things and have more arts / cultural experiences

7. Stress

a) Causes of Stress

The main causes of stress amongst young people in Wingecarribee are:

- School
- Family and home life
- Friends and peers
- Social media
- Employment
- Money / lack of money
- Concerns about the future
- Fear of judgement / embarrassment

b) Impact on Young People

The impact that stress has on young people includes:

- Difficulties balancing school, work, friends, family life and recreational activities
- Lots of pressure from self and others - including friends, family, teachers, and other adults to do well at everything
- Young people don't feel supported by adults as they feel that adults don't understand the pressure young people are under
- There is lots of negative stigma around seeking help, and young people worry about confidentiality and remaining anonymous
- The cost of living is high in Wingecarribee and things are expensive. Young people are impacted by their parents' being stressed because of concerns about money
- Local job prospects are low for young people, and young people find it hard to fit part time work around their other activities
- There is a heavy workload / homework load for students. From Year 9 on young people are feeling pressured about the HSC. Young people are also concerned about limited subject choices at school
- Peer pressure - finding common interests with other young people and the need to fit in all put pressure on young people, which is hard to deal with
- There is pressure to look, dress and act a certain way
- Pressure to have a boyfriend / girlfriend
- Constant connectedness to social media creates stress. Especially because of bullying and nasty comments, negative judgements and worries about the number of likes on Facebook
- There is a fear of judgement, embarrassment and shame associated with accessing support services, because the region is small and everyone knows each other
- There is a lack (or perceived lack) of services available to support young people, so they resort to help from people they know or online
- Most young people are aware of positive coping strategies, but self-harm and substance abuse still happen for some young people

Suggested Outcomes by Young People

The following suggestions were made to combat stress amongst young people in Wingecarribee:

- Increase the number and range of support services available to young people. This should include services in schools, as well as outreach services and online support. Services should be more young people friendly, comfortable and welcoming. A commitment to confidentiality should be ensured.
- Teach positive coping skills from an early age - from early primary school
- Provide additional supports from adults
- Increase awareness and promotion of mental health issues and stress
- Offer inexpensive, fun activities for young people to enable them to socialise and combat some of the negative impacts of stress. Also, continue to support young people to see their friends and have social time

8. Peer Pressure

a) Issues

The key issues raised by young people with regard to peer pressure were:
- Not being able to say no
- Having social intelligence
- The need for self awareness
- The difference between good and bad pressure
- Being able to manage saying no or being different
- Family pressures to perform and do better
- Fear of not fitting in by standing out
- Conflict and fighting from group influences and group pressures
- Pressure to NOT do well academically by peers

b) impact on Young People

The impact of peer pressure on young people includes:
- Feeling forced into doing something you are not comfortable with or think is wrong
- Saying no and your friends being angry with you
- The pressure is there from Year 6, and it gets harder and more complex as you go through high school
- Needing to have enough confidence to be yourself
- Sometimes pressure is good - it can help you to try something new or face your fears
- Can lead to losing friends
- Learning that its ok to be yourself and the world will still accept you
- Realising who your friends are, and who will support you
- Pressure also comes from external sources, such as media - TV, magazines, social media
- It can start off as fun but end up in trouble
- Pressure from parents - comparisons with siblings, other family members, friends
- Peer pressure can stop you from following your dreams and passions
- Continuing to be a friend no matter what choices you and your friends make - let them know you are there for them, not judging them
- Peer pressure can effect your future - opportunities, relationships, employment
- You can end up settling for something rather than doing what you really want

Suggested Outcomes by Young People

The following recommendations came out of the small group discussions:
- More conversations are needed from an early age to educate and equip young people to deal with peer pressure before it happens, not after. There should be daily conversations about this, not one-off events. This should start in primary school and continue through high school
- Learning the skills to say no
- Educate parents to support young people with peer pressure
- Providing peer mentoring and positive role models to counter-balance the negative impacts
- More information should be provided to young people about external support services - knowing where to go for help
- More activities and venues which provide an environment where peer pressure is less likely or not tolerated, such as alcohol and drug free activities and events

9. Sex and Sexuality

This group looked at issues faced by young people concerning sex and sexuality, with a focus on young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, inter-sex or questioning (LGBTIQ).

a) Issues

The issues and barriers around sexuality include:
- Bullying
- Staring
- Judgement
- Sexualised comments
- Sexual harassment
- Lack of services
- Misuse of social media
- Lack of community awareness / acceptance
- Abuse
- Exclusion
- Environmental issues - home, peers, school, local community
- Lack of understanding by parents
- Fear of not being accepted
- Isolation
- Mental health issues

b) Impact on Young People

The impact of these barriers and issues on young people who identify as LGBTIQ in Wingecarribee are:

- Lack of services and support
- Feeling isolated and alone
- Concerns about confidentiality - which makes it hard to talk to anyone
- Fear of labels
- Reliance on pornography for information, which causes false expectations and false information about sex and relationships
- Lack of self acceptance
- Fear of judgement and rejection

Suggested Outcomes by Young People

The recommendations arising from this group were:
- More support groups are needed for LGBTIQ young people, ensuring that they are better promoted to young people. This should include support groups in schools
- Increased awareness of LGBTIQ issues in the broader community and amongst young people, by offering more in depth sex and relationships education in schools which explores gay sex, contraception / safe sex, the meaning of sex etc
- Offering workshops for parents and community members about LGBTIQ people
- Promoting acceptance and greater understanding of LGBTIQ people in the community

10. Intergenerational Issues

a) Issues

The key issues raised by young people which cause intergenerational conflict were:
- Technology
- Generational differences
- Older family members not being involved in family life
- Communication
- Interaction

b) Impact on Young People

The impact that these issues have on intergenerational relationships are:

Technology - Older people don't like change, and young people could be less reliant on technologies. Young people don't think that older people can use / make the best use of technology

Generational differences
- Traditions, rules and regulations
- Lack of interest between the generations
- Older people tend to be less accepting of differences in culture and sexuality
- "Young people think older people are rude and grumpy. Older people think young people are rude and grumpy"

Involvement in family life
- There is lack of interest in relationships (with each other), and less opportunity to build these
- Young people don't seek out interaction with older people

Communication
- There is judgement by peers when young people engage with older people - it's seen as embarrassing by some young people
- Personality clashes, difficulties in interacting

Interaction
- There are difficulties with interaction between generations
- Older people do not always interact well with young people
- Some young people have responsibilities for caring for older parents and relatives

Suggested Outcomes by Young People

Young people suggested the following ideas to improve inter-generational relationships:
- Improve older people's understanding of technology. Generations can learn from each other, with young people showing older people the benefits and uses of social media. This would also help young people to better understanding the value of face to face contact with others
- Provide more opportunities for young people to meet with older people, and to respect the lives they have lived
- There should be more involvement across all years at school with older people, e.g. holding Grandparents Day at primarily and high schools; older people sharing at careers expos
- Encourage opportunities through schools for family members to be involved in activities across all year groups

Other Comments and Feedback

In addition to the discussions in the roundtable groups, young people were invited to make further comments and recommendations about things they would like to have happen in the Wingecarribee area. These comments were written on post-it notes and stuck up around the room. The comments included:

- Political education (20+ post its)*
- Free wifi (10+ comments)
- Chalk board walls
- More awareness groups / support on mental issues and better mental health services (e.g. headspace), and better communication about these services between Council and young people
- Money / small businesses
- Low prices to bring more youth
- Coffee
- More trampoline places ad indoor stress relieving
- Sports centres - boxing
- Graffiti wall
- Affordable stores eg Kmart, not country boutiques - “too expensive and ugly”
- Don’t reinvent the wheel too much, rather build on existing services / facilities to make them more youth friendly and increase accessibility e.g. HYH open longer - services can hot desk / outreach
- More money - not being able to afford things because of no jobs
- More and faster public transport

**Note: Post-its recommending political education were written and pasted on each of the posters around the room. This seems to have been a well coordinated campaign by a small number of young people keen to see this happen.*

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to Wingecarribee Shire Council, arising from the issues and ideas discussed during this youth forum:

1. That Council works with local service providers to ensure that there are youth-specific spaces which house a wide range of youth services, programs and activities, and provide young people with a fun and affordable activities, such as the recently opened PCYC Southern Highlands. Council should work with the PCYC to ensure the new space is widely promoted to young people, and should investigate whether other similar youth spaces are needed within Wingecarribee Shire.

2. That Council lobbies for a range of services which address the issues raised by young people including stress and anxiety, peer pressure and sexuality. This should include services for young people, as well as programs which raise awareness of issues with parents and community members.

3. That Council explores a range of youth-focused events and activities suggested by young people at this forum, ensuring that these are well planned, promoted, affordable and accessible. This should include a wide range of cheap or free creative activities such as street art, busking, arts workshops and performance opportunities.

4. That Council works with key stakeholders to explore more effective ways of promoting the existing services and recreational opportunities for young people, in order to highlight and showcase the available services, programs and activities available to young people in Wingecarribee. Council should ensure that young people are involved in the design of promotional materials to ensure their relevance and suitability, including discussing ways to reduce the stigma associated with using / attending services and activities.

5. That Council works with local services and stakeholders to explore ways to reduce inter-generational conflict and to improve inter-generational understanding and cooperation. This should include a focus on addressing judgements and stereotypes between generations, and opportunities for young people to mix with older people, such as young people teaching older people about new technologies and social media.

6. That Council works with key stakeholders - including the NSW Government and the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People - in order to address concerns raised by young people about gaps in public transport and the impact this is having on young people's access to a range of services, recreation and employment opportunities. Council should also look at ways to increase accessibility within and between towns and villages, such as improved footpaths and bike tracks.

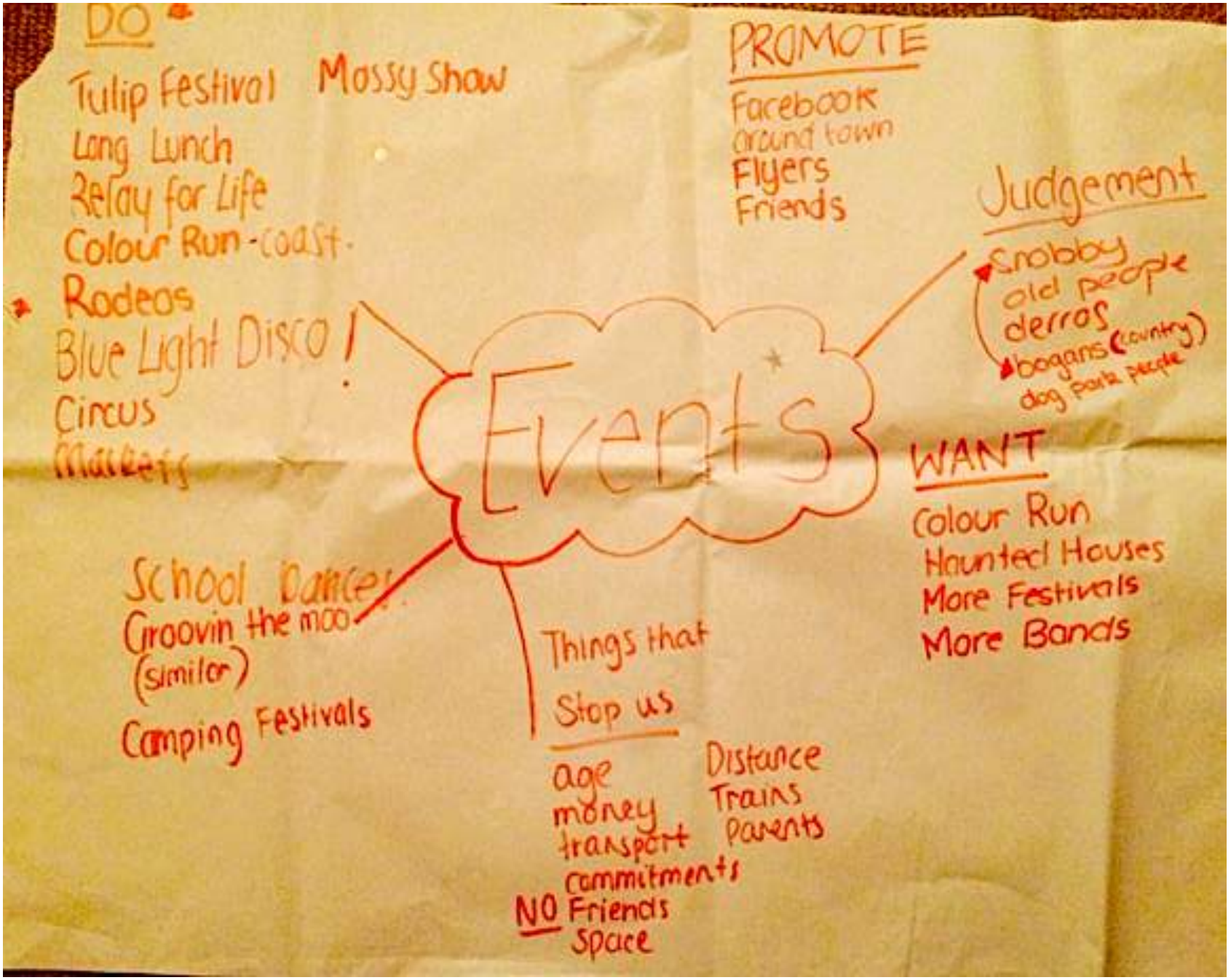
7. That Council works with key stakeholders - including local business groups, employers, state and federal government - to explore ways to increase employment opportunities for young people, including entry-level jobs which enable young people to stay living in the Shire after completing their education.

8. That Council continues to offer regular forums and consultations similar to this one, in order to promote and encourage consultation, information sharing, collaboration, and the sharing of ideas and resources with and between Council, youth services providers and young people.

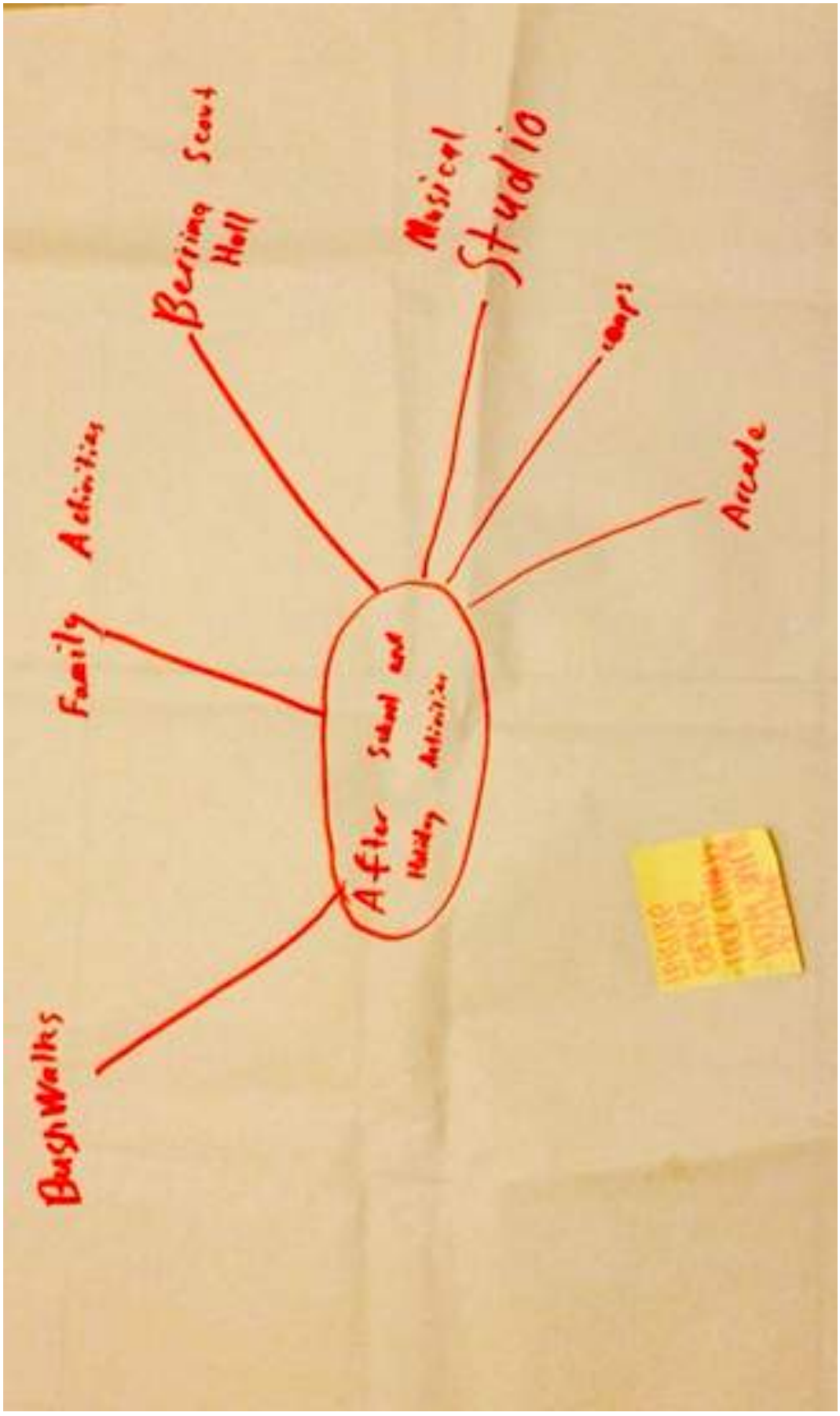
9. That Council establishes a group / committee charged with responsibility for further investigating and developing the ideas put forward during this forum. This group / committee should include representatives from Council, local youth service providers, young people and community members.

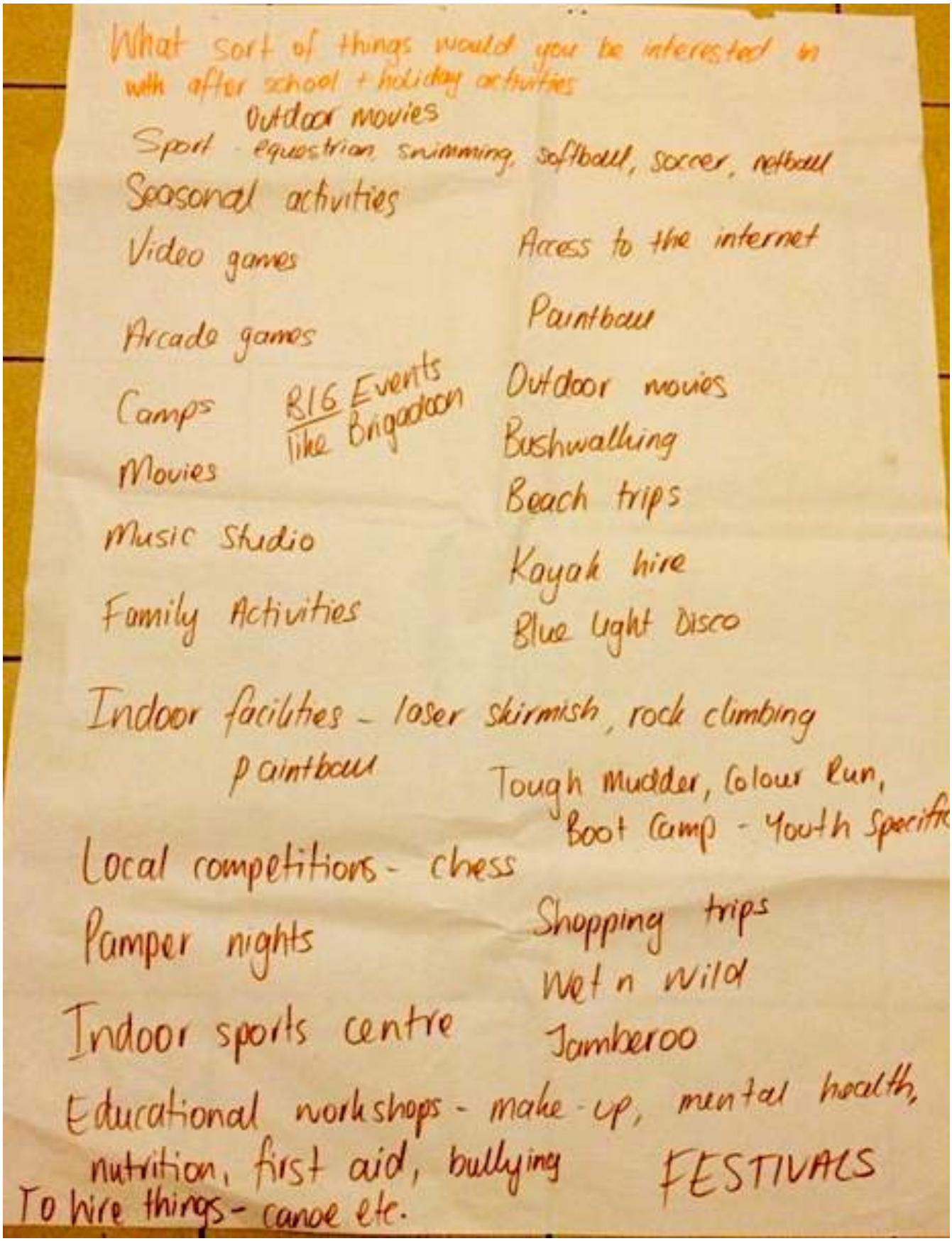
Youth
Have your say
2015
Wingecarribee
Youth Forum
9.00am-9:30am: Participant registration
9:30am-9:45am: Welcome and introduction
9:45am-10:45am: Round table discussions
10:45am-11.00am: Morning tea
11.00am –12noon: Workshops
12noon–1.00pm: Lunch
1.00pm-2.15pm: Issues and action plans
2.15pm -2.30pm: Guest speaker and wrap-up

1. Events and Festivals

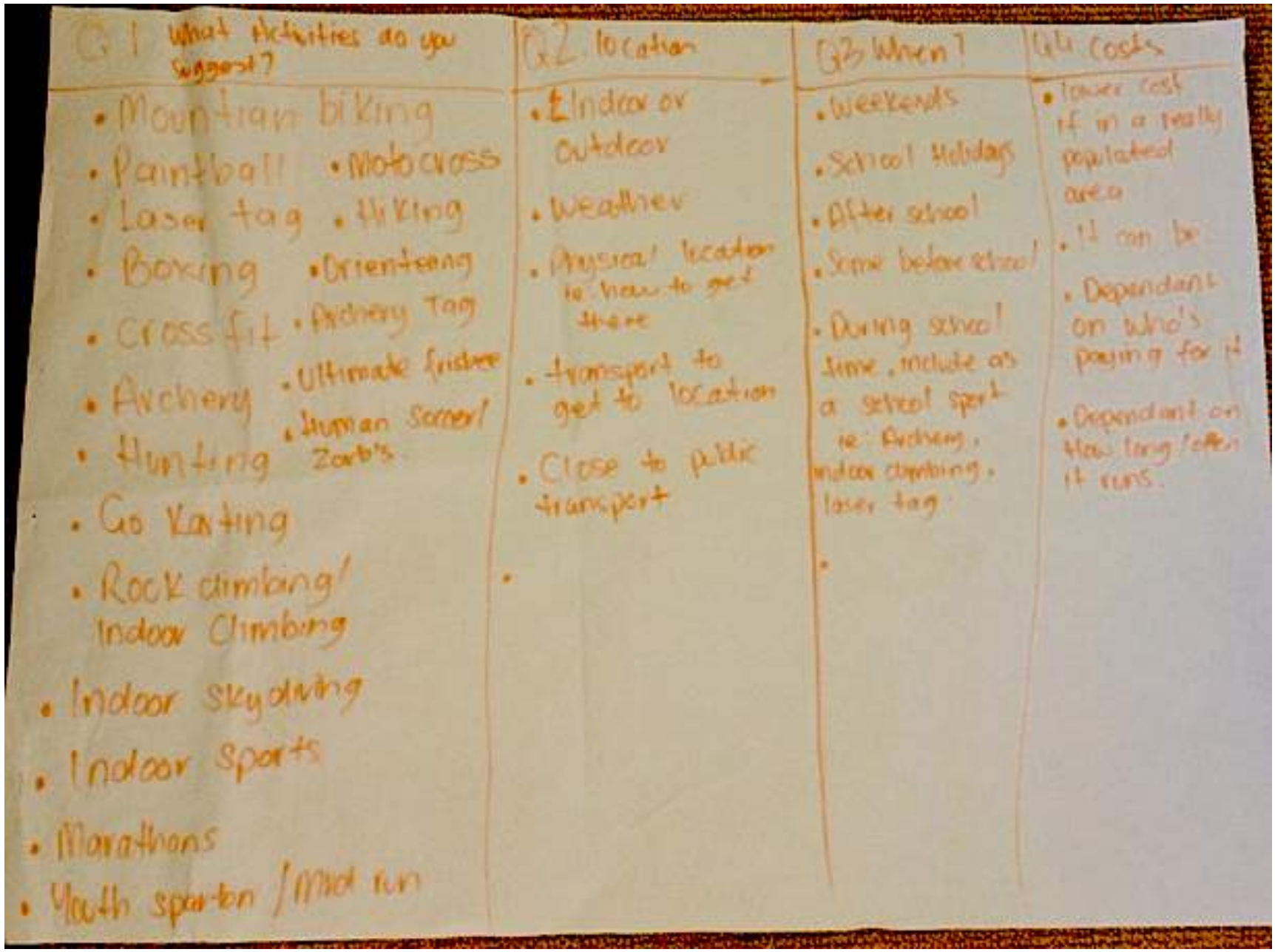

DO
Tulip Festival
Mossy Show
Long Lunch
Relay for Life
Colour Run - coast -
Rodeos
Blue Light Disco!
Circus
Markets
School Dances
Groovin the moo
(similar)
Camping Festivals
PROMOTE
Facebook
around town
Flyers
Friends
Judgement
Snobby
old people
derros
boogans (country)
dog park people
Events
WANT
Colour Run
Haunted Houses
More Festivals
More Bands
Things that
Stop us
age
money
transport
commitments
Distance
Trains
parents
NO Friends
Space

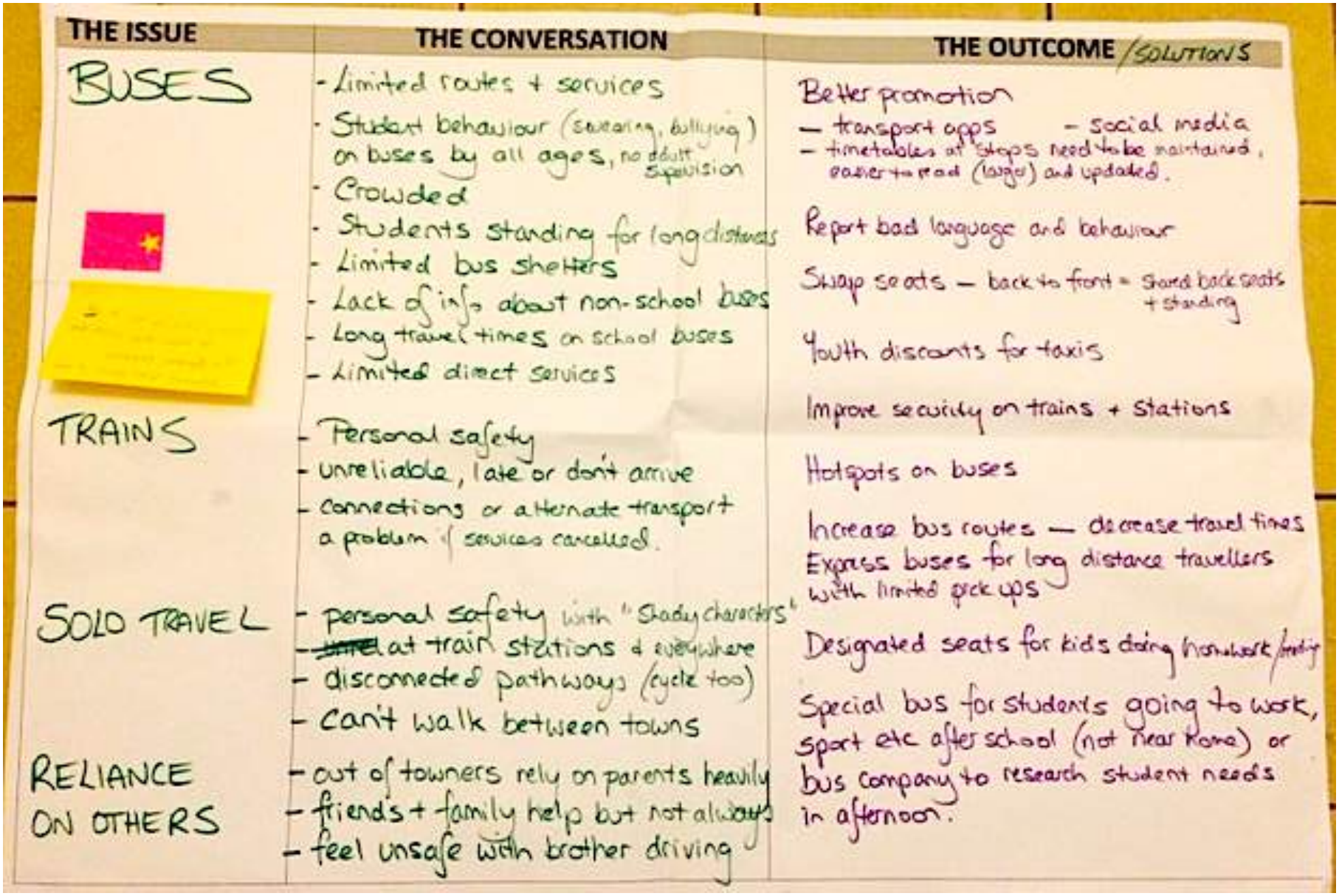
2. After School and School Holiday Activities



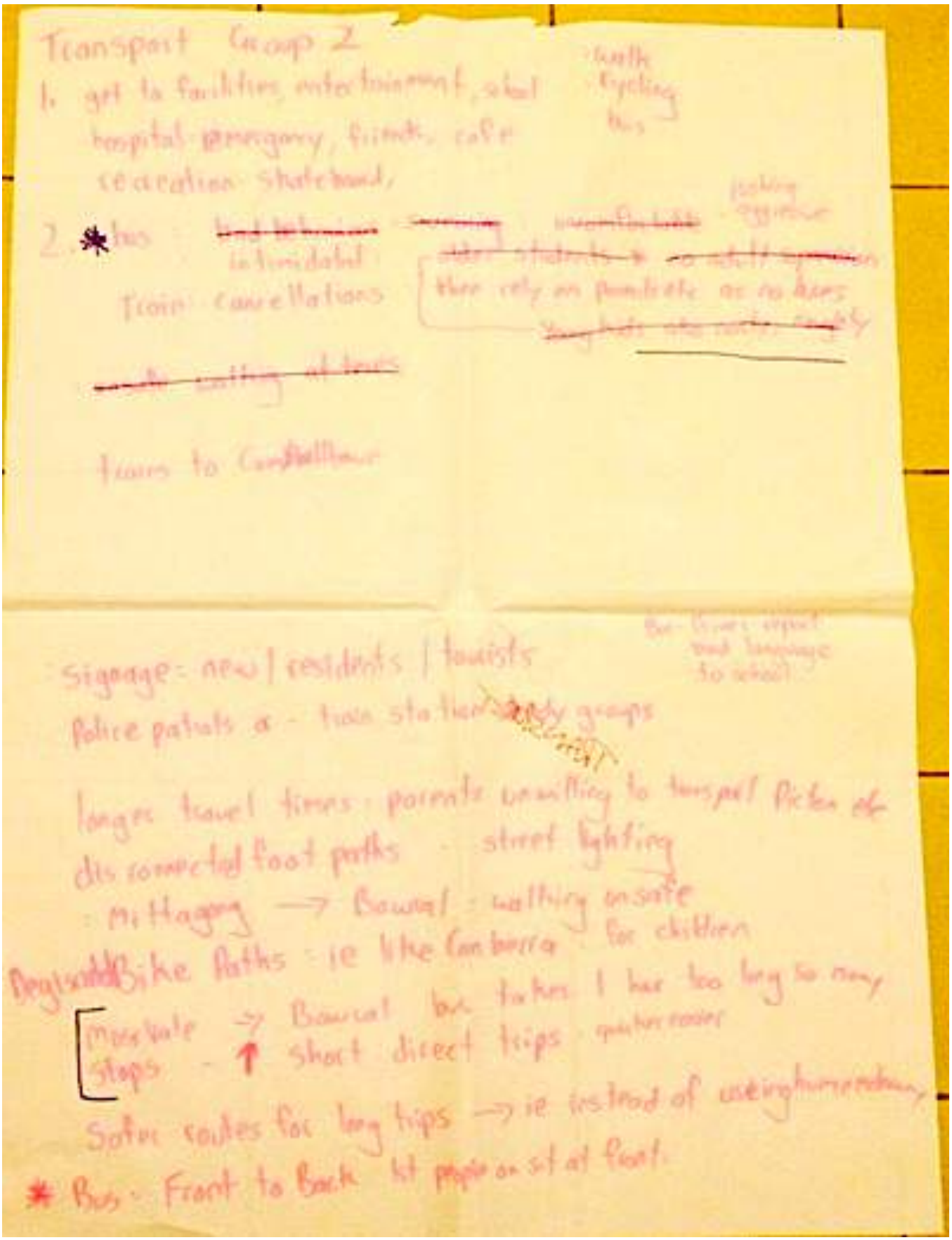

What sort of things would you be interested in with after school + holiday activities
Outdoor movies
Sport - equestrian, swimming, softball, soccer, netball
Seasonal activities
Video games
Access to the internet
Paintball
Arcade games
Camps
R16 Events like Brigadoon
Outdoor movies
Bushwalking
Movies
Beach trips
Music Studio
Kayak hire
Family Activities
Blue Light Disco
Indoor facilities - laser skirmish, rock climbing
paintball
Tough Mudder, Colour Run,
Boot Camp - Youth Specific
Local competitions - chess
Pamper nights
Shopping trips
Wet n Wild
Indoor sports centre
Jamberoo
Educational workshops - make-up, mental health,
nutrition, first aid, bullying
FESTIVALS
To hire things - canoe etc.

3. Sports and Recreation


Q1 What activities do you suggest?
• Mountain biking
• Paintball
• Laser tag
• Boxing
• Cross fit
• Archery
• Hunting
• Go Karting
• Rock climbing/ Indoor Climbing
• Indoor skydiving
• Indoor Sports
• Marathons
• Youth spartan / Mud run
• Motocross
• Hiking
• Orienteering
• Archery Tag
• Ultimate frisbee
• Human Sorrel Zorb's
Q2 location
• Indoor or Outdoor
• Weather
• Physical location is how to get there
• transport to get to location
• Close to public transport
Q3 When?
• weekends
• School Holidays
• After school
• Some before school
• During school time, include as a school sport ie: Archery, indoor climbing, laser tag
Q4 Costs
• lower cost if in a really populated area
• It can be
• Dependant on who's paying for it
• Dependant on How long/often it runs.



THE ISSUE	THE CONVERSATION	THE OUTCOME / SOLUTIONS
BUSES	- Limited routes + services - Student behaviour (swearing, bullying) on buses by all ages, no adult supervision - Crowded - Students standing for long distances - Limited bus shelters - Lack of info about non-school buses - Long travel times on school buses - Limited direct services	Better promotion — transport apps — social media - timetables at stops need to be maintained, easier to read (larger) and updated. Report bad language and behaviour Swap seats — back to front = shared back seats + standing Youth discounts for taxis Improve security on trains + stations Hotspots on buses Increase bus routes — decrease travel times Express buses for long distance travellers with limited pick ups Designated seats for kids doing homework/study Special bus for students going to work, sport etc after school (not near home) or bus company to research student needs in afternoon.
TRAINS	- Personal safety - unreliable, late or don't arrive - connections or alternate transport a problem if services cancelled.	
SOLO TRAVEL	- personal safety with "Shady characters" ~~at~~ at train stations & everywhere - disconnected pathways (cycle too) - can't walk between towns	
RELIANCE ON OTHERS	- out of towners rely on parents heavily - friends + family help but not always - feel unsafe with brother driving	



Transport Group 2

1. get to facilities, entertainment, school
hospital emergency, friends, cafe
recreation skateboard,

· walk
· cycling
bus

2. * bus ~~bad behaviour~~ ~~swearing~~ ~~uncomfortable~~ · looking aggressive
intimidated

~~older students → no adult supervision~~
then rely on parents etc as no buses
~~young kids also [illegible]~~

Train cancellations

~~[illegible] waiting at [illegible]~~

trains to Campbelltown

Bus - [illegible] report
bad language
to school

Signage = new | residents | tourists

Police patrols a - train station [illegible] groups

longer travel times - parents unwilling to transport Picton etc

disconnected foot paths - street lighting

: Mittagong → Bowral : walking unsafe

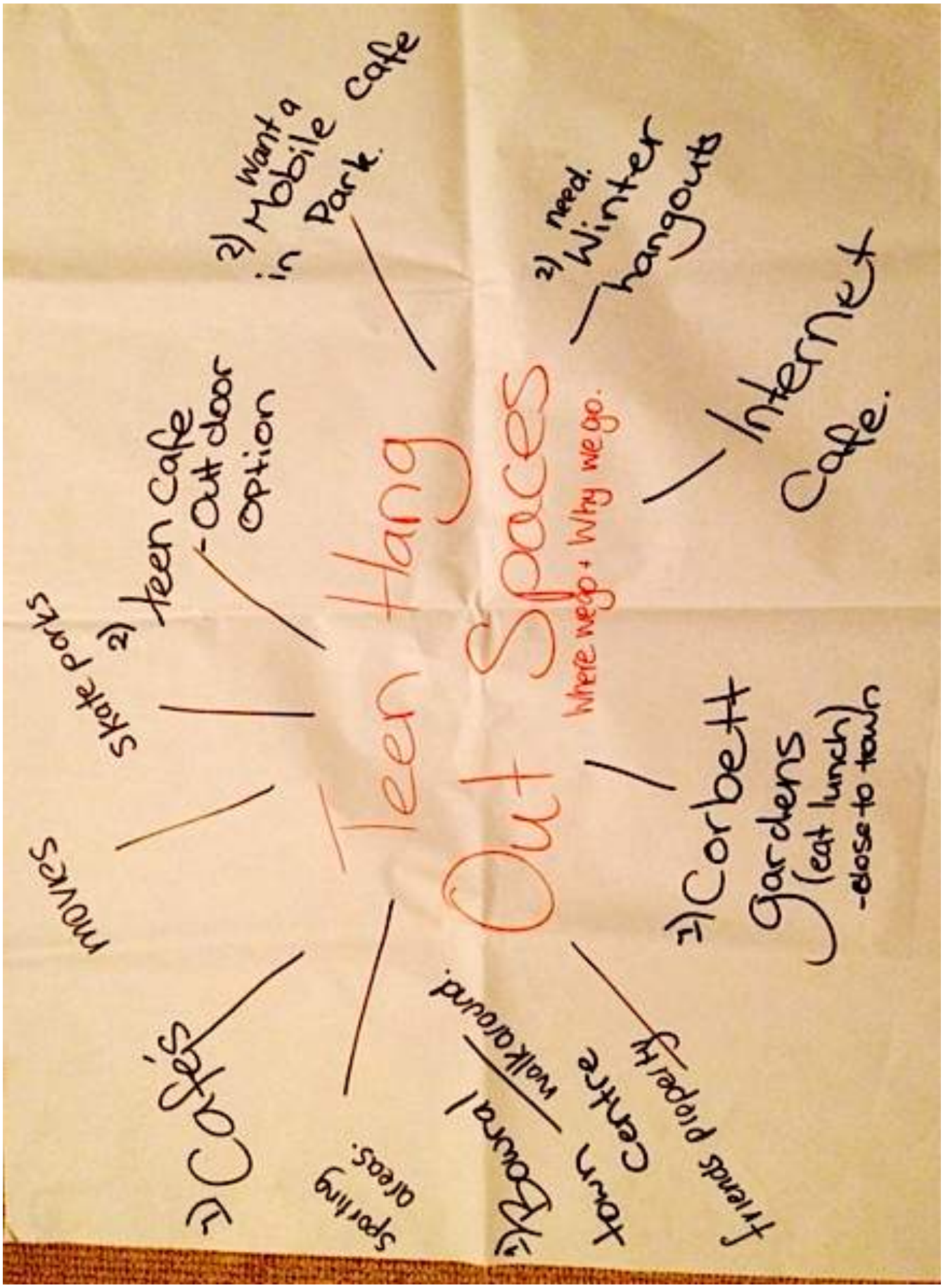
Bike Paths - ie like Canberra for children

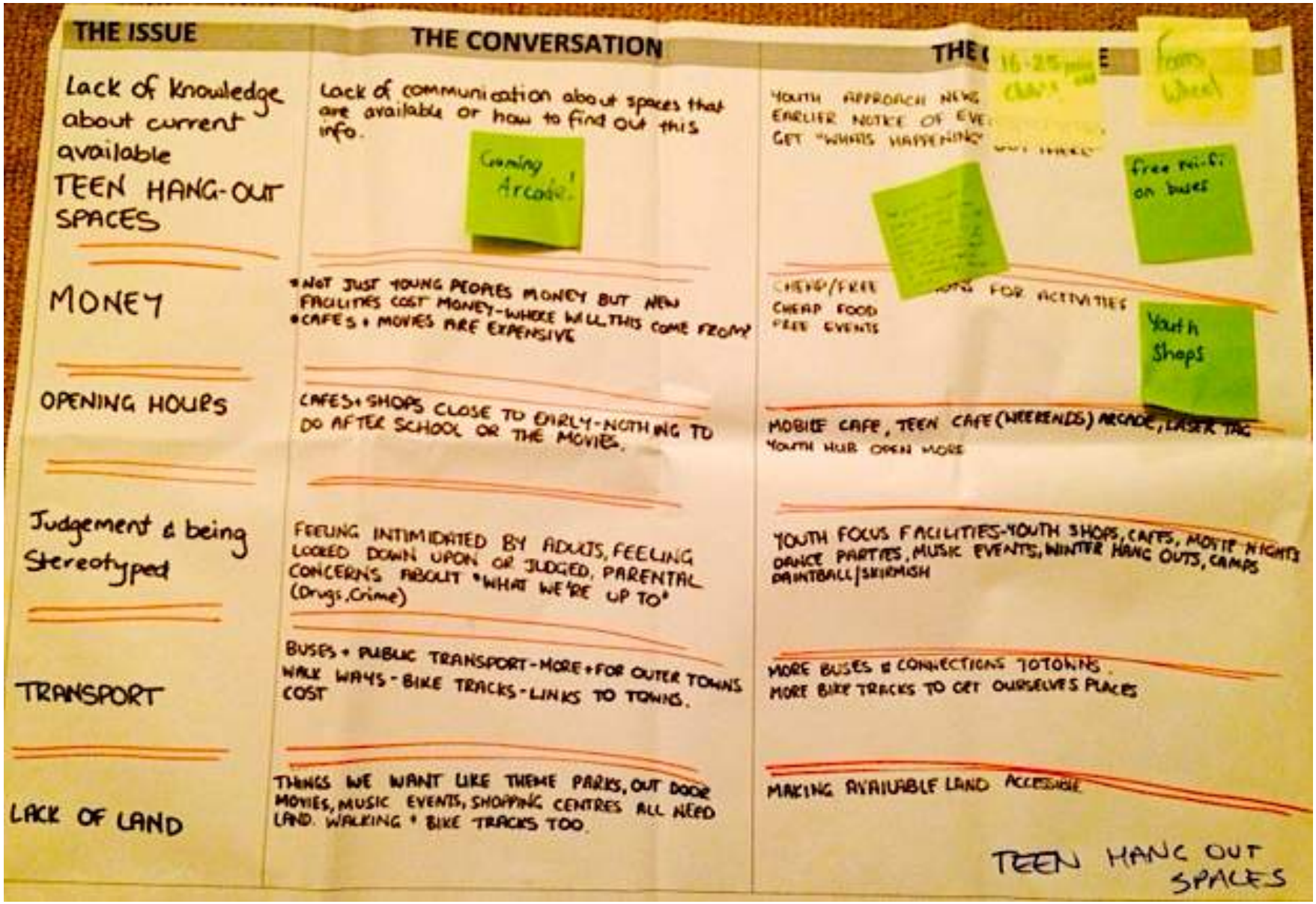
Moss Vale → Bowral bus takes 1 hour too long so many
stops - ↑ short direct trips quicker easier

Safer routes for long trips → ie instead of using [illegible]

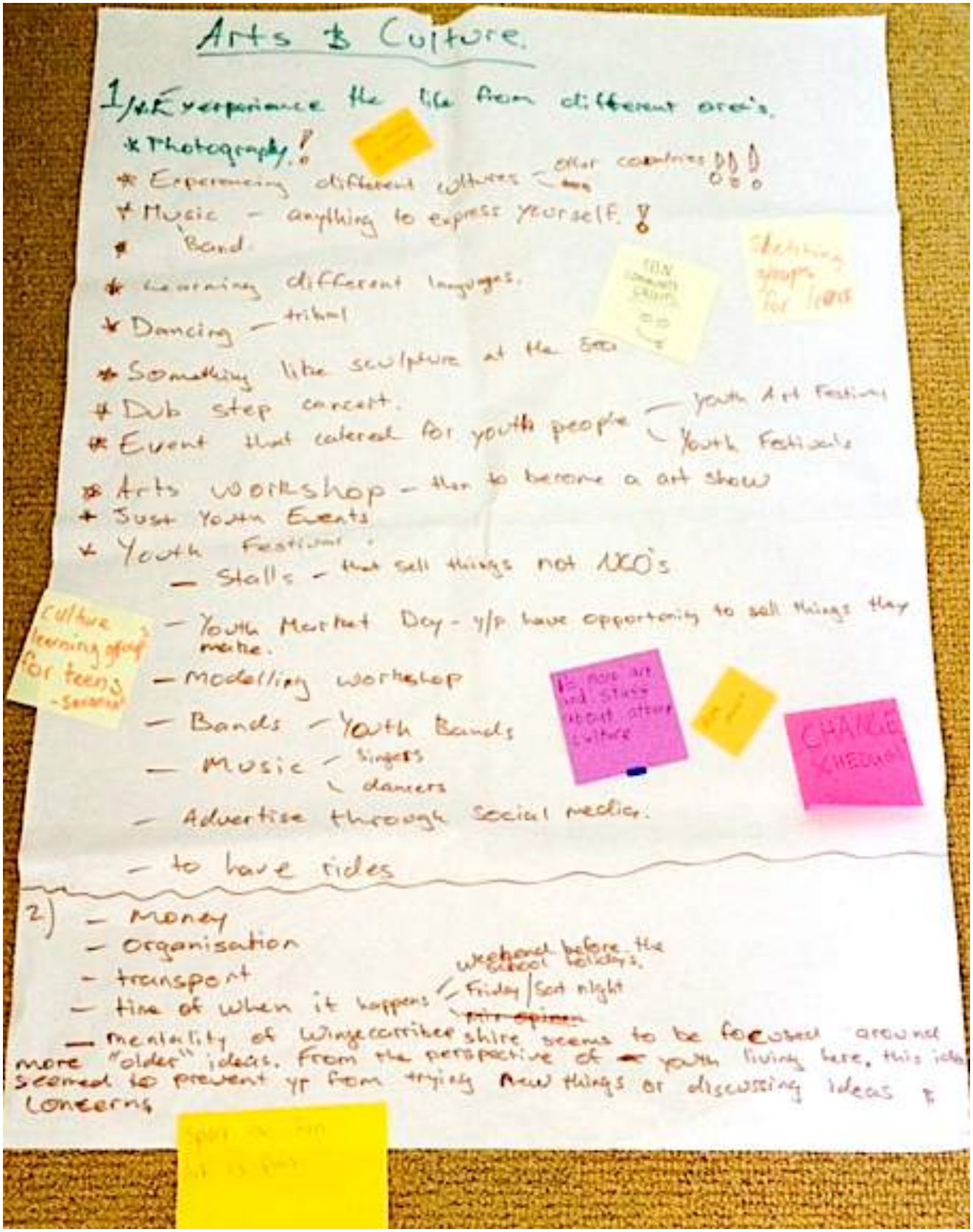
* Bus - Front to Back 1st people on sit at front.

5. Teen Hangout Spaces



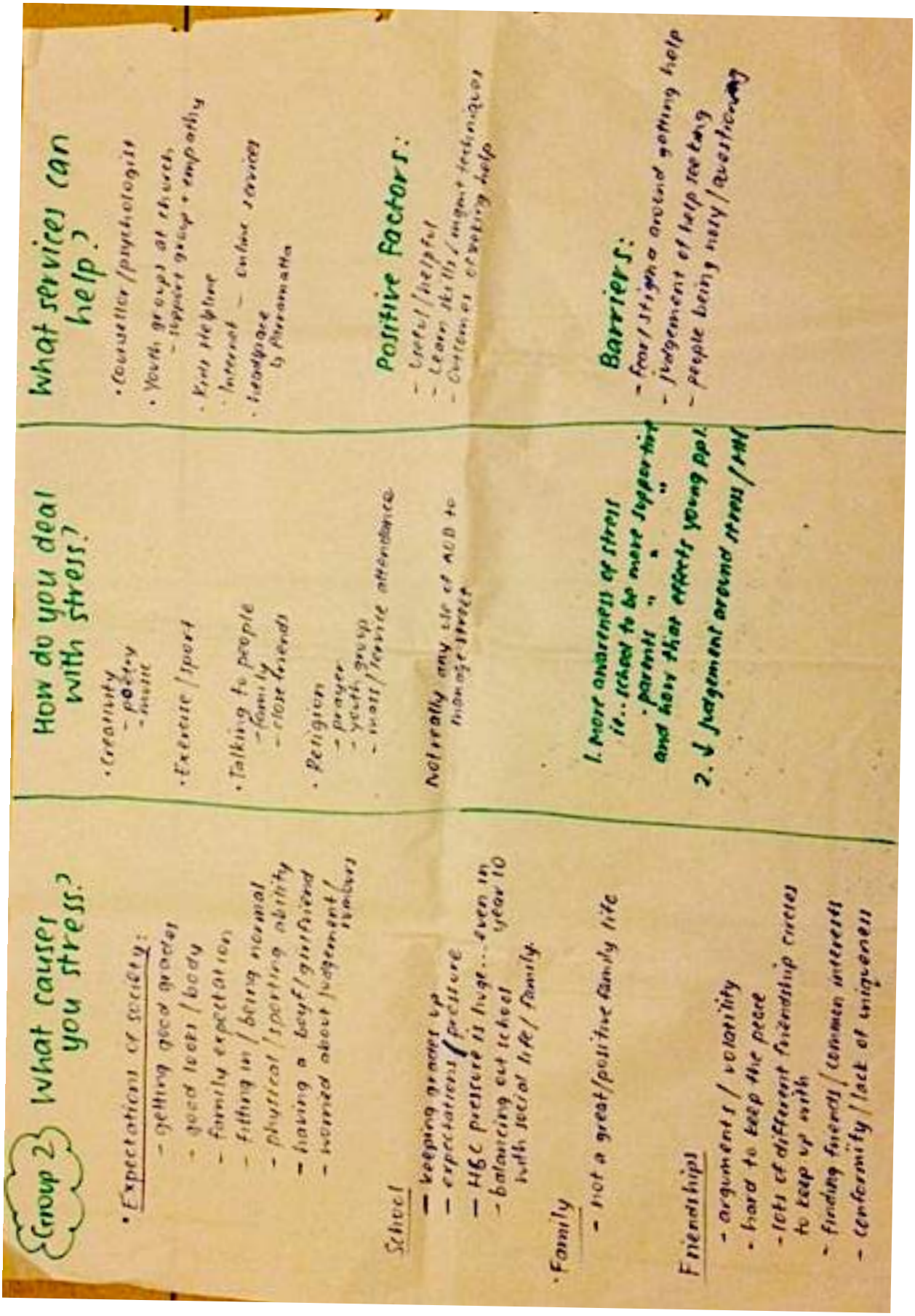

THE ISSUE
THE CONVERSATION
Lack of Knowledge about current available TEEN HANG-OUT SPACES
Lack of communication about spaces that are available or how to find out this info.
Gaming Arcade!
YOUTH APPROACH NEWS
EARLIER NOTICE OF EVE
GET "WHATS HAPPENING"
16-25 min
Forms Wheel
free wi-fi on buses
MONEY
*NOT JUST YOUNG PEOPLES MONEY BUT NEW FACILITIES COST MONEY-WHERE WILL THIS COME FROM?
*CAFES + MOVIES ARE EXPENSIVE
CHEAP/FREE
FOR ACTIVITIES
CHEAP FOOD
FREE EVENTS
Youth Shops
OPENING HOURS
CAFES + SHOPS CLOSE TO EARLY-NOTHING TO DO AFTER SCHOOL OR THE MOVIES.
MOBILE CAFE, TEEN CAFE (WEEKENDS) ARCADE, LASER TAG
YOUTH HUB OPEN MORE
Judgement & being Stereotyped
FEELING INTIMIDATED BY ADULTS, FEELING LOOKED DOWN UPON OR JUDGED, PARENTAL CONCERNS ABOUT "WHAT WE'RE UP TO" (Drugs, Crime)
YOUTH FOCUS FACILITIES-YOUTH SHOPS, CAFES, MOVIE NIGHTS DANCE PARTIES, MUSIC EVENTS, WINTER HANG OUTS, CAMPS PAINTBALL/SKIRMISH
TRANSPORT
BUSES + PUBLIC TRANSPORT-MORE + FOR OUTER TOWNS WALK WAYS-BIKE TRACKS-LINKS TO TOWNS. COST
MORE BUSES & CONNECTIONS TO TOWNS.
MORE BIKE TRACKS TO GET OURSELVES PLACES
LACK OF LAND
THINGS WE WANT LIKE THEME PARKS, OUT DOOR MOVIES, MUSIC EVENTS, SHOPPING CENTRES ALL NEED LAND. WALKING + BIKE TRACKS TOO.
MAKING AVAILABLE LAND ACCESSIBLE
TEEN HANG OUT SPACES

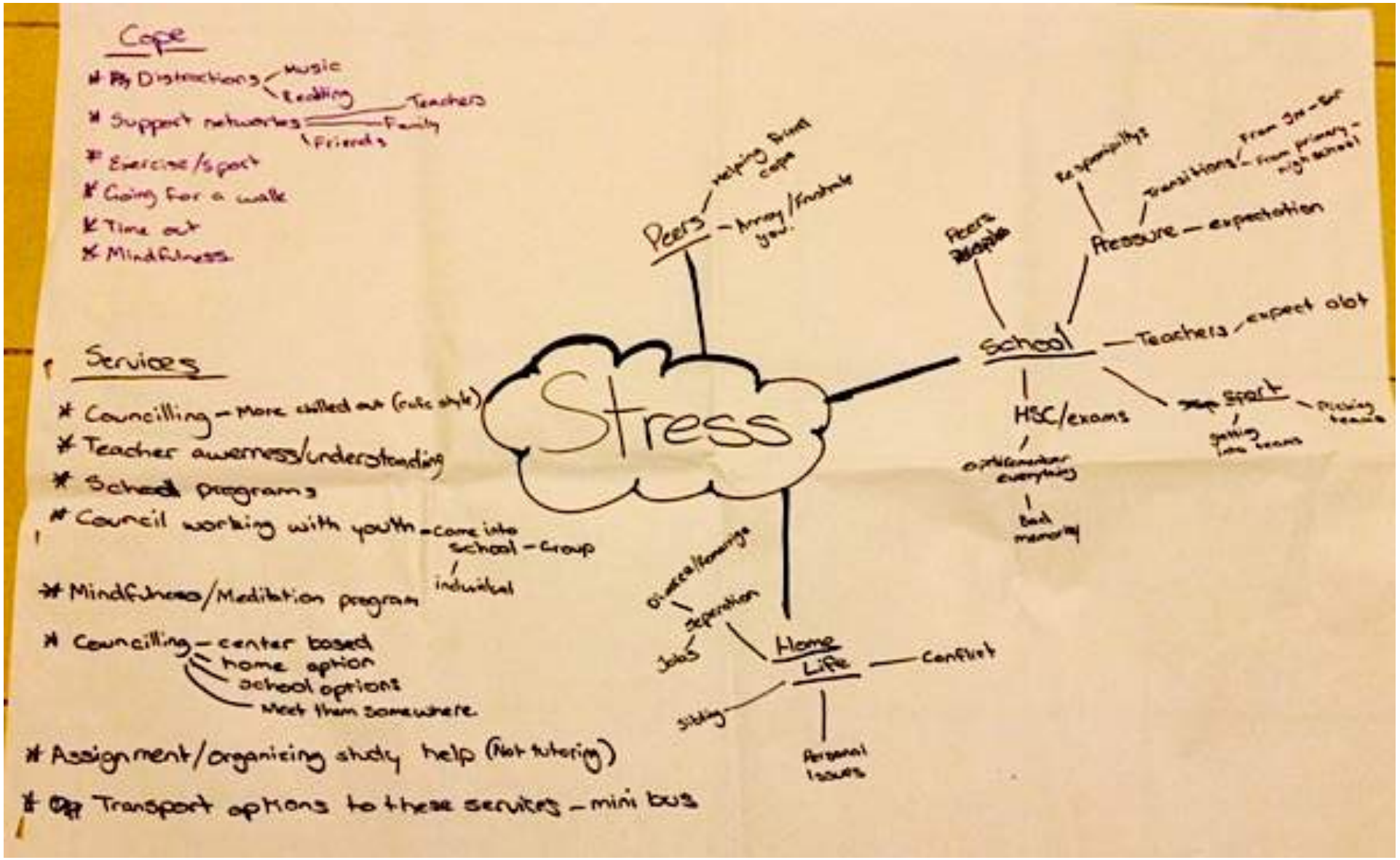
6. Arts and Culture



THE ISSUE
THE CONVERSATION
THE OUTCOME
Multicultural
Cultural workshops
NAIDOC
Workshops
Competitions
Art classes
Workshops
Arts Stall
Sculpture
Photography
Live music
Poetry
Youth Festival/Market
Street art
Observatory
Organisation
Funding
Self confidence
Older Ideas Dominant
Location
TRANSPORT

7. Stress


Group 2
What causes you stress?
Expectations of society:
- getting good grades
- good looks / body
- family expectation
- fitting in / being normal
- physical / sporting ability
- having a boyf / girlfriend
- worried about judgement / rumours
School
- keeping grades up
- expectations / pressure
- HSC pressure is huge... even in year 10
- balancing out school with social life / family.
Family
- not a great / positive family life
Friendships
- arguments / volatility
- hard to keep the peace
- lots of different friendship circles to keep up with
- finding friends / common interests
- conformity / lack of uniqueness
How do you deal with stress?
Creativity
- poetry
- music
Exercise / sport
Talking to people
- family
- close friends
Religion
- prayer
- youth group
- mass / service attendance
Not really any use of AOD to manage street
1. More awareness of stress
it.. school to be more supportive
- parents " " "
and how that effects young ppl.
2. ↓ judgement around stress / MH
What services can help?
Counsellor / psychologist
Youth groups at church
- support group + empathy
Kids Helpline
Internet - online services
headspace
by Parramatta
Positive factors:
- Useful / helpful
- Learn skills / mgmt techniques
- Outcomes of seeking help
Barriers:
- fear / stigma around getting help
- judgement of help seeking
- people being nosy / questioning


Cope
* Distractions
Music
Reading
* Support networks
Teachers
Family
Friends
* Exercise/sport
* Going for a walk
* Time out
* Mindfulness
Services
* Councilling – More chilled out (rafc style)
* Teacher awerness/understanding
* School programs
* Council working with youth – come into school – Group
individual
* Mindfulness/Meditation program
* Councilling – center based
home option
school options
Meet them somewhere
* Assignment/organizing study help (Not tutoring)
* Transport options to these services – mini bus
Stress
Peers
helping friend cope
Annoy/Frustrate you.
School
Peers
Responsibilities
Transitions
Pressure – expectation
Teachers – expect alot
HSC/exams
Sport
Home Life
Conflict
Personal issues
Sibling
Jobs
Seperation

Internet records
Losing trust of those around you
History preventing you from jobs or opportunities
Losing opportunities
Breaking and entering
-Legal consequences
Being different with different friends or people
Pressure to drink
-Alcohol poisoning
Pictures on the internet of negative activities
-drinking or other
Peer Pressure Trouble
Mental health consequences
Circle of support, not wanting to be friends
Employers check Facebook
-Photos
-Statuses
-Tagged images
Families feeling guilty
Not just affecting you. Wide spread effect.
Skipping school
-suspension
Sexting trouble
-Boys and girls can be in serious trouble
-Suspensions
-Bad reputation
Harm to self
Lose friends
Bad reputation
-Prevent making friends
Realising who your true friends are, who will support you.
Quick Conflict and fighting arising from influences or group pressure
Negative role models cause conflict
Going along with the peer pressure can be someone doing it to themselves

What is Peer Pressure!

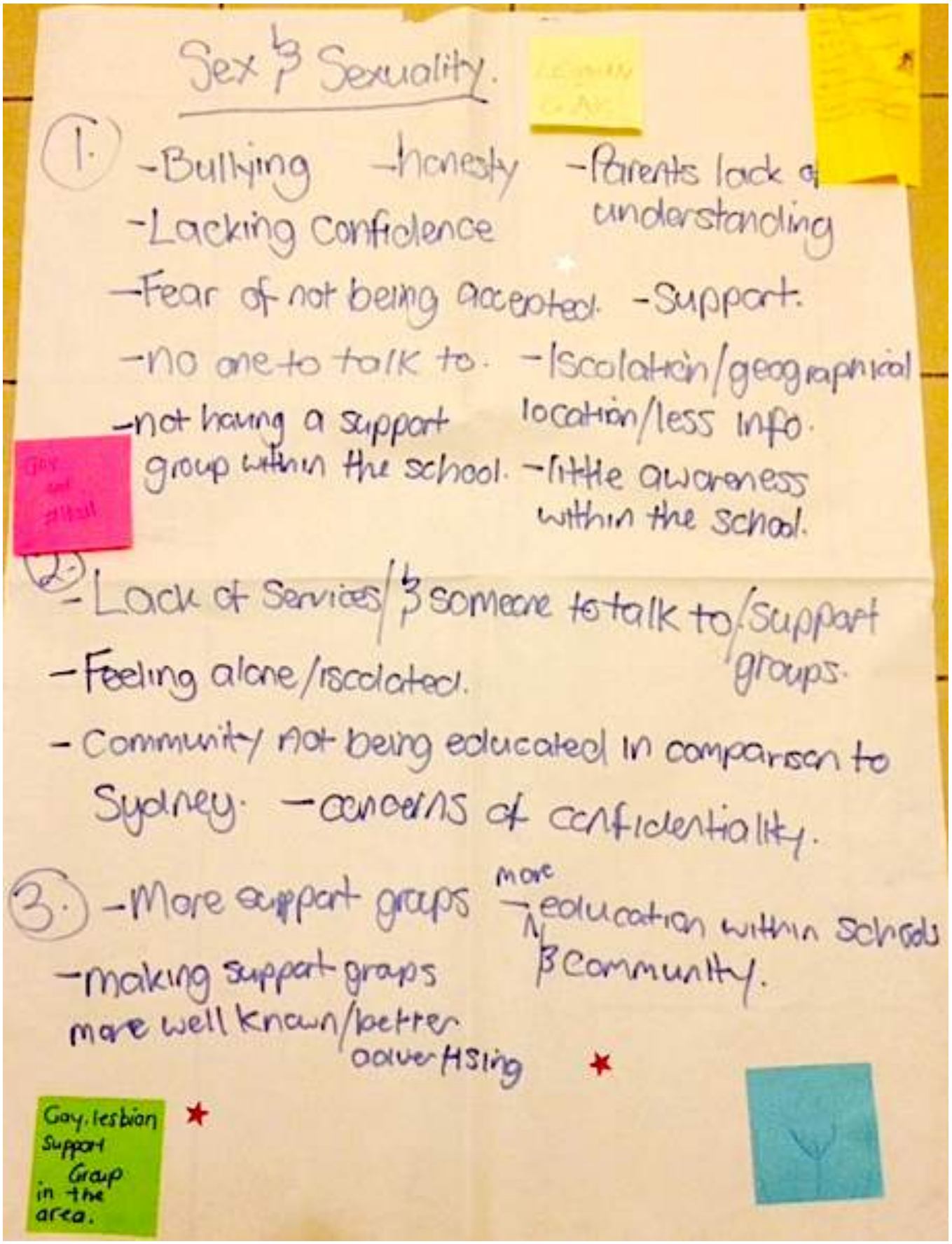
Group 3

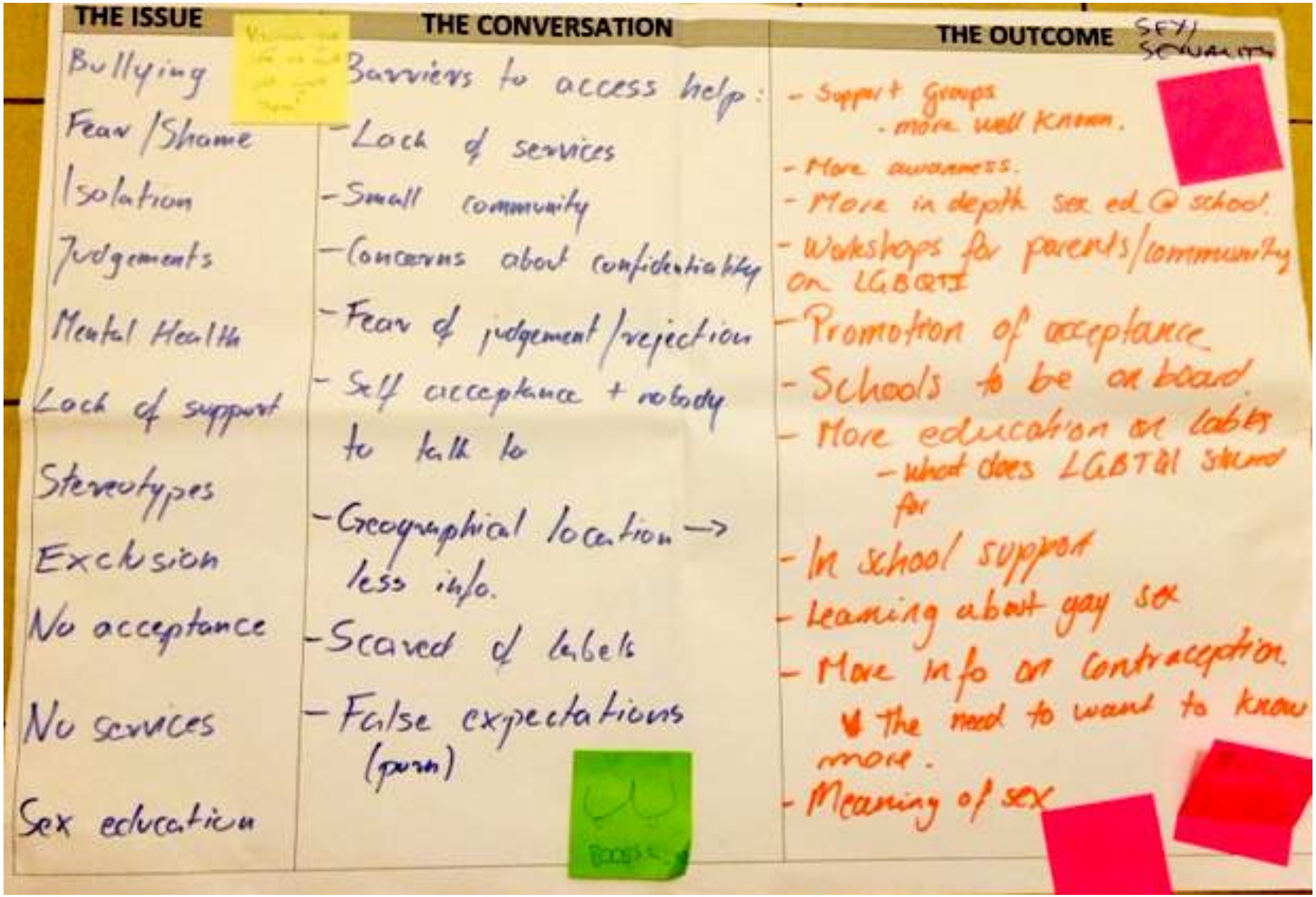
- get the latest technology or you won't fit in
- sporting pressure can be good.
- friends and people around you putting ideas on you - making you feel like you need to do stuff to remain friends.

Services

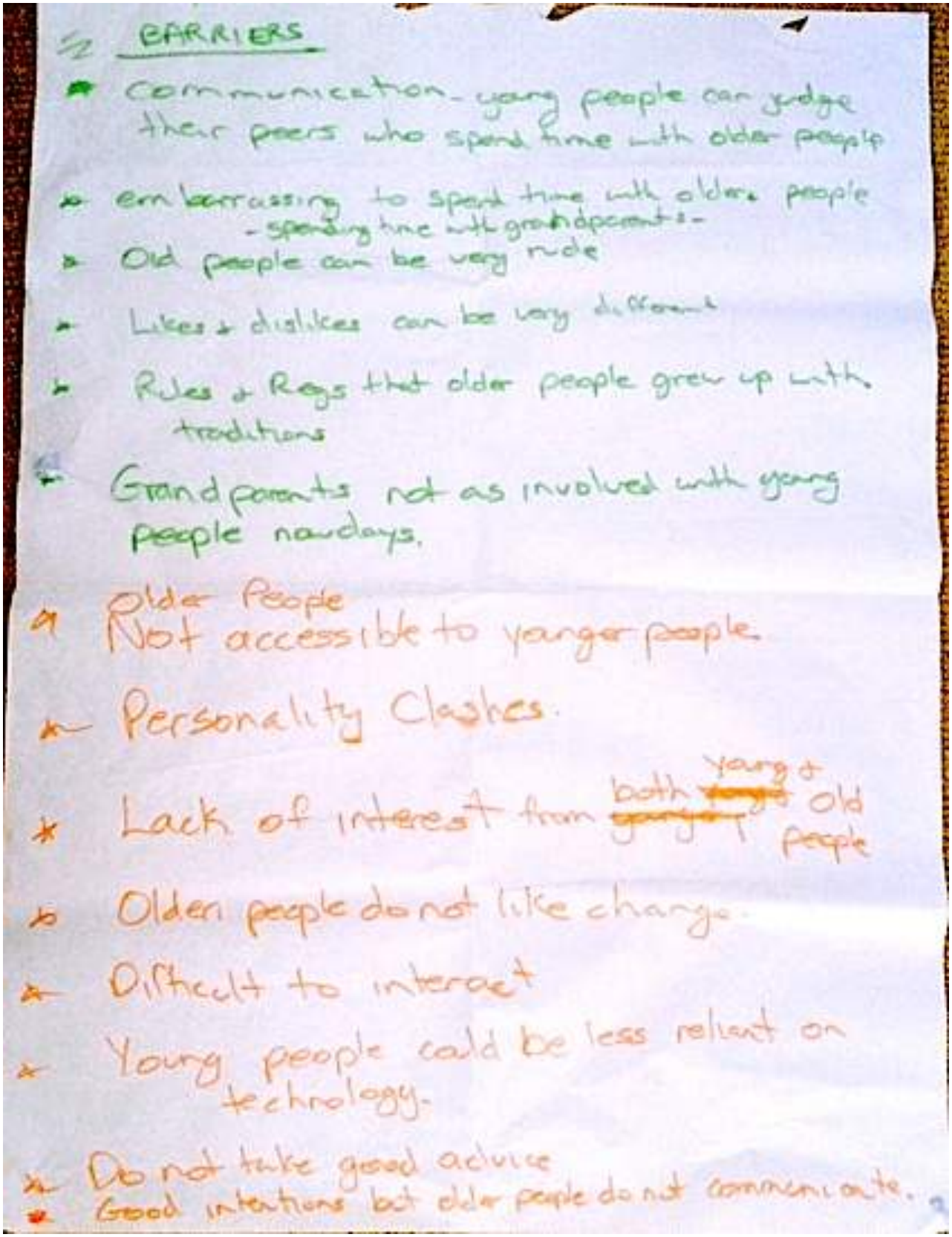
- classes to teach you not to do what your friends do — teach you to say no
- go to activities/venues where no alcohol/drugs allowed - structure supports you.
- If friend gets mad when say no - sometimes say yes - just to save friendship

- explain that you will do something else with them
- Accepted that won't fit with a particular group and thats ok
- Found friends who accept as you are.
- School can provide support through programs and discussions - which include students as mentors and teachers
- Peer Pressure not just friend based - can also be from media →
- smaller school environment → less Peer Pressure
- Strength to choose your friendship group.
- First year of high school difficult as everyone establishing their identity.


Sex & Sexuality.
1.
-Bullying -honesty -Parents lack of understanding
-Lacking confidence
-Fear of not being accepted. -Support.
-no one to talk to. -Isolation/geographical location/less info.
-not having a support group within the school. -little awareness within the school.
2.
-Lack of Services/& someone to talk to/support groups.
-Feeling alone/isolated.
-Community not being educated in comparison to Sydney. -concerns of confidentiality.
3.
-More support groups
more
-education within schools & community.
-making support groups more well known/better advertising
Gay, lesbian Support Group in the area.


THE ISSUE
THE CONVERSATION
THE OUTCOME
SEXUALITY
Bullying
Fear / Shame
Isolation
Judgements
Mental Health
Lack of support
Stereotypes
Exclusion
No acceptance
No services
Sex education
Barriers to access help:
- Lack of services
- Small community
- Concerns about confidentiality
- Fear of judgement / rejection
- Self acceptance + nobody to talk to
- Geographical location → less info.
- Scared of labels
- False expectations (porn)
- Support Groups
. more well known.
- More awareness.
- More in depth sex ed @ school.
- Workshops for parents/community on LGBQTI
- Promotion of acceptance
- Schools to be on board
- More education on labels
- what does LGBTQI stand for
- In school support
- Learning about gay sex
- More info on contraception.
the need to want to know more.
- Meaning of sex

10. Intergenerational Issues



INTERGENERATIONAL

THE ISSUE	THE CONVERSATION	THE OUTCOME
1. Technology	1. OP don't like change. YP could be less reliant. YP Dont think OP can use or make the best use of technology.	1. Improve OP understanding of technology. Generations can learn from eachother. YP showing older people the benefits and uses of social media. YP understanding the value of face to face contact with people.
2. Generational differences.	2. Traditions, OP rules + regulations. Lack of interests - YP to OP / OP to YP. OP not as accepting of differences such as culture, sexuality. YP think OP are rude + grumpy and OP think YP are rude + grumpy.	2. Respect OP lives they have lived. OP can be very wise and have good advice. More school involvement across all years with OP eg. Grandparents Day. More opportunities for non age specific events. OP Knowledge sharing at careers expos.
3. Older family members not as involved in family life.	3. Lack of interest in a relationship. Less opportunities. YP do not always seek out interaction with OP.	3. Encourage opportunities through schools for older family members to be involved in activities across all year groups.
4. Communication	4. Judgement by peers when engaging with OP. Seen as embarrassing by some YP. Personality clashes, difficulties in interacting.	4. More opportunities to meet + talk to OP. across different generations.
5. Interaction	5. Difficulties with interaction. OP do not always communicate well with YP. Responsibilities of caring for older parents or relatives.	5. More school involvement eg grandparents Day etc.