

MEDIA RELEASE  
25 May, 2009



## YzzzzUp Hepatitis C expo a great success

On Friday 22 May, Youth Off The Streets joined forces with a number of area health service providers to mark Hepatitis C Awareness Week by hosting the YzzzzUp Expo. The aim of the expo was to promote safer sexual health practices within the area, provide an educational opportunity for local youth, and to create greater awareness of the local services and resource agencies available for youth.

According to Youth Off The Streets Outreach Manager, Lyn Field, the Expo was designed to increase awareness of the illness and to work towards prevention of transmission among young people:

*"It is known that some young people in this area are engaged in the very activities that work to transmit the Hepatitis C. Activities such as unsafe drug use, unsafe sexual practices and receiving tattoos from an unlicensed and unregistered premises can all put a young person at risk of infection. We must educate our young people so that they are aware of all the risks of undertaking such activities and where they can go if they are in need of help."*

Throughout the day, the 43 local young people who attended had the opportunity to attend 5 different interactive workshops that were facilitated by a team of various health professionals in answer to a request from Youth Off the Streets. Each participant was treated to a BBQ lunch and received a show bag of information about Hepatitis C, its myths and realities, to take home to share with their family. The Expo was generously hosted by the Walgett RSL Club and expenses were covered by a NSW Department of Health grant awarded to Youth Off The Streets Walgett.

Youth Off The Streets are very grateful to all the Health and Youth Services who supported the event including: The Reconnect programme, Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service, Greater Western Area Health Service, Walgett Shire Council, Walgett Community College High School and the Local Police.

The NSW Department of Health states that some 200,000 Australians are infected with Hepatitis C, which can be a debilitating and potentially life threatening disease. Over the last decade, it has been the most commonly notified infectious disease both in NSW and Australia.

Readers can call the Toll Free Hepatitis C Hotline and support service for people affected by Hepatitis C. Ph: **1800 803 990**

**For any media request, please contact:**

**Youth Off The Streets: Email: [lnam@youthoffthestreets.com.au](mailto:lnam@youthoffthestreets.com.au) / Ph: 9330 3543 / M: 0412 377 217**

**Youth Off The Streets Mission:**

*Helping disconnected young people to discover greatness within, by engaging, supporting and providing opportunities to encourage and facilitate positive life choices.*

**About Youth Off The Streets:**

Youth Off The Streets is a non-denominational community organisation working for young people who are chronically homeless, drug dependent and recovering from abuse. We support these young people as they work to turn their lives around and overcome immense personal traumas such as neglect and physical, psychological and emotional abuse.

Since opening in 1991, Youth Off The Streets has grown from a single food van delivering meals to young homeless people on the streets of Kings Cross to a major youth specific agency providing a wide range of services offering a full continuum of care.

It is our goal that these young people will leave our care drug free, with a high school education, living skills and a full or part time job in hand. **To donate to Youth Off The Streets, please call: 1800 06 22 88 or visit: [www.youthoffthestreets.com.au](http://www.youthoffthestreets.com.au)**

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