

Community Safety and Wellbeing Research Study

Consolidated Report

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Bowchung Consulting, Pty Ltd

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Acknowledgements

First of all we would like to thank all those 1343 respondents who generously gave their time to participate in the survey. The surveys took an average of one hour to complete, and we are grateful to people for taking the trouble. We also want to thank those who voted – their thoughts have been appreciated, and added a depth to the data available. We would also like to thank all of the twenty Government Business Managers who facilitated the process of requesting community permission, and the reporting back process. Their enthusiasm has helped enormously in implementing such a successful research project. Finally, the local researchers have been an invaluable part of every research team. Their work has meant that the survey has been completed by a wide range of people throughout each of the sixteen participating communities, and the responses we have received are of a higher quality than would otherwise be the case.

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Executive Summary

The Community Safety and Wellbeing Research Study (CSWRS) was conducted in seventeen remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory between December 2010 and June 2011. The survey gathered important data by systematically asking residents of remote Indigenous communities about their lived experience in the three years since the Northern Territory Emergency Response. A total of 1411 residents of these communities participated, answering questions on the following issues:

- changes that have taken place over the last three years
- safety in their community
- ongoing social problems
- attitudes to violence
- substance use issues and
- experiences of crime and trouble.

The research was commissioned by FaHCSIA and conducted by four social research companies: Colmar Brunton Social Research, Bowchung Consulting, Dr Bev Sithole with Aboriginal Research Practitioners Network (ARNet), and N-Carda Group. Over fifty local Indigenous people were employed for the research. They worked with the consultants to conduct the survey and participatory component.

The aim of the CSWRS was to collect systematic and robust data which:

- allows for individual assessment of current status and recent changes in each place
- allows for a comparison of communities with national standardised data
- aids our understanding of safety through systematic qualitative evaluation research and
- provides a resource for each of the communities involved for use as a reference in future community development and planning.

A mixed methods approach enabled the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data and resulted in three data sources. For statistical analysis purposes, over 1400 people were interviewed using a quantitative standardised survey questionnaire to collect robust data covering safety and wellbeing. As part each survey interview, commentary around the survey questions was encouraged and recorded to provide contextual insight to the survey responses.

In addition to the survey questionnaire, community members took part in a participatory process that was designed to allow community members to talk about their own experiences and priorities in their community. The participatory process both broadened the scope and deepened the relevance of survey results for each community. The qualitative research exercise was designed to identify and rank major challenges and changes in each community. The qualitative component involved a number of

participatory methods including: most significant change, mapping exercises, ranking exercises, and focus groups.

This report presents findings from 1343 respondents from sixteen communities. The 68 responses from the pilot site have been excluded because they are not directly comparable to the main body of results.

Changes

Survey responses showed consistent agreement that the key positive changes perceived to have taken place over the last three years are in schools (83.3%), Centrelink (80.6%), clinics (78.3%), police (76.3%) and stores (76.2%). Services that have contributed to an improvement in safety at the community level are Night Patrols (74.8%) and more activities for young people (65.4%). In addition to the survey responses, the participative voting process identified that the most highly regarded change over the last three years was the increase in police presence. In addition, the Basics Card, improved housing and the school nutrition programs were voted into the list of the top five changes across the sample. (These issues were not covered by the survey tool). Improvement in opportunities for employment and training were also identified as a significant positive change. These data provide strong evidence that survey participants identify improvements to service delivery as being the most important changes that have taken place over the last three years. A very strong finding was that some of the positive changes, particularly those around community functioning and safety, were much less marked in larger communities.

The majority of survey respondents (58.7%) reported that their own lives were on the 'way up'. The most common reasons cited were getting a job, living in improved housing, and having more money. Fewer people thought that their community was on the 'way up' (47.4%); however more people judged 'way up' than 'no change' (42.1%) or 'way down' (7.6%). The most common reasons for citing 'no change' or 'way down' were that people are still living in overcrowded housing, find it hard to get a job, there is still a lot of family fighting and unhappiness about both the Intervention and the loss of Community Councils through the change to governance through the Shires.

Strong negative changes that have taken place over the last three years are perceived to be the loss of control at the community level and resulting disempowerment of local leaders, and the increase in marijuana use.

Challenges

Both the survey and participative processes identified a cluster of issues relating to young people as among the key challenges for the communities in the sample. Responses to the survey identified these issues as young people not listening to the older generation (70.5%), kids and young people being out at night (64.5%) and sending nasty text messages (57.7%). Reinforcing the emphasis on the challenges presented by issues with youth, the participative processes found that the need for jobs and training, and more activities for young people were voted as the second most important challenges across the entire sample. Qualitative feedback indicates that smoking marijuana is a major issue that impacts young people in remote communities, creating violence, mental health problems and disengagement from employment and culture. Again, there is a strong statistical relationship between the population size of the community and the extent to which these issues are perceived as serious problems, with larger communities experiencing more problems with marijuana than smaller communities.

The other major challenge identified is the need for continued improvement in infrastructure. Housing was not covered by the survey, but through the participative process improved housing received a third more votes than any other issue as the most important challenge still to be faced. The need for better roads and transport related infrastructure was also strongly identified through the voting process.

Services

As shown above, respondents clearly identified improved service provision as the most important change to have taken place over the last three years. Through the voting process they also nominated ongoing improvement in service provision, particularly in housing, employment and training, and activities for young people as the most important challenges still facing their communities.

In response to the survey questions specifically about NTER measures and their impact on safety, Night Patrols were viewed as the service that has been most effective in improving safety (74.8%), followed by youth services (65.4%). The strengths of Night Patrols are seen to be their cultural competence and the range of roles they fill within any given community. Youth programs are perceived as important in keeping children and young people off the streets, particularly at night. Youth activities are also seen as enhancing communities working together, and decreasing substance use among young people.

Increased police presence was voted as the most important change to have taken place over the last three years. Their role in stopping alcohol being brought into communities and in stopping family fighting has been particularly appreciated.

The type of service most frequently cited as being needed are drug and alcohol, and parenting services.

Safety

The substantial majority of respondents rate their safety highly, both at home and around most locations in their community. The survey responses show almost three quarters (72.6%) of respondents report that safety has improved in their community over the last three years. Safety ratings from this survey are generally slightly higher than those generated by the NATSISS¹ survey. Young women are seen as the least safe demographic group in the community, closely followed by young men, however three quarters of respondents rated both these groups as 'safe'. Qualitative data suggests that fights within the demographic of young people generate many of the safety risks in the community. Two of the three least safe locations identified revolve around young people – the youth drop in centre and sporting events. In addition there are a wide variety of dynamics within the young people demographic that lead to fights – same sex peers fighting over jealousy and teasing, and couples fighting. Phone messaging and chat line posts are nominated as triggering a lot of fights.

Within the generally high safety ratings there is strong statistical evidence that perception of safety decreases as the population of the community increases. In the largest communities, with populations of over 1100, 22.5% of respondents rate children as 'not safe', 36.8% of respondents rate young women as 'not safe,' and respondents rate 30.1% of young men as 'not safe'; compared to 8.7%, 6.3% and 5.8% respectively in communities with populations below 350.

Leadership

The qualitative and quantitative data present contradictory information on the current state of leadership in the sample communities. Qualitative data indicates that strong leadership is perceived as calling community meetings to address problems, and representing the community in other forums. There is a lot of feedback that the demise of the local Council governance structure has significantly weakened local leadership by removing the forum through which such meetings used to be called. The

¹ National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics

death of many senior people and the dis-engagement of young people are also cited as reasons for a decline in the strength of elders and leaders.

The quantitative data generated through the survey, on the other hand, show that the majority of respondents perceive that there is more respect for elders (64.3%), and that leadership is stronger (61.0%) than three years ago. Significantly more people under the age of 25 years agree with these statements than older people. Once again the communities with populations over 1100 were far less likely to agree, with 51.3% of respondents from these communities disagreeing with the statement 'There is more respect for elders than three years ago'.

Children

There is a very clear perception from the majority of survey respondents that the lives of children have improved over the last three years. The biggest improvement is seen to be children eating more food than three years ago, with 68.8% confirming this. The qualitative data provides evidence that Basics Card and the school nutrition program are credited with creating conditions in which children have more access to food. The Basics Card was voted as the third most important change to have occurred over the last three years.

Survey data also shows that children's level of activity, their school attendance, health and happiness are all seen to have improved. It is clear that in some communities' respondents' perception of increased school attendance is at variance with school attendance data, which records a decrease in attendance in some sites.

There is a markedly lower level of the perception of increased school attendance in larger communities, with 20.1% of respondents in communities with a population of over 1100 judging that fewer children are attending school, compared to 2.9% in communities with fewer than 350 people.

There is qualitative material from a small number of participants to suggest that some children are still not receiving adequate care and supervision in some communities in the sample.

Young people

Feedback on young people stands out as possibly the strongest message in the survey. There is a multiplicity of findings that point to the extent to which many difficult issues in communities are

generated by the behaviour of young people. Two of the three least safe areas within communities are where young people congregate – the youth drop in centre and sporting events. A great deal of qualitative feedback indicates that fights within the young people peer group have a negative impact on the rest of the community. Survey responses indicate that text messaging, young people not listening to older people, kids being out at night and gunja are found to be the four top challenges – all of which mainly revolve around young people.

Qualitative evidence shows that the most common strategy offered to meet the challenge presented by young people is to make sure that there are activities in the community that can offer more constructive options in which young people can become involved. More activities for young people and more employment and training were voted as the second most important challenges facing communities. Several thoughtful respondents also commented that the current generation of young people received very little education and face huge challenges in finding a constructive role in society.

Substance Misuse

Survey responses provide evidence that people perceive that alcohol use has declined, while marijuana use has increased over the last three years. Survey responses indicate that the most severe problem caused by substance use is perceived to be 'going mad' from excessive use of marijuana. Qualitative data shows that there is also a perception that excessive use makes young people disinclined to work or to engage in cultural activities. Communities with populations of over 700 experience more severe problems with both alcohol and marijuana.

Communities with alcohol outlets experience a statistically significantly higher frequency of problems with alcohol than those who do not. New laws governing alcohol are perceived to have made a difference to levels of consumption, as well as increased police presence and consequent more vigorous policing of the new laws.

Changes to rules governing community based alcohol outlets are perceived to have had more impact than restricting the consumption of alcohol within prescribed areas. Qualitative data suggests that individuals may not be drinking less alcohol overall, however responses to the survey found 57.2% of respondents agree that less alcohol is consumed *within* communities, which improves the safety of residents. There was some qualitative feedback that a number of people leave their 'dry' communities to travel to larger towns where there is easy access to alcohol.

Attitudes to violence

The substantial majority of survey respondents (80%) do not sanction violence as a means of resolving conflict. The use of violence to address jealousy within a couple is particularly frowned upon. Witnessing violence makes most survey respondents feel 'no good', but not necessarily unsafe. There are cultural rules governing who responds to particular violent situations, largely depending on family relationships.

Bringing it all together

Several very strong messages come through the survey. The majority of people judge that their life has improved over the last three years. Qualitative feedback offered with this judgment stresses that employment has been a major factor in improving individual's lives. The benefits of employment are improved income, but almost more importantly many people stress that they are busy (and therefore not 'looking for fights') and feel that they are contributing to their community. Some adults also comment that their children are happier because they see their parents go to work more often.

The second strong message is that young people are the epicentre of many community dynamics. There is an enormous policy challenge to create conditions in which it is more difficult for young people to opt for a 'party' lifestyle, and easier to get a job.

The third strong message is that small communities are very different to large ones. There is very consistent and solid evidence from both quantitative and qualitative data sources that gains made over the last three years are much less pronounced in communities of over 1100 people; and that challenges in these large communities are more acute. There is scope for working to understand the precise nature of why larger communities are much more difficult environments in which to achieve positive change, and to fashion policy to address the very particular nature of the dynamics of large remote Indigenous communities.

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1. Introduction

The Community Safety and Well-being Research Study (CSWRS) is a key research component of the evaluation of the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER). The CSWRS provides a voice for Indigenous Australians who reside in communities covered by the NTER by presenting in a systematic way the views of 1343 people in sixteen communities who have been directly affected. The survey results provide an important source of rigorous and reliable data which can contribute to high quality evidence and allow for the cross-referencing of findings with other evaluation and monitoring data sources.

The NTER evaluation is a whole-of-government exercise, examining themes and overall outcomes rather than the specific effects of individual measures. It takes a 'person-centred approach,' where individuals affected by the NTER, rather than the programs, are at the centre of research. In effect people are asked: 'All these programs have been delivered in your community, so when you look at your life in this community – has it changed, and if so, how has it changed?' The initial focus of the CSWRS is community and personal safety, child nutrition and health and well-being for community members. In addition qualitative input from participants has generated information on a wide array of issues.

The CSWRS presents quantitative and qualitative evaluative research that has been done in a cross-section of NTER prescribed communities. The quantitative component is a statistical social survey covering safety and well-being. The qualitative component has been undertaken using a range of participatory research methods and gives context and local meaning to the survey.

The aim of the CSWRS project is to collect systematic and robust data which:

- allows for individual assessment of current status and recent changes in each place
- allows for a comparison of communities with national standardised data
- aids our understanding of safety through systematic qualitative evaluation research and
- provides a resource for each of the communities involved for use as a reference in future community development and planning.

The CSWRS seeks to address the following key research questions:

- what behaviour is occurring in the community in relation to violence?

- how safe do individuals feel in different situations and locations and has this changed over time?
- what are the values and norms around acceptable behaviour in relation to safety and well-being?
- what has influenced the safety and well-being of the community since the commencement of the NTER?
- what other changes have occurred in the community in relation to parental care, schooling, children's well-being and youth participation?

(Source: Attachment A, Community Impact Study Request for Quote, FaHCSIA, September 2010)

The structure of this report is to begin by presenting a holistic view of elements of community life that have changed, and those that remain as challenges. Detailed findings on each issue are then presented. The intention behind this structure is that the reader can progress through the report with an appreciation of the contribution that each issue has made to overall changes and challenges still remaining. It is anticipated that many people will not read the whole report, and each section is intended to make sense on its own.

The Research

2. Methodology

The methodology used gathers both quantitative and qualitative data through the implementation of a set survey tool with both open-ended and closed questions, and a range of participatory research techniques.

2.1 Development of the survey tool

The aim for the survey tool was to meet three key criteria – firstly to gather data that could be comparable to existing data sets; secondly to cover all the key issues that affect safety and well-being at the community level; and thirdly for the survey to be as user-friendly as possible for residents of remote communities so that its use could facilitate the collection of high quality data.

In order to develop the survey tool the Department of Families and Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) contracted the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) to develop questions on safety, and staff at FaHCSIA collated questions on well-being from a range of existing sources. Questions were drawn from the following existing surveys:

- Western Australian Aboriginal Children's Health Survey
- Australian Institute of Criminology Community Safety Survey
- Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands Survey of people's attitudes
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Crime and Safety Survey
- Aboriginal Communities and the Police's Taskforce THEMIS Survey
- ABS Women's Safety Survey
- Young people's attitudes towards domestic violence survey
- Income Management Survey and
- Canadian Urban Aboriginal Perceptions Study.

(Source: Development of a Community Safety Tool for use by FaHCSIA in Northern Territory Remote Indigenous Communities, Australian Institute of Criminology, 2010)

In addition to the items taken from these sources, several 'new' questions were developed specifically for this survey by FaHCSIA and the AIC.

2.2 Pre- testing the survey tool

Staff at FaHCSIA combined the questions proposed by the AIC, well-being questions that they had identified, and 'new' questions into a draft survey tool. This questionnaire was then given to two Indigenous residents of Alice Springs, both of whom are highly experienced at conducting research with residents of the Alice Springs town camps. Through this work they have gained an acute sense firstly of what questions are socially and culturally acceptable and secondly how questions can be worded to ensure that most if not all respondents understand what is being asked. These researchers tried out the questionnaire on family members and friends in order both to make their own assessment of how well each question worked and to get feedback from the 'guinea pigs.'

The researchers then met with FaHCSIA to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the questionnaire, and to proposed changes. FaHCSIA accepted all the changes proposed by the researchers.

2.3 Ethics Clearance

At this point ethical permission to conduct the pilot program for the research was sought from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Studies. The Committee granted permission for the pilot program to go ahead.

Ethics permission was also sought from the Centralian Human Research Ethics Committee and the Menzies School of Health Research Top End Human Research Committee to conduct the research in all sixteen participating communities. The Centralian Ethics Committee gave permission. The Top End Committee required copies of all permission letters from consenting communities before it would give permission. These were supplied.

2.4 Piloting the survey

After the test survey tool was agreed upon, arrangements were made to pilot the research process in a community in Central Australia. Key community members gave permission to Bowchung Consulting to undertake the pilot in December 2010 and February 2011. Prior to the start of the research a flyer was placed around the community advertising the survey and Bowchung staff visited all the key local families to let them know it was coming up.

A team of six researchers conducted the pilot stage of the research, including the two Indigenous researchers who had earlier tested the questionnaire. This team developed a stratified purposive sampling frame that gave a final sample that was representative across the age and gender structure

of the population. This sampling frame guided the team on whom to approach to participate in the research.

This team found that it took up to one and a half hours to conduct the questionnaire with each participant, and that the wording of many of the questions was difficult for respondents to understand. The research team collaborated throughout the week to develop and test alternate wording and also suggested the inclusion of some issues (such as cyber bullying) that were initially omitted. They also proposed omitting some questions in order to make the survey shorter. The re-worked questionnaire was then submitted to FaHCSIA. FaHCSIA staff then added some questions to this draft, and changed the wording of some questions.

The results of the sixty-eight interviews conducted during the pilot have not been included in the final data set because they were collected using a variety of different wordings for many of the questions, and are therefore difficult to incorporate to the whole data set. The report from the research was however widely circulated through FaHCSIA and extensively used in the early policy formulation for the Stronger Futures process. This use of the report met our commitment to community residents that their results would be used to inform government decisions on policy development.

In February 2011 the research team returned to conduct the participatory element of the research. Team members developed a voting process whereby lists of key changes and challenges that had come through strongly from the survey were compiled into two ballot papers – one of changes, and the other of challenges. People were then asked to vote using numbers one to five, for what they judged to be the most important issues on each list – from first down to fifth preference. This worked well, and 110 people participated in the voting process. The votes were weighted and then analysed so that the voting process generated a list of residents' perception of the most important five changes and challenges in their community.

In June 2011 one of the researchers returned to the community to present and discuss the resulting research report with residents and service providers. FaHCSIA received the same report as the one presented to the community. This system of reporting has continued throughout the project.

2.5 Implementing the survey across the NT

The next step in the process was to implement the finalised survey tool across a larger selection of communities. FaHCSIA went to select tender to engage four companies to conduct the survey, plus a Co-ordinating Researcher. This person would have the oversight and quality control of research in each community, design a data collection template that could be used in each community, conduct data checking and quality assurance; and produce a consolidated analytical report.

2.5.1 Sample of communities

The aim of the research was to get the views of residents in a cross -section of communities on the combined effects of a variety of NTER Measures. It was important therefore to select communities representing the range of different community environments to be found across the NT.

FaHCSIA staff developed a purposive stratified sampling frame that identified the following variables across which the sample needed to be representative:

- location (region)
- police status (new police station, additional police or no change)
- population
- police incident rate and
- School attendance rate.

With reference to these variables, a list was developed of possible participating communities. This list was included in the request for tender document, with companies requested to nominate communities in which they felt they could conduct high quality research (depending on the strength of pre-existing relationships that would facilitate the process). Using this process a total of nineteen communities were approached to participate in the survey. The survey was conducted in sixteen communities in addition to the pilot site, only three declined. Table 2.1 presents the community characteristics according to the sampling criteria.

Table 2.1: Community characteristics according to sampling criteria.

Variable	Number of communities
• Location	Top End - 8
	Central Australia - 8
• Police status	New police station - 5
	Existing police station - 9
	No police station - 2
• Population	Large (over 750) – 6 communities
	Medium (351 – 749) 6 communities
	Small (<350) – 4 communities
• Police incident rate	Low (<0.2) – 5 communities
	Medium (0.2 – 0.4) – 5 communities
	High (>0.4) – 6 communities
• School attendance rate	Low (<60%) – 8 communities
	Medium (60 – 80%) – 4 communities
	High (>80%) – 4 communities

2.5.2 Seeking community permission to conduct the research

The companies each used slightly different approaches to request community permission to conduct the survey. There were two methods used, with variations. The first was to use existing connections between researchers and community members to approach a wide range of members of key families in each community, and develop a shared approval process through which permission was granted (and the permission letter signed) by at least one member from each key clan or family group. This approach was used in nine communities.

For the remaining seven communities the Government Business Manager (GBM) was approached in the first instance, and asked to undertake initial discussions through existing community forums which would give access to a representative group of community members. Once this was done in two cases a member of the research team visited to discuss the project and gain broadly based informed consent and in four cases the GBM completed the permission process.

The research companies found that the vast majority of community members who were approached regarding the permission were very keen to participate. Many commented that they were really pleased to be asked what they think, and what they have experienced; and several commented that this was the first time that they had been offered such an opportunity. They felt that it presented an chance to give government a detailed picture of patterns of life in their community. In their view the benefits of this were to inform the development of good policy, and to increase the chances of their own communities receiving government support for their various issues.

Both methods resulted in a comprehensive understanding and approval of the forthcoming survey. Taking a lot of care with the permission process also conveyed the researchers' respect for the community and maximised the chances of a co-operative and mutually fruitful research experience. The way in which the permissions were obtained was time-consuming (and therefore expensive). In the author's opinion, this more painstaking approach was a major contributing factor to the large number of people who participated and to their goodwill in doing so.

2.5.3 Getting a representative sample

A total of 1343 respondents from sixteen communities participated in the survey. Prior to undertaking the fieldwork each research group utilised the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 Australian Census as a source of information on the age and gender breakdown of the population in each community. Using the total number of interviews requested by FaHCSIA they then calculated the number of interviews needed from each gender and age group (using the five-year age groupings presented in the 2006 Census) in order to get a representative sample.

A list of the number of interviews required from each gender and age group was put up on a whiteboard (or similar) at research headquarters at each site. Researchers then ticked off each completed interview according to age and gender, and kept track of the characteristics needed in future respondents in order to obtain the correct quotas in each category. For example, if the whiteboard record showed that sufficient older women had been interviewed, but not enough men in the fifteen- to nineteen-year-old group (typically the most difficult to 'get') then the researchers would focus on finding respondents in that category. Using this process, a more or less representative sample was obtained at all sites. For the data set as a whole the gender and age breakdowns are reasonably representative. Table 2.2 presents the age and gender data from the survey, compared with the Indigenous population of the NT (ABS 2006).

Table 2.2: Age and gender comparison between the Indigenous population of the NT (ABS 2006 Census) and the survey population, by percent

NT wide Indigenous population	Percent	Survey population	Percent
Males	49.2	Males	48
Females	50.8	Females	51.9
15 – 19 years	16.7	15 – 19 years	14.4
20 – 24 years	17.0	20 – 24 years	13.7
25 – 29 years	15.0	25 – 29 years	11.4
30 – 34 years	11.9	30 – 34 years	12.4
35 – 39 years	10.0	35 – 39 years	11.0
40 – 44 years	8.0	40 – 44 years	10.0
45 – 49 years	6.0	45 – 49 years	9.5
50 – 54 years	4.6	50 – 54 years	6.2
55 – 59 years	3.3	55 – 59 years	4.6
60 – 64 years	2.9	60 – 64 years	2.8
65+	4.4	65+	3.9

These data show that the survey population is somewhat under-represented in the 15 – 30 year age group, and over-represented in the 30 – 60 year age group. This imbalance is likely to be because it is generally harder to find young people and persuade them to participate. Also, respect dictates that a number of older people must be interviewed because of their senior position in the community, and this tends to skew the over-all sample. The survey includes a very diverse range of people and is broadly representative of the wider NT Indigenous population.

2.5.4 Conducting the survey

FaHCSIA staff, the Coordinating Researcher and key researchers from each company attended a two-day workshop in Alice Springs before the fieldwork commenced. This allowed all researchers to go through the questionnaire carefully, and discuss the intention behind each question to ensure that all clearly understood the rationale of the survey. The Excel spreadsheet that had been developed to facilitate the recording of data that would be as clean as possible was introduced, and the researchers all learned how to use it. The participatory methodology developed for the pilot site was also discussed and agreement was reached that the aim of the participatory methodology was to identify the top five challenges and changes. Even though different companies may use different participatory techniques to ascertain what these challenges and changes might be in each community.

To conduct the survey each research company used approximately the same methodology as that developed in the pilot site. All employed local researchers to help with finding participants, interpreting and/or to conduct the surveys in their own right. This ensured that where necessary surveys were conducted in the respondents' own language. It also added to the credibility of the survey process at the community level.

Most surveys were conducted on a one-to-one basis; some however were done in groups of up to twelve. In these situations some companies had respondents fill out their own survey forms and the consensus option with assistance from a researcher. In the latter circumstance the researcher then completed a form for each participant after the group interview. This process was used in less than 5% of the interviews.

All research companies used similar strategies to recruit survey participants. Before any survey was done researchers explained the process to the prospective participant, and stressed that they did not have to do it if they did not want to, and whatever they said was confidential. They visited workplaces at convenient times, visited the homes of people who were known to the researchers and expanded the sample from that base by asking who else might be interested to participate, they also made themselves available at public places such as outside stores. Potential bias was introduced by these recruitment strategies in that people with jobs are probably over-represented, and people who do not have jobs are likely to be correspondingly under-represented. This could have skewed the results towards a more positive outlook than would otherwise be the case. However analysis of results suggests that respondents' employment status has not affected their responses.

Each company dealt with its data entry in a different way. Most did it on site, in the evenings, or released one researcher to sit and enter data while others conducted interviews. Some companies encouraged local researchers to do data entry as a part of their learning about research, and others did not. One company did almost all of the data entry after fieldwork had finished.

The Coordinating Researcher visited each company during its fieldwork to ensure that all were using processes that would generate comparable results, and was satisfied that this was the case.

2.5.5 Participatory methodology

The participatory process involved each community identifying a list of significant changes and challenges that have occurred in their community in the last few years. These changes and challenges were compiled through means that were suitable to each community, such as through focus groups with different cohorts in the community, semi-formal discussions, comments received throughout the survey process, survey findings and participatory ranking and matrix ranking methods.

These lists ranged from 10 to 15 items per community and were not limited in any way. In 12 communities, people were asked to vote the changes and challenges they thought were most important to them from one (most important) to five. In each community between 50 and 100 community members participated in the voting process. In order to weight each vote, each number one vote was given a score of five, the number two vote was given a score of four and so on through to the number five vote which got a score of one.

In three communities participatory ranking and matrix ranking methods, which were more detailed and not directly comparable to the methodology used in the other 12 communities so they are not included in the results of this analysis. In one community this phase of the research was not undertaken.

2.5.6 Use of local researchers

Local Indigenous researchers were employed as part of each survey team. These were individuals who may have had some prior experience or training in data collection techniques and interpreting, or who were interested in gaining such skills. The consultants identified and engaged the local researchers either with the assistance of the FaHCSIA Government Business Manager and/or Indigenous Engagement Officer, or utilised established local research networks such as the Aboriginal Regional Practitioners Network (ARPnet) and the Yalu Marngithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation research team. All local researchers and interpreters were paid for their services. Over fifty local Indigenous people were employed for the CSWRS. They worked with the consultants to conduct the survey and participatory component.

Local researchers played a number of roles depending on their experience and interests. These were:

- project leaders
- interpreters
- 'brokers' to encourage people to participate
- conducted surveys and interviews
- Organised groups and conducted participatory research and
- entered data.

2.5.7 Analysing and reporting the results

The research companies analysed the results for each community they surveyed. They then provided FaHCSIA, community members and service delivery organisations with a report that presented the findings in fairly straightforward language. The community have joint ownership of the report, in conjunction with FaHCSIA. Some members of each research team later returned to present the findings and discuss them with community members and service delivery organisations. Efforts were made to ensure that all those who had signed the permission letter received a copy of the report. Some companies also wrote a summary report for widespread distribution around the community. The intention of this reporting back is to encourage the use of the report in any future community endeavors aimed at improving safety and wellbeing. Researchers have gained very positive responses from this process, with community members stating that they would use the findings in a variety of forums.

Survey forms and spreadsheets containing the data from each community were sent to the Coordinating Researcher. Each form was checked to ensure that it had been entered in to the relevant spreadsheet and 20% of the survey forms from each community were checked to ensure an acceptable standard of data entry. Any errors identified during this process were rectified. A combined dataset was then compiled.

The overall dataset has also been analysed, and the results are presented in this report. Two key variables have been grouped to facilitate this analysis. The first is the population size of the communities in the sample. In grouping communities by population size, we took into account several factors: firstly, we looked at the actual distribution of populations in order to see if there were any 'clumping' and secondly, we wanted to ensure a reasonable number of communities in each category. There is one obvious clumping. The three largest communities have approximately double the population size of the next largest community. They clearly belong in a group by themselves. Similarly at the lower end of the scale, the four communities with a population between 214 and 314 could be considered as one category. The remaining nine communities ranged in population size from 396 to 1054 – too large a range in our view to justify leaving as a single group. We therefore divided them into two groups, with a population of 700 as the divider.

This gave us four population categories:

- fewer than 350 (4 communities)
- 350 <700 (6 communities)
- 700<1100 (3 communities)
- 1100+ (3 communities)

The second key variable we grouped is the age of the respondent. Here we created three categories that relate to the stage of life experience as it is lived in remote Indigenous communities. The first is under 25 years, the second is 25 – 39 years, and the third is over 40 years.

There is additional valuable analysis that could be conducted with the data set that has resulted from this project, including comparison with other data sets. Such a secondary analysis has not been attempted for the purpose of this report.

3. Demographic Information

This section presents a description of the demographic details of the 1343 respondents.

3.1 Gender

Table 3.1: Gender composition of the sample

Gender	Number	Percent
Male	645	48
Female	697	51.9
Total	1343	100

3.2 Age

As described above, every data collection team made an effort to get a sample that was representative of the population structure in each community. This was balanced by the need to interview people who wanted to participate and needed to be given the respect of being offered an interview. This politeness and respect factor explains the higher number of interviews in the 65+ age group.

Table 3.2: Composition of the sample by age

Age group	Number of respondents	Percent of sample
15 – 19 years	193	14.4
20 – 24 years	184	13.7
25 – 29 years	153	11.4
30 – 34 years	167	12.4
35 – 39 years	148	11.0
40 – 44 years	134	10.0
45 – 49 years	127	9.4
50 – 54 years	83	6.2
55 – 59 years	62	4.6
60 – 64 years	37	2.8
65+	53	3.9
Unspecified	1	0.1
Total	1343	100

3.3 Marital Status

Table 3.3: Composition of the sample by marital status

Marital Status	Number of respondents	Percent of sample
Single	432	32.1
Married/Partner	757	56.3
Separated	71	5.3
Partner died	72	5.4
Unspecified	11	0.8
Total	1343	100

3.4 Work

Respondents were asked whether they worked or not ('Yes' or 'No'). There were no options given for students or retirees, and no differentiation of what type of work – for example full- or part-time, or CDEP-funded work. Table 3.4 presents the results of this question.

Table 3.4: Composition of the sample by work status

Work Status	Number of respondents	Percent of sample
Yes	802	59.7
No	524	39.0
Unspecified	17	1.3
Total	1343	100

More than half of the sample identified themselves as 'working', however the lack of differentiation of the question makes it difficult to use this information as a criterion for distinguishing patterns amongst the respondents on other issues.

3.5 Who do you live with at the moment

This question offered a number of options to describe who the respondent lives with. People were told they could choose more than one option. Consequently there are numerous responses to the question. A summary conclusion is that very few people live alone, and the vast majority live with family of some description.

Table 3.5: Composition of the sample by living arrangements

Who you live with	Number	Percent
Living with Spouse/Partner	650	48.4
Living with your children	560	41.7
Living with your parents	332	24.7
Living with other family	628	46.8
Living with friends	71	5.3
Living on your own	61	4.5

Note: Several respondents checked more than one option to describe with whom they lived.

The Results

4. Changes since the NTER

The purpose of this section is to return to the original intent of the survey, to answer the question: 'After all the changes brought about by the NTER, what in your life and in your community has changed, and which changes do you rank as most constructive.'

Several questions in the survey allow for feedback on this issue. There are questions that ask people to rate the changes that have occurred over the last three years, both in their own lives, and in the life of their community. There are also questions about the changes in services and laws that may have either assisted or hindered progress.

The first substantive question in the survey asks respondents to rank their level of agreement with statements about 'things that have changed' in their community over the last three years. The results of answers to this question have been presented in other sections of the report where they fit into the theme under analysis. Because the purpose of this section is to examine change, however, we have presented the whole table and dichotomised the categories for ease of analysis. So 'strongly agree' has been combined with 'agree', and 'strongly disagree' with 'disagree'. Table 4.1 presents the results for this question, ranked in order of the level of support for each one.

Table 4.1: Responses to ‘Can you tell us if these things have changed in your community in the last 3 years,’ by percentage in ranking order

Variable	Agree	Disagree	Don't know (0)	No response
School is better	83.3	11.9	3.8	1.0
Easier to get help from Centrelink	80.6	10.2	7.9	1.3
Easier to get help at the clinic	78.3	16.3	4.3	1.1
Easier to get help from the Police	76.3	19.2	3.8	0.7
Store is better	76.2	20.2	2.7	0.9
More kids being looked after properly	75.2	19.1	5.1	0.6
Community is safer	72.6	22.9	4.7	0.8
Community is working better together	68.5	26.1	4.7	0.7
More respect for elders	64.3	30.7	4.4	0.6
Variable	Agree	Disagree	Don't know (0)	No response
Less people making trouble	61.3	31.1	6.9	0.7
Community leaders are stronger	61	31.5	6.4	1.1
Less drinking grog	57.2	31.7	5.6	5.5
Less family fighting	58.6	34.5	6.1	0.8
Less sniffing petrol	33.2	24.1	21.7*	21.0*
Less smoking gunja	38.8	44.7	14.4	2.0

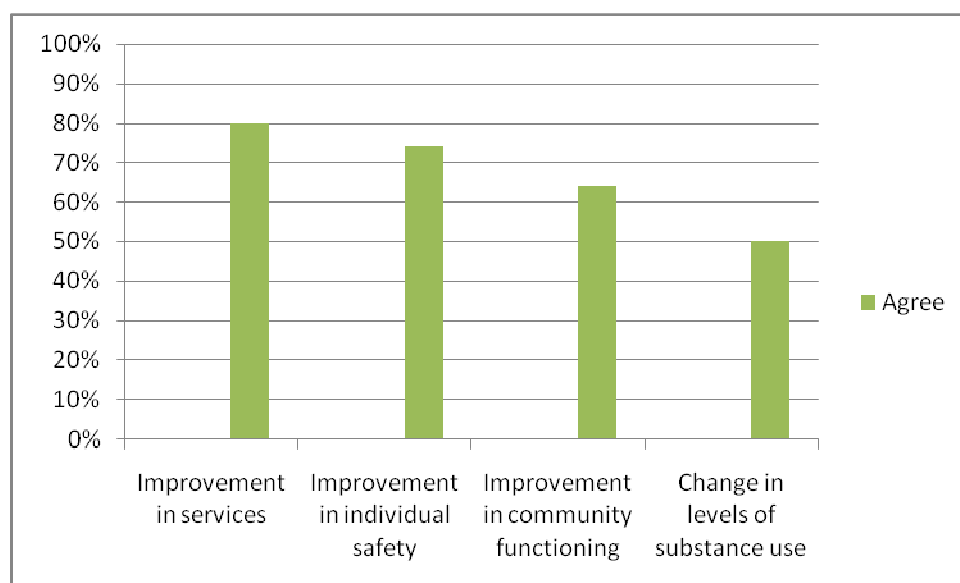
N=1343

*Note the high level of ‘don't know’ and ‘no response’ for this question

Note that not all services that impact on safety at the community level, for example Night Patrol and Police, were included in the question, and are therefore not included in this analysis.

When looked at in the order of the changes that elicited the most agreement to those that received the least, clear groupings emerge. The changes that drew the highest level of concurrence are all improvements in services provision: the school, Centrelink, the clinic, the police and the store. These changes are followed by ‘More kids being looked after properly’ and the ‘Community is safer,’ both of which encompass individual safety and well-being. The next grouping concerns community functioning and the final group contains the substance use and family fighting questions. Figure 4.1 presents a comparison of the average percentage of respondents who ‘agree’ with each of these themes.

Figure 4.1: Change grouped into themes, by percent who ‘agree’



Note that for the ‘change in substance use theme, only 50% ‘agree’ – which means that 50% do not agree that there has been any improvement on this issue (note also that this is influenced by high ‘don’t know’ and ‘no response’ figures for petrol sniffing).

When they are grouped in this manner, it is possible to speculate on the pattern of events that has delivered the changes. The following logic is one possible interpretation: a large proportion of respondents agree that service delivery has improved. This improvement may have driven better personal safety and well-being. These enhanced personal circumstances then flow through to more willingness to work together as a community and this in turn generates greater respect for elders. The most intractable issues – substance misuse and family fighting (which feedback throughout the survey suggests are closely linked) show the least change.

4.1 The relationship between perceived improvements and community population size

We have found that the size of the respondent community is a variable that has significant impact on perceptions of change. We therefore present an analysis of each of the variables in this question, cross-tabulated with community population size.

Table 4.2 below shows the proportion of respondents who agreed with each of the items specified in Question 7 of the interview schedule. The table does not include ‘Don’t know’ answers or a record of where there was no response. The table also shows the probability scores for two statistics: Chi square (which indicates whether or not a statistically significant relationship exists) and the Cochran-Armitage

test for trend, which indicates whether or not there is a linear association between the variable of interest and grouped population size. For both of these tests the lower the score, the stronger the association between the variables of interest – in this case the perception of change and the population size of the community. Therefore the score ‘.000’ denotes an extremely strong statistical relationship. For the purpose of analysis, the items have been grouped into three categories: community functioning and safety (7 items), substance misuse (3 items) and access to services (5 items).

Table 4.2: Proportion of respondents reporting that things have changed for the better in the community in the past three years

Topic	N =	% agreeing					P (Chi sq.)	P (C-A) (a)
		< 350	350 < 699	700 < 1100	1100 +	Total		
Community functioning, safety								
Less people making trouble	1240	75.3	77.4	68.8	50.8	66.4	.000	.000
Less family fighting	1250	74.4	72.1	60.4	51.6	63.0	.000	.000
More kids looked after	1267	89.8	86.9	79.3	68.6	79.7	.000	.000
More respect for elders	1277	89.2	81.4	63.3	48.7	67.7	.000	.000
Community leaders are stronger	1243	83.2	76.5	65.3	47.9	65.9	.000	.000
Community working better together	1270	81.0	80.1	68.6	64.9	72.4	.000	.000
Community safer	1268	91.6	87.3	73.4	62.7	76.8	.000	.000
Substance misuse								
Less drinking grog	1195	69.9	61.7	61.3	66.1	64.4	.145	.690
Less smoking gunja	1121	52.5	49.8	56.8	33.5	46.5	.000	.000
Less sniffing petrol	769(b)	53.3	58.3	63.8	54.9	57.9	.161	.914
Access to services								
Easier to get help at clinic	1270	77.4	90.2	79.5	82.0	82.8	.000	.616
Easier to get help from police	1282	81.4	82.5	80.7	76.4	80.0	.191	.062
Easier to get help from Centrelink	1221	91.8	92.4	89.1	83.2	88.7	.001	.000
School is better	1280	90.7	92.2	92.9	76.7	87.4	.000	.000
Store is better	1294	76.0	83.3	79.1	76.8	79.1	.102	.472

(a) Cochran-Armitage test for linearity.

(b) large number of missing cases (575) – respondents from places where petrol sniffing has not been a problem.

4.1.1 Community functioning, safety, well-being

In each of the seven questions referring to aspects of community safety and community functioning there was a statistically significant 'inverse linear relationship' between the proportion who perceived an improvement and the population size. This means the larger the population, the lower the proportion which agreed that improvements had occurred.

4.1.2 Substance mis-use questions

There was no association between community size and perceived changes in substance misuse in the case of 'grog' or petrol sniffing – although in the case of the latter the number of respondents is appreciably lower than for all other questions. This is a reflection of the fact that in several communities' petrol sniffing has not been a problem. The proportion that agreed there was less drinking going on than three years previously ranged between 61.3% and 69.9%.

In the case of 'gunja' the proportion of respondents who agreed that there had been a decline in smoking gunja was similar in small and medium sized communities (ranging between 49.8% and 56.8%) but was significantly lower (33.5%) in communities with a population of 1100 or more.

4.1.3 Access to services

The proportion of people who thought access to services had improved was high across all community sizes, ranging between a minimum of 76.0% and 92.9%. In the case of more ease in getting help from clinics and police and perceived improvements in the store, there was no association between the proportion that agreed and the population size. Statistically, an inverse linear relationship was recorded for improved ease in getting help from Centrelink and population size but in substantive terms this association does not appear to be important since the proportion agreeing was at least 83% regardless of population size. In the case of schools the proportion who thought that they were better was similar in small and medium sized communities but lower in communities of 1100 or more. The proportion was high at 76.7% in large communities.

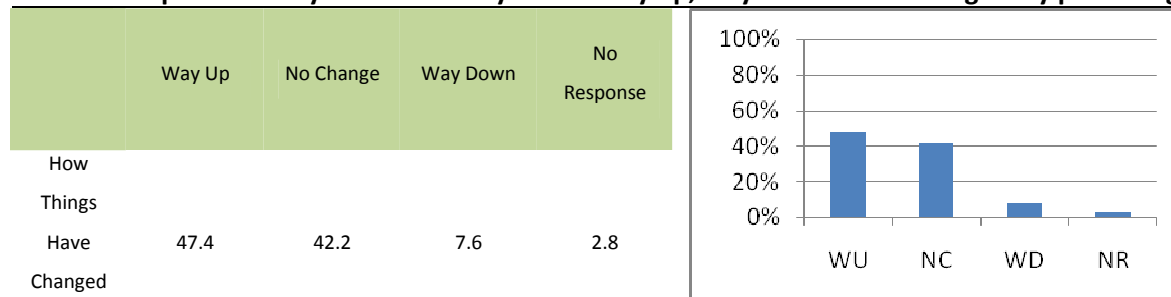
4.1.4 Conclusion

These figures taken over-all suggest that in relation to many, but not all, indicators – and especially community functioning and safety – the impact of increased services/change under the NTER over the past three years has been greater in small and medium sized communities than it has been in the larger centres.

4.2 A summary of all the changes – is your community on the way up, no change, or way down?

Near the end of the survey respondents were asked ‘After all these questions and thinking about your community and how things have changed, do you think your community is on the way up, or on the way down?’ This question encouraged the interviewee to think holistically about their community and how it had changed over a three-year period. Table 4.3 below presents the results.

Table 4.3: Response to ‘Is your community on the way up, way down or no change?’ by percentage



N=1343

Fewer than half of respondents (47.4%) thought their community was on the ‘way up’, however very few believed it was on the ‘way down’ (7.6%). Forty-two per cent opted for ‘no change’. There is a significant difference between the genders in this response, with men more likely to be positive about their community, and women more likely to judge ‘no change’. Table 4.4 below presents the response to this question analysed by gender.

Table 4.4: Response to ‘Is your community on the way up, way down or no change?’ by gender, by percentage

Gender	Way up	No change	Way down
Male	52.6	36.9	7.4
Female	42.8	46.8	7.7

N=1343

p<=.05

When the result is analysed by age there is no significant difference, however younger people were slightly more likely to be positive than older community members.

The main reason cited by respondents as to why their community was on the ‘way up’ was that there are now more jobs and training opportunities (13% of all responses). This response is particularly interesting because this was not a change that was included in the ‘Can you tell me what has changed?’ question. People were drawing on their own experience to answer, rather than confining themselves to the parameters of the survey. The next most common issue cited (9%) was an

improvement in safety in combination with less family fighting. Three issues received the third highest number of responses (6%) to explain why participants' communities were on the 'way up':

- more and better quality housing (also not included in the survey)
- better youth and sport and recreation programs and
- improved safety.

The final issue to garner considerable comment was reduced substance misuse (4%).

Conversely, the main reasons given regarding why communities were perceived as on their 'way down' was fighting in the community (4%) and the following issues all on 2%:

- not enough employment opportunities
- poor service delivery from the Shires
- loss of power for local leaders
- continuing problems with overcrowded housing and
- government changes have made things worse.

People who didn't think that their community had changed tended to say that they could see that things had happened in the community but that these hadn't changed their lives. They also cited family fighting, disappointment with the Intervention, loss of community councils and lack of employment as reasons why the community had not changed.

4.3 Feedback on significant changes from the participatory methodologies

As discussed in the methodology section above, in twelve of the sixteen communities included in the sample, community members were asked to vote on the most significant changes that had taken place.

For each, a list of issues was developed from the quantitative and qualitative survey responses or developed through focus group discussions with different cohorts. This list was set out on a ballot paper and people were asked to vote for their 'top five picks'. The vote was weighted by awarding five votes to the number one pick, four votes for number two and so on and then simply adding up which issues received the highest vote. Approximately 1000 people took part in the voting process across the twelve communities.

Across the twelve communities a total of 23 different issues were identified as the most important changes through this process. These 23 issues have subsequently been weighted to identify the most common important changes at the survey level. Table 4.5 presents the most important changes identified by all communities in descending order. Shading indicates issues that rated equally.

Table 4.5: Issues identified from the participatory process in 12 communities as the ‘most important change’ (community weighted results in descending order)

Issue	
1	Police – additional police and new stations
2	Better schools – more teachers and new facilities
3	The Basics Card
	More and better quality housing
4	More things for young people to do
	Better services from Centrelink
5	School nutrition program
	Night Patrols

In order to ensure that all important changes were included in this analysis, the issues were grouped into themes in order to assess the general areas of most significant change.

The themes are improved services, improved community functioning, improved quality of life for children and young people, and less destructive behaviour.

Improved services:

- New police station/more police
- Better school - teachers and facilities
- Better clinic
- Night Patrol
- Safe house
- School nutrition program
- Better services from Centrelink
- Crèche
- Houses
- More fresh food

Improved community functioning:

- More jobs
- Community working better together
- Basics Card
- Community is safer

Improved quality of life for children and young people:

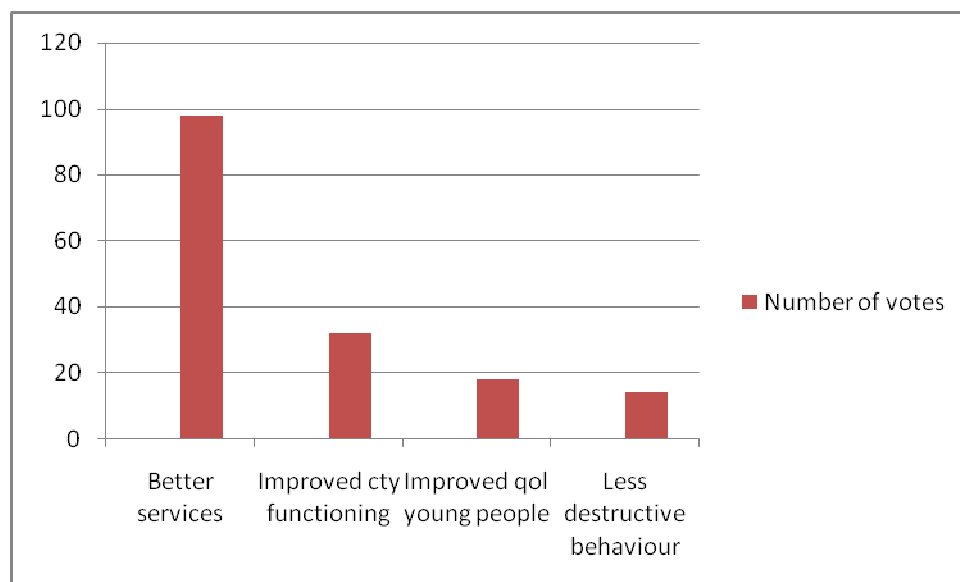
- More things for young people to do
- More kids looked after
- Healthy kids

Less destructive behaviour:

- New grog rules/better enforcement
- Less grog/gunja
- Less fighting

Figure 4.2 figure demonstrates the emphasis given by many respondents on the improved service provision that has resulted from the investments generated by the NTER. The significance of improved service provision is greater here than in the response to the survey question 'Can you tell us if these things have changed in your community in the last 3 years'.

Figure 4.2: Most important changes at the community level grouped by theme

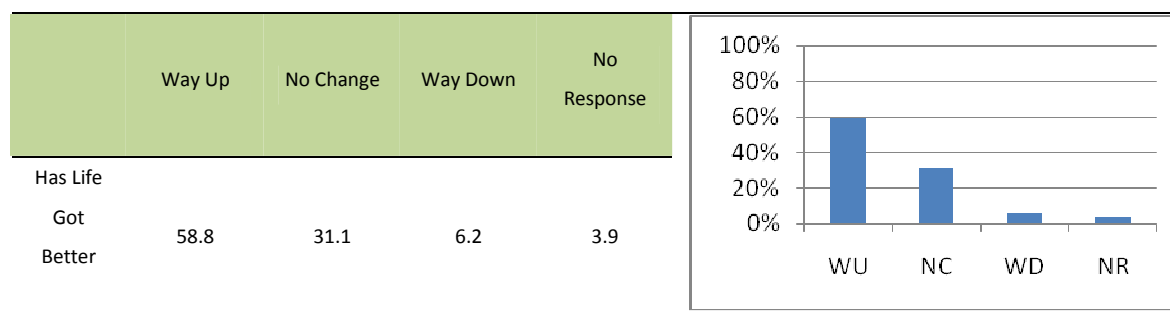


Note: The wide range of issues means when all the outcomes across the 12 communities were amalgamated, some issues received a low number of votes because they were specific to a community and did not fit comfortably into one of the four themes identified above.

4.4 Change on a personal level

Respondents were also asked whether their own lives had changed for better or worse over the past three years. Table 4.6 below presents the response to this question.

Table 4.6: Response to ‘Has your life got better now than it was three years ago?’ by percentage



N=1343

It is notable that the perception of change in personal circumstances over the three years (58.7%) is more positive than that of any change in community circumstances (47.4%). People gave a wide variety of reasons as to why their personal circumstances had improved over that time. The most common was that the individual had got a job. (Note: the methodology section, where participant recruitment strategies are flagged as a source of bias – page 20). This comment from a middle-aged woman is typical: *‘Me and my partner are both working and supporting our kids. I started last year. I want to keep working, keeping me busy, not lazy, also extra money for food and clothes’*. This is from a middle-aged man: *‘I am up high because there are so many good ideas, lot of work and training’*.

People also mentioned that having a job was keeping them out of trouble. A young man said: *‘I’m working now and that stops me from being bored and getting into trouble with the police’*. Another young man had a similar experience: *‘Got a new job and not involved in fighting’*. And finally, this young man: *‘I was a bad person before but now I started to realise that I wanted to change and be a good person. Now I’m better than I was before. I got a good job at the school helping kids.’*

Another common remark made by people who have jobs is that the job is making them limit their substance use and that they feel good about it: *‘Husband doesn’t fight with me. He is drinking less. He has a job and thinks less about grog’*. and *‘I’m working and not drinking too much. It’s keeping me busy.’*

People also cited benefits that came from spending more money on food, partly as a result of the Basics Card. This older woman said she had a better life *‘Because I can manage to look after my family*

better than before'. This older man said: 'I've got kids (grand-son and daughter) to look after. Before I was doing the wrong thing, the intervention made me realise I was doing the wrong thing. I made that decision by myself.'

Apart from jobs distracting people from substance misuse, several people also commented that they were consuming less gunja and alcohol. In some instances it was clear that this was a result of the use of the Basics Card. One middle-aged man said *'I used to be a drinker, used to live in town. Got some kids now to look after. Get good help from Centrelink - parenting payment, Basics Card been helping, really good'*. A woman commented: *'I used to drink with my husband and fighting too. But we have stopped now. New rules have helped me and my husband stop drinking'*. Finally: *'Living in a 'dry' community is good for me and makes me feel happy and safe. I used to spend too much on grog and gambling'*.

An improvement in housing was also often cited as a reason for life having improved. People (understandably) were enjoying living with just their own family, instead of in large, out-of control-households. This young woman said *'Yes [on the way up] because living with just my kids and partner (not in an over-crowded house).'* Another had a similar view: *'Living on own with the kids. Own house - was in other people's houses before – over-crowded'*.

The other major theme common to people who thought that their life had improved was that they felt that they were contributing to their community. This comment, by a middle-aged man, is typical: *'I am getting training (like first aid) and helping other people and the community;'* and: *'Yes because I work for Night Patrol and I think that I am starting to help and make a difference in the community'*.

Despite all these particular issues that have led people to judge that their life is on the 'way up,' the most responses commonly contained a combination of numerous factors, some the result of improved services, and some not. Following is a selection of these comments:

I feel very good. My life is very good now. I go to church every Sunday and give thanks.

Got good job and training. Got wife and daughter. Playing football.

Working, learning how to use computers at the computer rooms & music.

All the time working in the art centre. Got a lot of grand-kids. Going out (bush) with friends too to get honey ants. My life is good. I go out for workshops too. It's happy.

I'VE GOT A JOB AND A GOOD HOUSE.

Always getting better - doing footy work, seeing me as a role model for how to treat women and children. Employed by NTAFL.

Training and job with ITEC. Playing in football team, swimming, healthy activities. Good food from

bush tucker trips.

I have work; having a daughter (who) is growing up; and being a football coach.

School, food and sport are better. Apprentice training .

I am non-smoking. I didn't make any problem. Full-time salaries, sitting with friends and family, telling stories about work or job.

Because I'm happy myself of going to work in the school and like going fishing or just sit down with my grandchildren and watch them to play and have fun.

I got a job and surrounded by my family and living in a quiet community.

Busy working and feel good to live in a safe community close to families.

Got a good job, house, something to do after work, youth centre.

The reasons given by people who feel that their lives are on the 'way down' (6.2%) tended to be the reverse of the types of stories listed in the above table. Several people felt that their family life had deteriorated, as this comment typifies: *'Lot of my family go against me, my grandchildren, my children. We always stuck in the middle. I'm sick from people of always accusing me and abusing me from my kids'*. This young man doesn't have his own troubles, but community fighting brings him down: *'I'm healthy, good food, job, money but I feel sad when I see people hurting each other. No community support. Leader disinterested, we want our community be strong and making pathway for our young ones.*

The theme of community weakness is another reason commonly given by people who see their community as on the way down. For some this is driven by the NTER: *'The intervention has taken away a lot of our communities' pride, such as CDEP reform and the establishment of Job find,'* and: *'I'm not happy with some of the changes that have happened because I feel we are let down instead of with us side by side'.*

It is interesting to note that many of the comments relating to loss of leadership and community control are made by middle aged men, who are likely to be the main group who used to be closely involved in community affairs, and have now lost that role. This comment sums up a common experience for this group: *'Too much trouble in the community, people want help, but [I'm] unable to help them, hard rules at the Shire make things hard. When a local council ran the community things were better. Shires took power and control off local people, roads aren't looked after well now and the community isn't as tidy'.*

4.5 Summary

The different elements incorporated into the wider safety and well-being survey gave respondents several opportunities both to rank and comment on changes that had taken place over the previous three years. We can see from the results presented here that different ways of approaching the issue of what has changed have generated different results. The question: 'Can you tell me what has changed in your community over the last three years?' resulted in improved schools being the 'top pick'. The 'Is your community on the way up or way down?' question leads to improved employment opportunities coming through as a major generator of positive change and finally the voting process placed improved police services as the number one change. When a thematic approach is taken to the analysis however, it is clear that a general improvement in services is hailed as the most important change to have taken place.

There is also a considerable amount of material on negative changes that have occurred. This feedback is primarily generated through the 'way up' - 'way down' question and the voting process. The biggest negative changes appears to be- 'the loss of community control', and 'a loss of pride and identity' that has resulted from a combination of the way in which the NTER was initiated, 'the loss of control over income' resulting from the Basics Card and 'the move from local community council governance to the Shire system.'

Finally, there is considerable variation across communities. This is particularly evident from the results of surveys that have been conducted in communities with a population of more than 1100, and where the results were far less positive.

5. Challenges

This section is similar in intent to the previous one, in that it also focuses on the original aim of the survey - to seek answers to the question: ‘After all the changes brought about by the NTER, what in your life and in your community still remain as challenges, and which of these do you rank as the most pressing?’ The substantive material on each of the prioritised challenges addressed in this section is dealt with more fully in subsequent parts of the report. Substance misuse, for example, emerges as a challenge with more detail on the responses presented in the section on that topic (page 99).

The main survey question that dealt with challenges was: ‘Tell me which of these are still a problem in your community?’ We present the responses to this question here, and dichotomise the categories for ease of analysis. ‘Very big problem’ has been added to ‘big problem,’ and ‘small problem’ has been combined with ‘not a problem’. We have then ranked the issues from those nominated as the most to the least serious. Table 5.1 presents the results for this question, listed in order of the level of respondents’ support.

Table 5.1: Responses to ‘Can you tell me which of these is still are problem in your community?’ by percentage, dichotomised, in descending order

Problem	Big problem (happens a lot of the time)	Not a problem (doesn’t happen here)	Don’t know	No response
Young people not listening to their parents and older people	70.5	25.7	2.4	1.3
Kids being out at night	64.5	32.3	2.0	1.3
Drugs – too much gunja	61.7	27.8	8.6	2.0
People sending nasty phone messages	57.7	23.2	8.1	10.9
Other types of family fighting	53.8	41.9	3.0	1.3
Men hurting women	52.5	40.8	5.2	1.5
Drinking too much grog	52.1	40.1	2.8	4.9
Humbugging old people	49.3	44.1	5.2	1.4
Kids not going to school	46.4	49.7	1.9	1.4
Cars ‘spinning round’ or other dangerous driving	42.3	47.6	8.0	2.1

Problem	Big problem (happens a lot of the time)	Not a problem (doesn't happen here)	Don't know	No response
Sorcery	40.0	40.2	17.0	2.7
Kids not being looked after properly	38.3	55.3	5.0	1.3
Payback	34.0	48.8	13.9	3.2
Adults hurting kids or younger people	33.9	56.6	7.5	2.0
Young people hurting older people	33.5	57.7	7.2	1.6
Too much sniffing petrol, glue, paint	23.5	43.5	18.0	15.1

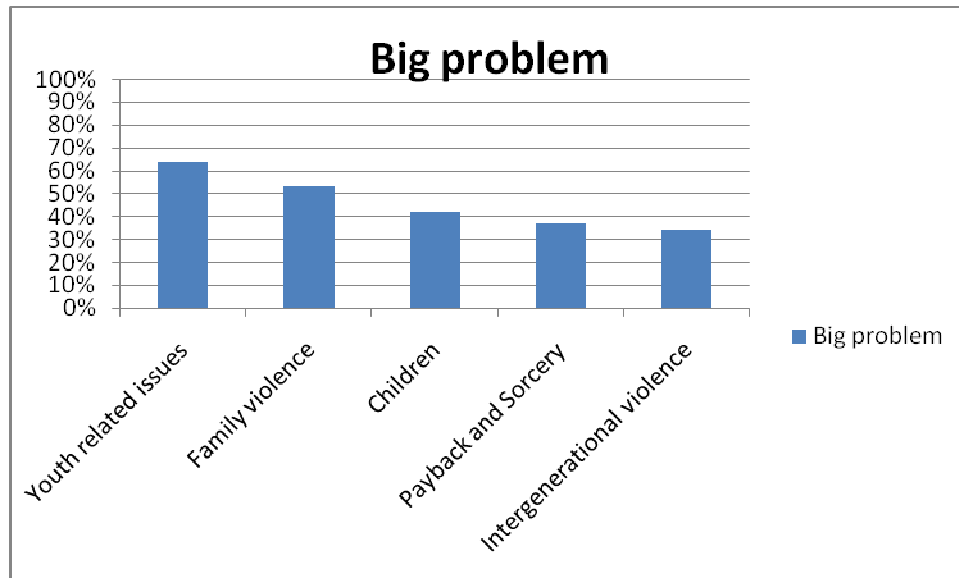
What first becomes obvious from the data is that the four challenges that are considered to be the most serious are all related to the behaviour of young people: not listening to their parents, roaming the community at night, smoking gunja and sending nasty text messages to each other in order to provoke fights. The next group of issues relate to violence: domestic violence, other types of family fighting, and drinking too much grog – one of the main objections to which is the resulting violence. Interestingly, the two options that specify inter-generational violence are not seen as such a serious problem: 33.9% for adults hurting kids and 33.5% for young people hurting older people, and are two of the bottom three issues.

We then drop below the 50% threshold into issues that are seen as either a 'very big' or 'big' problem by less than half the sample. This group presents a mix of issues, from humbugging older people to issues concerning young children: kids not going to school, and kids not being looked after properly. Two cultural issues - sorcery and payback - are also in this group.

The challenge that appears at the bottom of the table - petrol sniffing - warrants special mention. In several of the sample communities petrol sniffing does not occur and in some such communities researchers omitted the question. In communities where there is no petrol sniffing, but where the question was asked respondents in these communities tended either to answer 'don't know' or not to respond. The 23.5% of those who rated petrol sniffing as a severe problem are likely to be quite high proportions of the respondents in the small number of sites where sniffing *does* occur.

Figure 5.1 below presents the average score for the number of respondents who rated issues within each of the themes described above as a 'big problem'.

Figure 5.1: Average score for areas perceived as a big problem



This shows clearly that residents of the sample communities see issues related to destructive behaviour by young people as the most pressing challenge. This comment from a middle aged man in a large community expresses his frustration with young people in his community: *'Problem is how do you engage 15-30 year olds who missed out on an education and don't value work.'* This is from another middle aged man: *'Young people not listening to parents and elders has got worse'.*

5.1 The relationship between perceived challenges and community population size

Once again we have found the size of the community to be a significant variable when responses are analysed by community. We therefore present an analysis of each of the variables in this question, cross-tabulated with community population size.

The table also shows the probability scores for two statistics: Chi square (which indicates whether or not a statistically significant relationship exists) and the Cochran-Armitage test for trend, which indicates whether or not there is a linear association between the variable of interest and grouped population size. The smaller the score for both these tests, the stronger the relationship between the variables – 'the perceived severity of the issue', and 'the size of the community population'.

Table 5.2: Proportion of respondents reporting that specified issues were a 'big problem'

Problem	N =	% saying 'big problem'					P(Chi sq.)	P (C-A) (a)
		< 350	350 < 699	700 < 1100	1100 +	Total		
Men hurting women	1252	17.3	34.2	77.3	77.5	56.3	.000	.000
Other types of family fighting	1286	18.6	35.9	76.4	76.2	56.2	.000	.000
Adults hurting kids or younger people	1216	13.6	19.5	56.4	49.9	37.4	.000	.000
Young people hurting older people	1225	14.5	19.7	52.0	51.4	36.7	.000	.000
Young people not listening to their parents and older people	1294	49.3	63.0	82.9	86.7	73.3	.000	.000
Drinking too much grog	1239	38.8	53.9	70.7	55.2	56.5	.000	.000
Too much gunja	1202	32.6	55.2	84.3	83.8	68.9	.000	.000
Too much sniffing petrol, glue, paint	899 (b)	8.9	6.0	51.3	53.9	35.0	.000	.000
Humbugging old people	1254	22.8	37.6	67.8	69.5	52.8	.000	.000
Kids not being looked after properly	1259	15.3	32.0	54.5	50.9	41.0	.000	.000
Kids being out at night	1298	38.2	47.4	83.4	83.9	66.7	.000	.000
Kids not going to school	1299	15.0	28.8	63.4	68.2	48.0	.000	.000
Cars spinning round or other dangerous driving	1207	18.5	35.8	58.9	63.2	47.1	.000	.000
People sending nasty phone messages	1087	9.8	56.4	91.9	86.5	71.4	.000	.000
Sorcery	1078	13.1	27.9	65.6	75.7	49.9	.000	.000
Payback	1113	8.2	14.3	62.1	67.2	41.1	.000	.000

(a) Cochran-Armitage test for linearity

(b) Note large number of missing cases (445) - respondents from places where petrol sniffing has not been a problem

For each of the sixteen problems listed there is a clear and statistically significant relationship between community population size and the perceived severity of the problem, with a higher proportion regarding an issue as a 'big problem' in the larger communities. In some cases the relationship follows

a gradient: with each increase in population size, the proportion citing the problem as a 'big' also rises (e.g. 'kids not going to school', 'cars spinning round or other dangerous driving'). More frequently, the proportion identifying a problem as 'big' is similar in the two larger population categories: 700 -1099 and 1100+, and also significantly higher than in the two smaller population size categories (e.g. 'men hurting women' and 'other types of family fighting').

This finding shows a repeat of the relationship between community population size and the perception of change and in this case it is in fact stronger.

5.2 Feedback on significant challenges from the participatory methodologies

As discussed in the methodology section above, in twelve of the sixteen communities included in the sample community members were asked to vote on the most significant challenges facing their community. For each, a list of issues was developed from the quantitative and qualitative survey responses or developed through focus group discussions with different cohorts. This list was set out on a ballot paper, and people were asked to vote for their 'top five picks'. The vote was weighted by awarding five votes to the number one pick, four votes for number two and so on, and then simply adding up which issues received the highest vote. Approximately 1000 people took part in the voting process across the twelve communities.

Across the twelve communities a number of different issues were identified as the most important challenges through this process. These issues have subsequently been weighted to identify the most common significant challenges at the survey level. Table 5.3 presents the most significant challenges identified in descending order. Shading indicates issues that rated equally.

Table 5.3: Issues identified from the participatory process in 12 communities as the 'most significant challenges' (community weighted results in descending order)

Issue	
1	Housing
2	Jobs and training needed More activities for young people
3	Inadequate roads
4	Lack of power to make decisions at the community level
5	Police needed at the community

Housing, jobs, and activities for young people stood out as the main challenges. Qualitative feedback suggests that many respondents believe that young people should be getting jobs. When this is taken into account the feedback from the voting echoes the concern about young people's issues that came through so clearly in the ranked challenges discussed in Table 5.1 above.

There was of course a wide range of issues voted on throughout the different communities, depending on residents' particular experiences. The items that appear in the total list of issues that received the five highest votes across the twelve sites have been grouped into themes in order to assess the general areas of most significant challenge. The themes were: further improvement in services, improved infrastructure, issues relating to young people road and transport issues and destructive behaviour issues.

Further improvement in services needed:

- improved service at clinic
- more food at the store
- lower store prices
- jobs and training
- help families to return to homelands
- additional policing
- more Aboriginal Health Workers
- women's Centre
- safe house
- lower wages on CDEP

Improved infrastructure

- move rec. hall (away from Club)
- street lights
- sport and rec. facilities
- houses

Issues relating to young people

- more activities for young people
- stop kids being out at night
- school attendance
- kids learning culture
- nasty phone messages
- not listening to authority
- stop child neglect

Road and transport issues

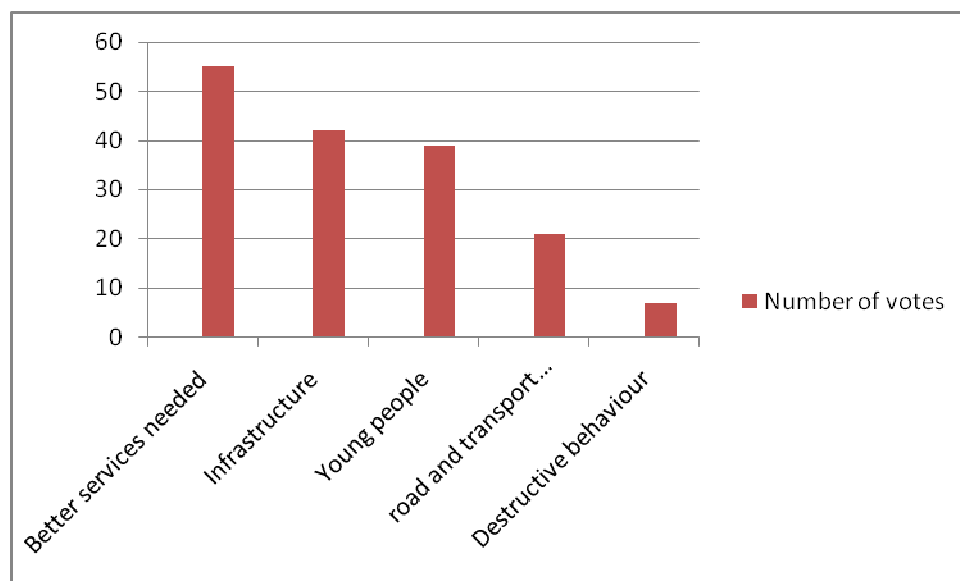
- inadequate road
- mechanics workshop needed
- no community bus

The group of challenges with the lowest ranking in importance is destructive behaviour, with seven amalgamated votes:

- gunja
- petrol sniffing
- gambling
- humbug

Prioritisation of service provision as shown in the Figure 5.2 echoes the ‘most important change’ results, where improved services were ranked as the most important change over the previous three years.

Figure 5.2: Votes for the most significant challenge grouped into themes



Infrastructure is the next highest priority. If these two were to be combined with road transport issues, improvements in infrastructure would become the highest ranked challenge. This process has resulted young people’s issues being rated as important, which confirms the outcomes of the ‘social problems’ question in the survey.

The low number of votes for destructive behaviour (gunja, petrol sniffing, gambling and humbug) is interesting. Firstly, it is surprising to note that alcohol issues did not make to the top five pick of any

community. It is not possible to tell whether this is a reflection of a decrease in the impact of alcohol, or if some other factor is at play.

The second remarkable thing about the low ranking for destructive behaviour is that there is a wealth of both quantitative and qualitative data that stresses the negative effects of cannabis use on communities; however gunja did not get many votes.

It is interesting to compare these ranked priorities with the results of the survey question on community problems. These also show that respondents consider youth-related issues to be the most serious. No 'improvement in service' or infrastructure topics were included in the question, which focused rather on the behaviour of community residents. The expanded list of issues of interest that was generated through consideration of both quantitative and qualitative responses to the whole survey nevertheless shows that other issues are also seen as important.

5.3 Summary

Through the use of both these methodologies, three key areas emerge as serious challenges.

They are:

- The need for continued improvement in service provision, especially in:
 - employment and training, and job opportunities
 - activities for young people and
 - improvement in stores.
- The ongoing need for improved infrastructure, particularly:
 - housing
 - roads
 - sport and recreation facilities and
 - streetlights.
- The need to address the socially destructive behaviour of young people.

Challenges relating to the actions of community residents, such as destructive behaviour and violence are perceived as more serious problems in larger communities.

6. Services

Voting on both the changes and challenges as described in previous sections are identified services which are both the most important change and also the most significant challenge for communities in the sample. This section examines quantitative and qualitative feedback on the following services:

- night patrol
- police
- youth services
- health services
- safe houses
- housing
- employment and training
- stores and
- Centrelink.

The NTER generated changes to a number of these services. Many communities received additional police, and in some, new police stations were built. The Shires received funding to run Night Patrols in all communities while some communities received funds to expand their youth services and others had stores licensed and the quality of their produce was monitored. Centrelink services changed with the introduction and servicing of the Basics Card. In some communities, Centrelink opened new offices, employed new or additional staff, and increased its visits from town-based Centrelink workers.

6.1 Services that improve safety

People gave enormous credit to Night Patrols and police for helping to keep communities safe in their responses to the question: 'Do you think that these things have made a difference to safety in your community?' The following comment illustrates how some perceive their effectiveness: *'Without Night Patrol or police the community will be at war'*.

Interestingly, there was considerable feedback to the effect that the best service is provided when the police, Night Patrol and community leaders work together. An older man explained it like this: *'More safer when Night Patrol and the police are working together with also with the law woman and man. We call this the Mala leaders'*.

Other services that were regularly nominated as helping to keep people safe were aged care centres and youth programs. Several people said that Mediation Group was helping to make their community

safer and one woman cited her community’s dog control program as having made a big difference to the number of ‘cheeky’ dogs that threaten everyone.

6.1.1 Night Patrols

Responses to the quantitative element of the questionnaire indicate that Night Patrols are perceived as the service that has made the most difference to safety in communities over the last three years, with 74.8% stating that they had made some difference (‘big difference’ and ‘little bit of difference’ responses combined). In addition to the results from this question, the voting process described earlier (page 20) ranked Night Patrols as the fifth most important positive change generated by the NTER across all communities in the sample. Table 6.1 presents the response to the contribution of Night Patrols in making communities safer.

Table 6.1: Response to ‘Do you think these things have made a difference to safety in your community – Night Patrols’ by percentage

	A Big Difference	Little Bit Of Difference	No Difference	Made It Worse	Don't know	No response
Better Night Patrols	43.3	31.5	16.8	3.4	3.6	1.4

N=1343

In keeping with the trend relating to population size that has been discussed in the earlier section, the larger the community’s population, the more reduced the perception of the effectiveness of Night Patrols. Table 6.2 presents this data.

Table 6.2: Response to ‘Do you think Night Patrol has made a difference to safety in your community?’ analysed by population size of community, by percentage

Population size	Big difference	Little bit of difference	No difference	Made it worse	Don't know	No response
<350	62.9	25.7	9.0	1.9	0.0	0.5
350 - 699	47.4	29.5	16.4	3.3	3.3	0.1
700 - 1099	46.3	28.9	16.6	3.7	4.5	0.0
1100+	28.5	39.7	21.8	4.2	5.2	0.6

N=1343

p<.01

It is not surprising that as communities get bigger and more geographically and socially complex, it becomes more difficult for Night Patrols to prevent and resolve disturbances and they are then seen as less effective.

Qualitative comment presented throughout this section provides insight into both why this service is considered effective, and how it can be improved.

6.1.2 Roles undertaken by Night Patrols

Feedback indicates that Night Patrols perform a wide variety of tasks and that these (and their effectiveness) differ as among communities. Following are the Night Patrol workers' functions that were identified:

- picking young people and children up when they are roaming around at night and taking them home
- chasing kids away from dangerous areas;
- intervening in family fights and encouraging people to calm down
- removing combatants when family fighting starts, and taking them to other family members' homes. (*'Good at relocating people who are starting family fights like a son who is smashing things up because he cannot get gunja' The Night Patrol will take him to his aunty's'*)
- taking people who they think are in danger to the police and or the safe house
- running the safe house
- calling the police when they believe people to be in danger
- asking people to turn down music that is too loud, and encouraging people to be more respectful
- getting people who are driving dangerously to slow down
- telling people how to 'stay safe' when they are drinking at 'boundary' camps
- taking children to school who are wandering in the community during school time
- taking on a security guard role and checking on the security of buildings at night
- alerting the Shire to areas in the community where important safety infrastructure such as street lighting needs to be repaired
- stopping people watching sexy movies in public places (i.e. not at home): *'The Night Patrol are talking to underage kids and asking them to go or taking them home. Before a lot of young boys were watching sexy / bad DVDs but that has stopped'*
- removing substance users such as sniffers to other communities

- sending drunks home and
- helping people whose cars are bogged.

This is an interesting list that combines preventive, responsive and protective roles. It emphasises the flexibility of the service, and also demonstrates how it has evolved in different communities.

6.1.3 The strength of Night Patrols

An older man summarised many people's feeling on the strength of Night Patrols when he said: *'They make it being safe to be controlled by interpreting in a better way for our community'*. He is referring to the cultural competence and acceptance of Night Patrol workers, which means community members are willing to receive their help, and also to the Night Patrol's role in liaising between community members and Police.

People were happy with the jobs generated by Night Patrols and clearly believe that its role is to help the community in a number of ways. The end result is that people sleep better at night and feel safer: *'Night Patrol means more kids get better sleep at night and it's safer'*.

6.1.4 Limitations of Night Patrols

Several limitations were commonly cited as restricting Night Patrol activities. Respondents tended to view the source of these limitations as the operating rules laid down by the Shires (who manage the Night Patrols throughout the NT). The most commonly referred to was not being allowed not being able to go beyond the community boundaries. This limitation means that many Night Patrols do not go to 'boundary' drinking camps and outstations (or do not go often enough).

Another limitation that people raised was Night Patrollers' lack of 'official' power: *'Better if we could have the Night Patrols have a pen and paper to write and make a charge to the community'*. Some respondents at least want Night Patrol to have the power to lock people up if they are causing trouble, either overnight, or until the police arrive: *'When police are not around but only Night Patrol, they should have an overnight lock-up so people causing trouble are not just let out. Keep them overnight'*.

Another issue that was commonly raised was the lack of respect shown to Night Patrollers by community members. In some communities several people mentioned that children and young people don't respect them, and would run away rather than stop and listen to them. Another problem cited was that some people expect Night Patrollers to look after their children who are at home, while they (the parents) roam the streets.

Respondents often stated that Night Patrollers are not skilled in managing violent situations. People suggested that they need more training. A middle- aged woman from a large community summed it up in this way: *'Night Patrol needs more funding and support like more training in security and personal protection.'*

Finally, many people felt that Night Patrols were limited by the low number of people employed and the inadequate hours that they are allowed to work. Numerous respondents suggested that Night Patrols would be more effective if their hours were increased, and if they had more people, in more vehicles. This response was common in communities of all sizes.

6.1.5 Night Patrollers

One of the great variables among communities is the demographic characteristics of the Night Patrollers. In some communities they are all women while in others all men, in other places older people do the work and some Night Patrols employ young people as well. There was quite a lot of comment on the most desirable mix of people. Within the variation of different opinions the overall theme was that Night Patrols should include not only men but some women and younger people. There was also some suggestion that major family groups within a community should all be represented.

6.1.6 Police

One of the major investments of the NTER was an expansion in policing in many of the prescribed communities. The survey included communities with no police; others that had previously had police, but which did not get any additional officers; those that already had police, but which did receive additional police officers. Finally, there were communities where there were previously no police, but which under the NTER got a police station and resident officers. Participants were asked to respond to the statement: *'It is easier to get help from the police than three years ago'*. Table 6.3 below presents the response.

Table 6.3: Response to 'It is easier to get help from the police than three years ago,' by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree A Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
Easier To Get Help From Police	45.5	30.8	13.0	6.2	3.8	0.7

N=1343

A combined 76.3% of the sample agreed ('strongly agree' plus 'agree') that it is easier to get help from police than was previously the case. There is a significant difference in the responses of different age groups to this statement, with people under the age of 25 more likely to agree than older people. This result probably also reflects feedback from communities that have a police station for the first time. This young woman summed it up: *'The help from the police is easier as they are present here at the local police station every day.'* This person also endorsed the role of the police in improving safety: *'The police have stopped a lot of the fighting and have made it safer'*. An old woman agreed: *'Permanent police presence has reduced grog and gunja and calms violent outburst more quickly.'* The result is consistent across all communities with resident police officers, but where there is no police presence respondents were significantly less likely to agree.

There was some complaint that call routing arrangements with 000 have made it more difficult to get help from the police. This story from a man in a large community illustrates the problem:

'Police calls [going] to Adelaide - Darwin has made it harder to get help from the police. There was a bloke beating a girl with a steel bar so I rang the police and got put through to Adelaide and they had to make a decision about a place they don't even know. This was at 3:30 pm in the afternoon. In another example, there was a bushfire coming up the hill so I rang the police here. Was switched to Adelaide-Darwin and they said "Why are you ringing the police - you need fire." But here the police are fire as well. Meanwhile the fire is still burning and we are wasting time on the phone'

Policing also has an impact on the perception of safety in communities. The table below presents the response to the statement 'Community is safer' analysed by the policing status of the community.

Table 6.4: Response to 'Community is safer' analysed by police station status, dichotomised, by percent

Police station status	Agree	Disagree
No police	89	11
No change	77.7	22.3
Additional police	64.9	35.1
New station + additional police	90.0	10.0

N=1268

p<.01

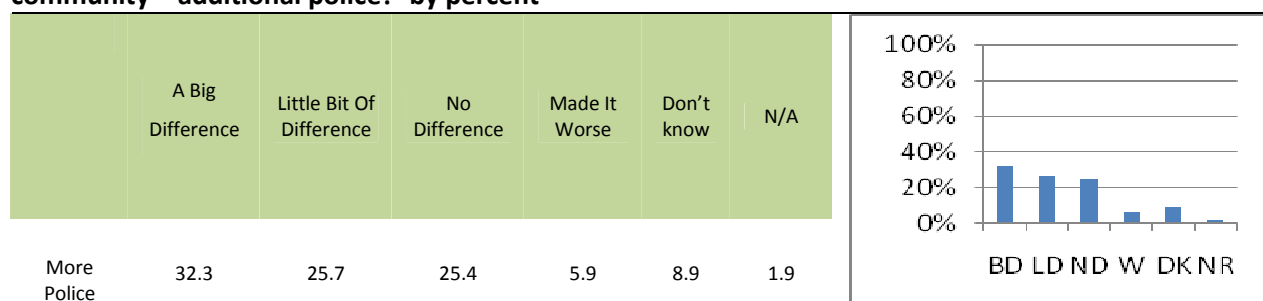
This result shows that - by a small margin - the communities which received resident police for the first time under the NTER recorded the highest response for belief in improved safety over the three years in question. This is very closely followed by communities with no police (These communities are very small, and tend to be fairly safe). It is interesting to note that communities that received additional

police recorded a lower rating on the improvement of safety than those with no change. This is likely to reflect the nature of individual communities, with qualitative data suggesting that relationships between the police and residents are somewhat frayed in several of the larger population centres.

The survey question on the difference made to safety by a range of services sought to elicit additional feedback on the effect on communities of a police presence. The results of this question are difficult to analyse because not every community had each service and therefore some questions were omitted from the survey in different places, generating high numbers of ‘no response.’ Also, some questions that were asked were not well understood, as can be seen from the high number of ‘no response’ and ‘don’t know’ answers.

Three communities in the sample had received additional police (to existing stations) as part of the NTER so only 405 of the 1343 sample were in scope for this question. More than half of respondents (58.0%) thought that they had made a difference to safety. This middle-aged man explained the way he sees it: ‘Safe because we have seven policemen here now, there used to only be two, so there is more law and order.’ Table 6.5 below presents these data.

Table 6.5: Response to ‘Can you tell me if these things have made a difference to safety in your community – additional police?’ by percent



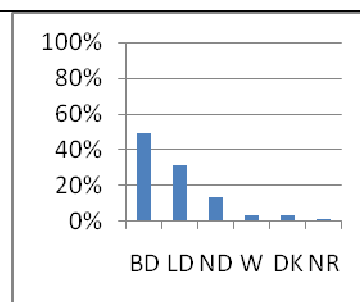
N=405

Through the NTER, five communities in the sample had obtained a resident police presence for the first time. These communities tended to be small communities, with only 350 of the 1343 sample in scope for this question. This result indicates that 80.0% of respondents felt that a new police presence made a difference to safety in their community (‘big difference plus “little bit of difference”). This makes police the most effective service to improve safety in these communities.

Table 6.6 presents this data.

Table 6.6: Response to ‘Can you tell me if these things have made a difference to safety in your community – new police station?’ by percent

	A Big Difference	Little Bit Of Difference	No Difference	Made It Worse	Don't know	No response
New Police Station	48.6	31.4	13.1	2.9	2.9	1.1



N=350

There were also differences between the genders and among age groups as to whether or not the changes to policing had made a difference to safety. In their responses to both these questions, males and people under the age of 25 were significantly more likely than females and those over 25 to state that the police had made a positive difference. This is interesting, as it is often young males that are the target of police activity and females are more likely to be those receiving protection.

Another measure of their effectiveness is that police were voted to be the most important positive change and police services were ranked the fifth most important challenge through the voting process previously described. Note that the voting on this issue in the challenges ballot was heavily affected by the responses from the three communities in the sample that have no permanent police presence.

There was a lot of variation in the responses about police and their effect on communities. The most consistent positive feedback was in regard to the role of police in limiting the amount of alcohol getting into communities. This comment from an older woman is typical: *‘Grog rules are hardly any different but police are around all the time to enforce the rules better,’* as is this: *‘Police go to the turn-off on Fridays and Sundays to make sure people don't bring grog back in and that's been good for our community.’* Many people also commented on the role of the police in reducing the amount of family fighting in communities, as this young man commented: *‘Young boys fight with fathers but not now police is here.’*

There was, however, a great deal of negative opinion particularly from those in communities with long-established police stations. The main complaints concerned police attitudes (*‘Police don't help when there's big trouble they just stand back and watch from long way’*) to the local community and situations of quick turnaround, where officers do short stints in a community and don't really get to

know anyone. This comment from an older man is typical: *'No police from city - they need to know the people here in the community. The police don't know the names of people.'*

Another issue commonly raised was that people would like to see Aboriginal police officers in their communities. Some older people reflected that there used to be more of them: *'The idea of a white police officer working alongside an Aboriginal police aide worked well for a while; now it seems to have been forgotten'*. Some expressed the view that Aboriginal police officers would make the police service more effective, and add depth to the Aboriginal leadership in the communities. This comment came from a young woman: *'Need more Aboriginal police. We would like to see our leaders get strong'*.

There was also some consistent comment to the effect that having too many non-Aboriginal police was actually perceived as disadvantageous. This feedback tended to come from the very large communities with an established police presence, or communities with new police stations. The following comment shows how police presence can impact on the pre-existing authority at the community level:

'Since the police came it is like they took the power off the parents and community elders, and now the kids walk the streets late at night because the police only give them a warning and say they can't do anything till the kids do something wrong. But to us, walking around late is a real problem, because they have no adults watching over them.'

6.1.7 Experiences of crime and trouble

Respondents were also asked about their experiences of crime and trouble. They were asked if anyone had started a fight with them or bashed them up over the previous year. Only 12.3% said 'Yes'. Most (76.7%) said that this had not happened to them, and 8.2% declined to answer. It is impossible to gauge the accuracy of this response as this is a very personal question and not all respondents may have been completely frank.

The respondents who answered in the affirmative were asked if they had reported the incident to the police. Of the 12.3% (165 respondents) who said that they had experienced a fight over the last year, 61.2% said that they had reported it.

6.2 Programs that deliver activities for young people and children

Schools, sport and recreation and youth programs deliver activities for young people. Responses on schools are included in the ‘Children and Young People’ section of the report. This section covers other activities.

‘Sport and recreation programs’ and ‘youth programs’ are terms that are often used interchangeably. Generally, the former focus on sport - often primarily football for males, and softball for females. Youth programs tend to have a broader focus, and may offer a range of sport and arts activities along with excursions to favourite swimming holes and other popular places. They sometimes also incorporate case management and diversion for young people with substance misuse or other problems, and who are involved in, or are at risk of involvement in, the criminal justice system.

The only place in which youth programs are addressed in the survey is in the question on the effect on safety of different services. Respondents were asked to rate the difference made by ‘More activities for young people.’ Further responses can however be seen in the results of the voting process, where an increase in activities for young people was voted the fourth most important change under the NTER across all communities. The need for more activities for young people was rated as the second most important challenge. The feedback from both the voting process and qualitative input makes it clear that youth activities are considered important for the safety of the whole community and for a better quality of life for young people.

In the question dealing with the various services and their effect on safety, the change of ‘More things for young people to do’ was second (behind Night Patrols) in making the most difference to safety, with a combined 65.4% of respondents believing that it had made a ‘big difference’ or ‘a bit of difference’. Almost a quarter felt that activities had made no difference. This may be because activities were not funded for every community. Table 6.7 below presents the response to this question.

Table 6.7: Response to ‘Can you tell me if these things have made a difference to safety in your community - more things for young people to do?’ by percent

	A Big Difference	Little Bit Of Difference	No Difference	Made It Worse	Don't know	No response
More Things For Young People	39.6	25.8	24.1	2.8	6.6	1.1

Category	Percentage
BD	39.6%
LB	25.8%
NB	24.1%
W	2.8%
DK	6.6%
NR	1.1%

N=1343

There is a small difference across age groups in the response to this question, with people under 25 years likely to be more positive than those in the older groups. Once again there is also a perception of decreasing positive impact than runs parallel with an increase in community population size.

The qualitative response on activities for young people is mixed. It is clear that in communities where the youth program is working well, community members see significant benefits. This comment, from a middle-aged man, notes the uniting effect of the sport activities provided through these programs: *'Football has helped young men to stop fighting - get together. Young people not as bad attitude and not as much hate.'* This comment also describes the benefits of a good youth program: *'Used to be lots of break-ins and grog before, and sniffing - nothing now because kids busy learning from sport and recreation - they got respect now, for these places, for parents.'* Others also commented on the connection between increased levels of organised activity for young people and a lower incidence of substance misuse: *'People have fun so don't need to drink so much'*. And from another young man: *'Youth program - stops them from drinking, sniffing and fighting (trouble) - should be bigger.'*

It is clear that people also relate an increase in the availability of activities for young people to improved community safety because fewer young people are roaming around: *'More things for people to do will help make the place safer'* and: *'Kids & young people needs more activities because kids run around at night.'*

Despite the positive reactions, there remain unresolved issues with the delivery of youth services. One common comment is that the activities tend to target either school-aged children, or males with a sporting interest (football), with little for teen-aged girls. One young woman expressed it this way: *'We need more things to do for young people especially for us young girls'* and: *'There's nothing for us young teenage girls only for younger kids.'* The difficulties that many communities experience in finding resources and staff for their youth programs were also apparent: *'The Shire Sport and Recreation program is not functioning, they don't have enough resources and they do not have the right people in the job.'* And: *'There has been more than five youth sport and rec. officers employed by the council over the past two years.'*

It can also be a challenge to balance the need for skilled, experienced staff and the desire to employ local people. This woman notes: *'Not much help from their co-ordinator. Always on leave. No holiday programs. Workers need an experienced person to work with them.'* And the flip-side of this situation:

‘Young people activities not organised. Lack of staff at sport and rec. club. Turn-over staff and outsider non-indigenous have first choice. No local.’

Despite these difficulties it is clear that youth programs play an important role in communities. Apart from employment, they are the most frequently cited mechanism through which the destructive behaviour of some young people can be addressed.

6.3 Stores

Stores provide an essential service in all communities. For many residents they are the main source of food, clothing, hardware, car parts and white goods. Their role as the primary source of food means that they play a vital role in residents’ health and well-being status. One element of the NTER was the obligatory licensing of all stores in prescribed communities.

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement ‘Stores are better than 3 years ago.’ Table 6.8 presents the response.

Table 6.8: Response to ‘Can you tell me if these things have changed in your community in the past 3 years – Store is better,’ by percentage

	Strongly Agree	Agree A Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know	No Response
Store Is Better	46.1	30.1	13.7	6.5	2.7	0.9

N=1343

A combined 76.2% of respondents (‘Strongly agree’ and ‘agree’) felt that stores had improved over the previous three years. There are no significant differences among the views of men, women, young and older people, or people who reside in large or small communities, which indicates that stores have improved at a fairly uniform level in communities in the sample.

In addition to the responses to the above statement, stores also attracted attention in the voting process. The item ‘more fresh food’ was one of the top five picks from three communities, and received a total of seven weighted, aggregated votes (or ninth place, out of a total of 22 issues that were included in the ‘top five picks’ from thirteen communities). This older woman said: *‘In the past three years it has changed in health, in the store more food provided [e.g.] vegetables, fruits, healthy food also drinks’.*

While people clearly believe that their stores have improved over the past three years, many were extremely concerned that prices had increased, making it very hard for people to afford healthy food. This young woman summed up her shopping experience: *‘Everything is more expensive than before, you can spend \$100 and just come out with two bags at the store.’* An old lady who needs to eat healthily because she is not well finds it difficult: *‘Shop is too dear and the price is high in the shop. We are all on medications and we try to buy good food to go with our medicines, but [the price] too high. Most of us end up getting sick.’* This young woman also struggles to make ends meet: *‘For people here, the stores are very expensive. They just about to survive. We need very badly some people to come [to our community] to check the prices.’*

There is more feedback on the price of food in the section on children’s health.

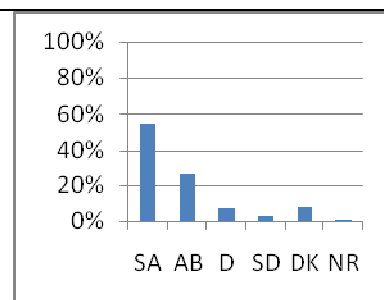
6.4 Centrelink and the Basics Card

Centrelink administers Australian Government’s income support payments including Aged and Disability pensions, Disability payments, Carer payments, Parenting payments, Newstart and Youth Allowance. It also administers the assessment and payment of the Family Tax Benefit. Under the NTER Centrelink’s role expanded to include the administration of the Basics Card.

Given the extent of remote area residents’ reliance on welfare payments, Centrelink is an extremely important service provider for the people who were surveyed. The question about Centrelink asks respondents to consider the statement ‘Can you tell us if it is easier to get help from Centrelink than three years ago?’ Table 6.9 presents the response to this question.

Table 6.9: Response to ‘Can you tell me if these things have changed in your community in the past 3 years - It is easier to get help at Centrelink?’ by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree A Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know	No Response
Easier To Get Help From Centre Link	55.0	25.6	7.1	3.1	7.9	1.3



N=1343

A combined 80.6% of respondents felt that it was easier to get help from Centrelink at the time of the survey than it had been three years prior. Women were more likely to 'strongly agree' with this sentiment than men (59.2% and 50.5% respectively). Other than this the response is consistent across age groups and community population sizes. This response ranks Centrelink as the second biggest improvement in service delivery over the past three years (behind schools, and ahead of clinics, the police and stores) - clearly a very strong endorsement.

This young man explains why he likes the Centrelink service: *'We're happy people, transfer money to the Basic Card. People like it here (Basics Card). Can ring up Centrelink Income Management seven days a week to transfer money'*.

Service delivery arrangements differ from place to place. In some communities there is a permanent Centrelink office and in others a Remote Visiting Team visits to assist people with their payments. Qualitative data indicates that people with Centrelink offices in their community are happiest with the service: *'Help from Centrelink is easier as the lady who works there is a local. She has her own Centrelink office which is open every day here.'*

Notwithstanding the general approval, several respondents described their difficulty with access to Centrelink services. This young woman explains her 'Strongly disagree' response: *'Centrelink office not open when workers are off sick and as there are only two there, but there should be four or five. New Basics Cards come from Darwin and you have to wait for Centrelink to come out from Darwin. People have trouble with faxing their forms. Sometimes the agent isn't there to fax it for them, so they have to go to the school or the Shire and ask to fax for them, but that is not their job to do.'*

Other communities don't have a Centrelink office, and rely on periodic visits from the Remote Visiting Team. This young woman lives in one of these communities and describes the effect of the lengthy wait between visits: *'Centrelink staffs don't come out enough. Some people go without money for a long time.'* The same respondent appreciates the ability to make free phone calls for assistance: *'The free phone for Centrelink makes a difference'*. Residents of one community were full of praise for the Remote Visiting Teams, saying that these Centrelink staff provided the most consistent service delivery for their community.

6.4.1 Basics Card

The Basics Card was not included in the survey tool, however a great deal of qualitative material was gathered about it. People raised it in their explanations of their responses to a number of questions and it was also included in the participatory voting process in many communities (depending on the extent to which people had raised it as an issue). Feedback on the effects of the Basics Card is included in both the 'Changes' 'Children' and 'Young People' and the 'Substance Use' sections of this report.

The majority of those who mentioned the Basics Card made positive comments. In essence many people said they had found it useful in helping them to direct their income away from the purchase of alcohol, marijuana, and gambling, to spending on food and clothes. These observations capture the sense of the responses: *'People used to spend their money buying grog and gambling, now since changes more people are buying food and kids clothes and saving money'*. And: *'Basics Card is good, as young mothers gamble all money away without it.'*

Several older people also identify that having a Basics Card reduces the amount of 'humbug', or pressure from younger family members. This old woman explains her satisfaction: *'I like the Basic Card because my family don't humbug me for money anymore. I got a green Basic Card and the red one. The red one is for the store card and we can use it only for the store here in our community and nowhere else. When family asks me for money I show them the green Basic Card and then they just leave me alone. Yeah so it's really good.'*

However the Basics Card is not universally popular. This old lady commented: *'I don't like that card – I am old, but I am wise and I know how to spend my money'*. Others echoed her opinion, saying that they don't like losing control of their income: *'Basic Card - not fair. Can't have access to that money. Set up as savings. Once you get pay government already take out without consulting you.'*

The Basics Card received endorsement as the equal third most important change to be implemented over the last three years through the participatory voting process.

6.5 Safe houses

The NTER saw safe houses constructed and operated in five communities in the sample. A further two communities already had safe houses operating prior to the commencement of the NTER. In total, 777 respondents were in scope for this question. The idea behind the safe house is that people (generally women) can take refuge in them until it is safe to return home. Respondents in the seven communities with a safe house were asked whether they thought the safe house had made a

difference to safety in their community. Table 6.10 presents the response to this question. Communities with no safe house have been excluded from the data presented.

Table 6.10: Response to ‘Can you tell me if these things have made a difference to safety in your community – safe house,’ by percent

	A Big Difference	Little Bit Of Difference	No Difference	Made It Worse	Don't know	No response
Safe house	41.3	28.6	12.0	1.5	10.2	6.4

N=777

Seventy percent (69.9%) of respondents agree that safe houses have made a difference. Interestingly, there is no significant difference in the response to this question by gender or age groups. However there was some qualitative feedback suggesting that in some communities safe houses were not extensively used.

6.6 Housing

Housing was not included in the set questions in the survey tool, but regardless of this, the issue elicited significant comment. The comments largely came from residents of communities in which houses had been constructed and describes the positive effect of new housing. This comment is from a middle aged man in a community that has had a significant supply of new housing built and he describes the far-reaching impact: *‘Improvements to infrastructure, services and more houses has changed the way people feel. Now they are safer, healthier and happier. We have 105 more houses. That’s taken the pressure off of overcrowding for 105 families, lifestyles have changed. Now it is husband and wife and two or three kids instead of 30 people to a house. Means they can look after kids better, buy their own food that won’t be taken, and get them to school.’*

Housing was also an issue covered in the participatory methodologies. New housing was voted the third most positive change (level with the Basics Card) and a lack of new housing or repairs and renovations to existing housing was ranked as the most important challenge still facing communities.

6.7 Employment and Training

Respondents were asked how important it was to them to have a ‘proper job’. The term ‘proper job’ is not well defined, so it is not clear what people have included in this category – for example, whether or not they consider CDEP as a ‘proper job.’ Table 6.11 presents the response to this question.

Table 6.11: Response to ‘Please tell me how important these things are to you and your family – having a proper job’. by percent

	Very important	Important	Not really important	Not important at all	Don't know	No response
Having a proper job	81.2	10.6	3.3	0.7	3.1	1.1

N=1343

This response suggests that the majority of participants value having a job very highly. There are no significant differences between age and gender in this response, however there is a slight tendency for males between the ages of 25 and 39 years to be less concerned with having a proper job.

There was significant comment that attributed employment and training as having produced important changes in communities. The first important change described was a shift in young people’s attitudes. This middle-aged woman had noticed that: *‘More jobs meaning younger people are working which helps young people to start to think properly’*. Similarly this young woman commented that: *‘More people looking for work so less fighting and trouble. Men who used to be fighting against each other now in jobs working together.’*

A participant having a job was also the most common reason (23%) given for people to assess their life has on the ‘way up.’ Comments given throughout the survey cite employment as helping people to drink less alcohol, smoke less marijuana, to stop ‘looking for fights’ and to take better care of their children (These comments are included in the relevant sections of the report). Interestingly the flavour of many of these comments is on the benefits of being busy as much as the extra income.

Employment and training issues were also raised in the voting process, where more jobs and training programs were seen as the second most important challenge facing communities in the sample.

Finally a personal story shows how a job turned this young man's life around:

'My name's C. I live with my Mum. I sometime live with my Dad. My Mum, Dad sort of married, it's complicated for them. I don't know if they're married. I use to smoke marijuana when I was thirteen. Every day in the morning. I could get up walk to the shop and hang around with my marijuana mates, look for money to buy marijuana. We could not find it we could get stressed out, look for fights and that. In three years' time I realised I was going the wrong road. When I turned seventeen I found a job with the power and water and my life was enjoyed'.

6.8 Summary

The answers and comments in response to the survey questions, and feedback generated through the voting process confirms that service delivery is believed to be both the area of the most significant change over the last three years, and of the most important continuing challenge. The services seen by respondents as having improved the most are the schools, Centrelink, stores, clinics, youth programs and police. Those in which people would most like to see further improvement are housing and activities for young people. There was also considerable qualitative feedback on the sorts of services that are unavailable and still needed. The services most consistently identified as being needed are drug and alcohol services, followed by parenting support services.

These comments give the tone of the feedback on services that are needed in participants' own words:

There are a lot of services helping young people, the problem is the parents. The last three or four years the government has been pouring a lot money into the community.

Maybe more drugs and alcohol education. Need to try to stop kids having those phones. I'd like to find a job to help to stop these problems. Do training and get a job to talk to people.

We don't have enough professionals in the community and no contact at times when things are happening. There really is no help.

No services available and community not sure about who relevant to seek information and support.

Need targeted parenting programs and more access to social workers, alcohol programs and driving courses.

Young people not listening to parents and elders has got worse. Need more services mental health, self-esteem building, motivational and suicide prevention, career counselling. Need sport and rec. program and drop-in centre. Parenting programs for parents and HACC program for old people, alcohol programs and drugs too.

Not enough services. Need more role models like AFL players and Indigenous bands, Aboriginal people they look up to coming in and talking to them who keep coming back and then ongoing support services in community.

Not enough services. Need mental health services for alcohol and drug, depression, bipolar, paranoia, schizophrenia.

Need to get kids to school and make them stay.

More services to help young boys stop smoking gunja and breaking in shops and wending around getting into trouble.

Need help for families - the kids are totally disobedient - need a social worker to go around and talk to the families and sort out problems between parents and kids. Also need life skills teach them how to clean a house.

No - need mental health alcohol and drug counselling. Problem is how do you engage 15-30 year olds who missed out on an education and don't value work.

Not enough youth services, we need a youth development program with three project officers, one male and one female. Need the right people, someone the kids look up to and want to hang around someone young and fit not middle aged and big. Need more life savers for pool. Youth program could train up life savers, do fund raising, dance and music development. Need more music nights.

Need more legal aid.

No, need more AA and help people stop smoking gunja and drinking. Need more activities for young people. Take all kids out bush camping out. TOs go with the kids and give them culture.

7. Safety

One of the key areas covered by the survey was safety. People’s perception of the safety of different locations and situations in their community and the safety of different demographic groups was assessed. Some of these measures are comparable to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS). The contribution of different measures introduced and services funded through the NTER to safety were also covered. Finally, perceptions of whether or not communities are safer now than they were three years ago was asked about.

A lot of the qualitative material gathered on safety contains comments, suggestions and ideas that conflict with each other. For example many people mentioned that children are safe because there is always someone at home to look after them. Others nominated the period between when their children get home from school and they get home from work as a difficult period because there is no one to mind the children. This is to be expected from such a large and diverse sample and reflects the variety and complexity of the factors that affect safety in different communities and households.

7.1 Changes in the safety over time

The first question asked about safety was whether or not the ‘community is safer than three years ago.’ This was part of the question that asked about various dimensions of change over the past three years. Table 7.1 below presents the response to this question.

Table 7.1: Responses to ‘Community is safer than 3 years ago?’ by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree A Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know	No Response
Safer Than 3 Years Ago	41.0	31.6	14.7	7.2	4.7	0.8

N=1343

When ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree a bit’ are combined almost three quarters (72.6%) of respondents feel that their community is safer now than three years ago, which is an extremely positive result. This response is consistent across age and gender.

7.1.1 What affects the safety of whole communities

Qualitative data supports the finding that large communities are less safe. Small remote communities seen as safer than larger ones and Alice Springs/Darwin as the least safe. As this young woman expresses *'This is a small community and that's why it is always safe for s to live in'*. An analysis of the quantitative data by the population size of the respondent's community confirms this perception, as presented in the table below.

Table 7.2: Response to 'Community is safer' analysed by population size of community, dichotomised, by percent

Population size	Agree	Disagree
<350	91.6	6.4
350 - 699	87.3	12.7
700 - 1099	73.4	26.6
1100+	62.7	37.3

N=1268 p<.01

These data show a very clear trend of a decrease in the proportion of respondents who believe that their community has got safer over the last three years as the population size increases. However it should be noted that even in the largest communities almost two thirds (62.7%) of respondents think that their community safety has improved.

The strength of the community also impacts on safety. People commented that their community was safe because their clan leaders sorted out most of the problems. People also reported that in their community they take action to improve safety – such as closing the disco if there are drunks there. This sort of community wide action is seen as making the community safer. The following comment made by a middle aged woman reflects many more in the same vein: *'It's a safe community because it's a family community. There are some problems but we have a strong community and we sort it out before we call the Night Patrol or the police'*.

Visitors to a community can make it less safe – and conversely people are less safe when they are visiting other communities: *'bad things can happen to people nobody knows'*. This factor may provide some explanation for the perception that large communities are less safe because the larger the community, the more visitors there are. This means that at any time there are a number of people in the community that are not known to a portion of residents. In a small community this is rarely the case.

Another geographic factor affecting safety is the ability to go to an outstation to get away from trouble. This quote is from a middle aged woman from the community with the lowest safety ratings: *'Can go outstation to stay safe - come back all time.'*

Conversely in some communities there are dynamics which make some sections of the population less safe. In one community surveyed a young woman made the following comment: *'The young boys and men of this community have a strong rule on this place - at times this has and can have a negative effect on the women and children when violence is involved.'*

7.2 Feelings of safety at different times of day

The feelings of safety while walking around during the day, and for being at home during the day are very strong. Table 7.3 presents this result.

Table 7.3: Responses to 'How safe do you feel in your community – being home in the daytime?' by percent

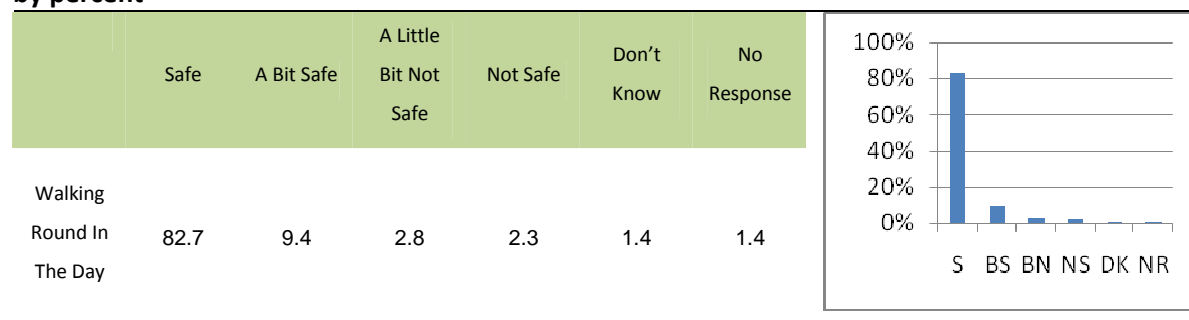
	Safe	A Bit Safe	A Little Bit Not Safe	Not Safe	Don't Know	No Response
Being Home In The Day	88.4	6.6	1.4	1.4	1.0	1.2

N=1343

When 'safe' and 'a bit safe' are combined 95% of respondents feel safe while they are home during the day. There are no significant differences between age and gender in this response. This compares with 93.5% for the Australian Indigenous Population, and 95% from NT – Indigenous people remote/very remote areas (Source: 2008 NATSISS tables released Dec 2010). However it should be noted that the NATSISS is not directly comparable, as it describes that 'Feelings of safety at home alone during day', whereas this survey did not stipulate that the person was at home alone.

Respondents report feeling somewhat less safe when they are walking around their community during the day than they do when they are at home. A combined 92.1% report feeling safe when they walk around their community in the daytime, however this is still a very high rating for feeling safe. Table 7.4 presents this result.

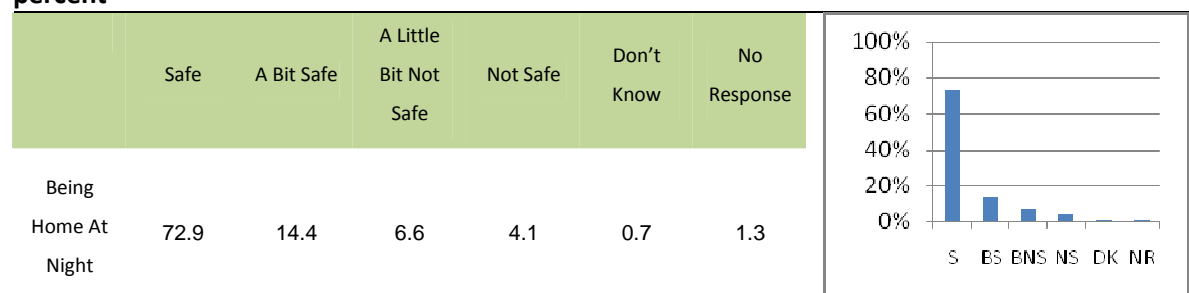
Table 7.4: Responses to ‘How safe do you feel in your community – walking around in the daytime?’ by percent



N=1343

Feelings of safety at night time are still very high, with 87.2% of respondents rating that they feel ‘safe’ or ‘a bit safe’ when they are at home at night. Once again this is considerable higher than the 79.9% reported for the Australian Indigenous population as a whole in the NATSISS survey of 2008, and the 81.1% from the NT – Indigenous people remote/very remote areas (noting that this data too is not directly comparable due to the ‘at home alone’ factor) (ibid). Once again there are no significant differences in the responses of different ages and gender for this item. Table 7.5 presents this result.

Table 7.5: Responses to ‘How safe do you feel in your community – being at home at night time?’ by percent



N=1343

People almost universally reported feeling less safe when walking around their community at night. A combined 55.8% of respondents reported feeling ‘safe’ or ‘a bit safe’ in this situation. This compares with 52.6% reported for the Australian indigenous population and 61.1% for NT – Indigenous people remote/very remote areas, 2008 in the NATSISS, 2008 (Source: 2008 NATSISS tables released Dec 2010). Once again these data are not directly comparable.

Table 7.6: Responses to ‘How safe do you feel in your community – walking round at night time?’ by percent

	Safe	A Bit Safe	A Little Bit Not Safe	Not Safe	Don't Know	No Response
Walking Round At Night	36.2	19.6	14.7	24.9	3.1	1.5

N=1343

The reason for this fear was often snakes (which tend to be active at night), horses and black magic. This young woman explains that sorcery and spirits are real fears in her community: *‘Some people feel unsafe from their fear of spirits and witch doctors; suicides and other deaths are blamed on sorcery’*. This young man agrees: *‘Night time - black magic. Bad things can happen. People die for no reason.’*

People’s feelings of safety or threat when they are at home are important to their wellbeing. The data presented above suggest that the large majority of respondents feel safe when they are at home.

7.3 Feelings of safety at different locations around the community

A wide array of environmental risks was identified in qualitative data gathered on the safety questions. The first category of these risks is the various animals that pose a risk to everyone. The most often mentioned of these was ‘cheeky dogs’, which came up as an issue in many communities. In fact dogs were mentioned by 47 (4%) people in the questions concerning safety. These dogs cause particular concern in relation to the safety of small children. However snakes, crocodiles, donkey, buffaloes and horses were also mentioned.

Various physical locations were also pointed out as being unsafe. Many people said that anywhere with long grass was dangerous (because of snakes), and also beaches (because of crocodiles). Other locations identified as dangerous were playgrounds – because the swings were too high, bathrooms – where old people might slip and fall, and anywhere near fires. Finally some environmental risks were identified that result from the remote locations of the communities surveyed. People noted that old people could wander off into the bush and not know how to get home, and people could get lost while out hunting.

However despite these risks people reported feeling very safe in the places around the community which they could be expected to visit frequently. Tables 7.7 to 7.9 present data on perceptions of safety at a variety of locations around the community.

Table 7.7: Responses to ‘How safe do you feel in your community – going to the school?’ by percent

	Safe	A Bit Safe	A Little Bit Not Safe	Not Safe	Don't Know	No Response
School	88.5	5.1	1.7	1.0	2.2	1.5

N=1343

Table 7.8: Responses to ‘How safe do you feel in your community – going to the clinic?’ by percent

	Safe	A Bit Safe	A Little Bit Not Safe	Not Safe	Don't Know	No Response
Clinic	90.9	5.2	1.0	0.7	0.7	1.5

N=1343

Table 7.9: Responses to ‘How safe do you feel in your community – going to the store?’ by percentage

	Safe	A Bit Safe	A Little Bit Not Safe	Not Safe	Don't Know	No Response
Store	88.8	6.8	1.6	0.8	1.0	1.0

N=1343

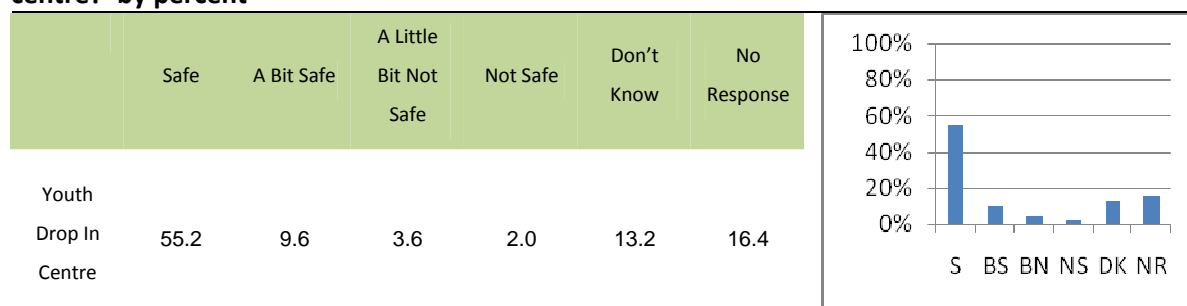
These data suggest that most people feel safe as they go about their daily life – going to school, shopping and so on. There are no significant differences when the data are analysed by gender and age, and in fact there is a remarkable degree of correlation between responses.

The places and events that were perceived as less safe are the youth drop in centres, sporting events and community meetings where people might be arguing. People felt less safe at these places because of the risk of people becoming angry, and their anger leading to fights, as this middle aged woman

commented: ‘Sometimes boys playing footy have arguments and after the game get angry’, and ‘At meeting; arguing might look for fight, throw stones or wood or drive car angry.’

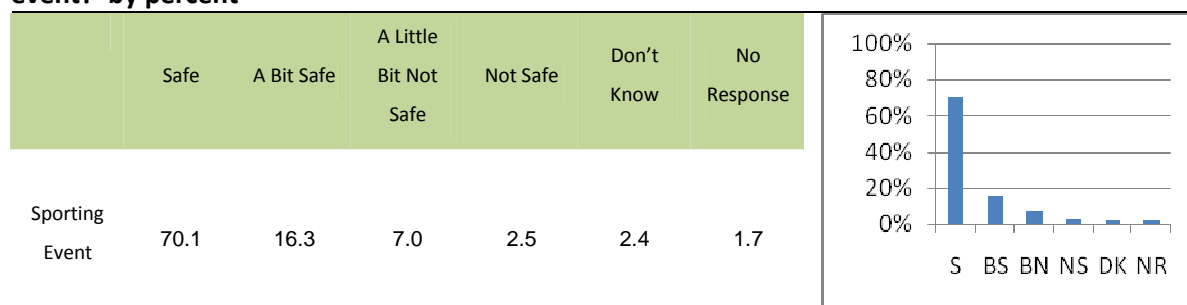
Tables 7.10 to 7.12 present the responses for safety in these locations.

Table 7.10: Responses to ‘How safe do you feel in your community – going to the youth drop in centre?’ by percent



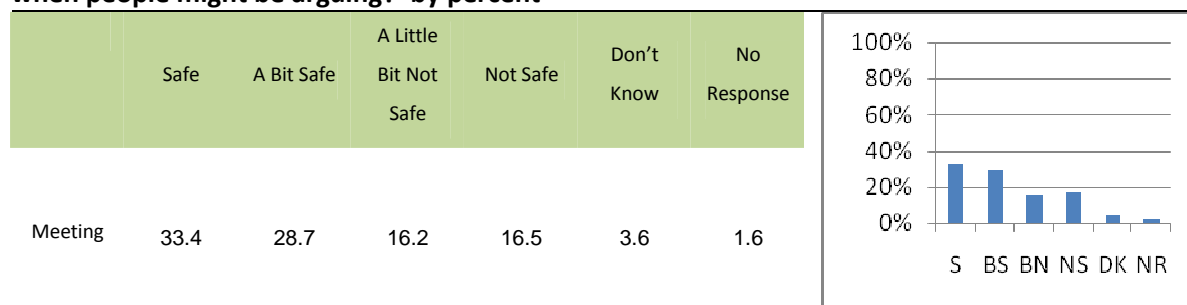
N=1343

Table 7.11: Responses to ‘How safe do you feel in your community – at a community sporting event?’ by percent



N=1343

Table 7.12: Responses to ‘How safe do you feel in your community – being at a community event when people might be arguing?’ by percent



N=1343

The general theme here is that people are, not unreasonably, wary of being in places or at events where people may become angry and fight. It is also interesting to note that two of these locations are frequented by young people. This reinforces the concerns expressed in the Challenges’ section of this report (page 36) about socially destructive behaviour by young people.

7.4 Safety of different demographic groups

Respondents were asked to rate the safety of little kids, young fellas, young women, women, men, old women and old men as being ‘safe all the time’, ‘safe some of the time’, ‘not safe some of the time’ and ‘not safe all the time.’

7.4.1 Children

The table below presents data for the safety of little kids.

Table 7.13: Responses to ‘How safe you think your community is for little kids?’ by percentage

	Safe All Of The Time	Safe Some Of The Time	Not Safe Some Of The Time	Not Safe All The Time	Don't Know	No Response
Little Kids	49.7	30.8	10.9	5.4	1.5	1.7

N=1343

When ‘safe all the time’ and ‘safe some of the time’ are combined 80.5% of respondents perceive children to be safe.

When these data are analysed by the population size of the community a highly significant difference becomes apparent. Little children are seen as significantly less safe as communities increase in size. Table 7.14 below presents these data, with ‘safe all of the time’ and ‘safe some of the time’ combined, and ‘not safe some of the time’ and ‘not safe all of the time’ combined.

Table 7.14: Response to ‘safety of little kids’ analysed by population size of community, dichotomised, by percent

Population size	Safe	Not safe
<350	90.9	8.7
350 - 699	84.3	14.3
700 - 1099	81.5	17.4
1100+	75.3	22.2

N=1268

p<.01

It is of concern to note that 8.5% of respondents who live in communities with over 1100 residents regard little kids as ‘not safe all the time’.

There are several issues that impact on children's safety. The first is the dynamics among the children themselves – there were frequent reports of kids fighting over toys and bullying within groups of small children, who tend to spend large amounts of time together without adults. Groups of children are also a safety issue for other groups in the community because they harass them, as this middle aged woman observed: *'For old people- some of the time, because little kids might tease them.'*

Then there are the dynamics of the wider community and other sub groups within that community that affect children's safety. The first is that parents become involved in children's fights, and everyone lands up fighting: *' Sometimes when all the little kids are playing around during the day or night and they fight then all the parents end up fighting'*. This young mother commented: *'Kids don't go out without me because the other kids will come and whack them and then the other kids' adults get fighting.'*

Another dynamic is that older kids both fight with smaller children, and get them to fight each other. Another version of this is when children get involved in the 'online' fighting between families: *'Kids are getting hurt by online from other family groups.'*

People identified several reasons why the dynamics among children and then out to the rest of the community become so fraught. One was that little children are often left in the care of slightly older children for hours at a time. Another variant of this was that several people (generally younger women) commented that there was nobody at home when their children finished school and they were not yet home from work. This (and school holidays) were identified as times when children are most likely to be unsafe.

7.4.2 The safety of young fellas and young woman

The tables below present data for the safety of young fellas and young woman.

Table 7.15: Responses to ‘How safe you think your community is for young fellas?’ by percent

	Safe All Of The Time	Safe Some Of The Time	Not Safe Some Of The Time	Not Safe All The Time	Don't Know	No Response
Young Men	44.3	33.9	13.3	4.0	2.6	1.9

N=1343

Table 7.16: Responses to ‘How safe you think your community is for young woman?’ by percent

	Safe All Of The Time	Safe Some Of The Time	Not Safe Some Of The Time	Not Safe All The Time	Don't Know	No Response
Young Women	41.1	33.1	16.2	5.0	2.6	2.0

N=1343

Young men and young women are seen as the least safe demographic groups in communities in the sample, with young women seen as slightly less safe than young men (74.2% and 72.0% combined ‘safe all the time’ and ‘safe some of the time’ respectively). Interestingly there is a significant difference in the responses to the question on young women, with men being more likely to rate young women as less safe; however there is not similar trend in the response to the safety of young fellas. Analysis by size of community gives a repeat of the finding report above. Tables 7.17 and 7.18 below present the safety of young women and young men analysed by size of community.

Table 7.17: Response to ‘safety of young women’ analysed by population size of community, dichotomised, by percent

Population size	Safe	Not safe
<350	91.3	6.3
350 - 699	86.3	12.1
700 - 1099	73.6	23.0
1100+	60.3	36.8
N=1316		p<.01

These data show that more than a third of respondents in very large communities perceive that young women are unsafe in their community. This is the highest rate of all demographic groups, and is of concern.

Table 7.18: Response to ‘safety of young fellas’ analysed by population size of community, dichotomised, by percent

Population size	Safe	Not safe
<350	93.7	5.8
350 - 699	86.8	10.6
700 - 1099	79.1	17.5
1100+	66.7	30.1
N=1317		p<.01

This figure of 30.1% of respondents in very large communities perceiving young men as unsafe is less than that for young women, but still very high.

The consensus of many comments is that young people fight a lot. People report various dynamics within this fighting. The first is same sex fights. Boys tease each other and fight, and girls often have ‘jealous fights’ as this older man observed: *‘Young girls more vulnerable to being beaten up by other girls usually over jealousy issues’*. One young person mentioned that a young fella might hang themselves because of this sort of teasing: *‘Problem is when young people might argue and say I’m going to hang myself.’*

Another common source of fights was identified as being between young couples, as this middle aged woman said: *‘Young fellas - we don’t know their boyfriend-girlfriend business and they come home yelling and smashing things.’* An unplanned pregnancy can also trigger fights, as this young man observes: *‘Young women do not look after themselves and sometimes they get pregnant and that causes trouble with their family - the father of the child also has big problem too.’*

As well as fights between couples, fights occur between groups of young men and women who hang around together: *'Young men and young women going around in groups and start arguments - start telling stories about each other and therefore starting fight.'*

As well as conflict within the demographic of young people, there is also conflict between young people and different age groups. A small number of communities reported old men harassing young women as a factor that makes young women unsafe. As one older woman commented: *'Some young women have little choice who they have sex with.'*

Comments given suggest that there are several forces driving these conflicts among young people. A major one is internet chat rooms and texting on mobile phones. In communities with mobile phone coverage this was nominated as a major issue by 76% of respondents. This seems to be a dynamic that is particularly problematic for young girls: *'Young girls not safe because never know who might come up and hit them. Mainly from any other young girls because of the chat line.'*

7.4.3 Safety of women and men, old men and old women

These groups all received very similar ratings for this question. Their combined 'safe all the time' and 'safe some of the time' was rated as follows:

- Women – 83.3%
- Men 87.2%
- Old women – 84.1%
- Old men 84.6%

7.5 The impact of families on safety

People's family situation was identified as a crucial factor in individual safety, as one young woman said: *'They only need families to be with them.'* In line with this, several people commented that it is not safe to be alone. Associated with this is extensive comment about the benefit of living with family, as there is always someone at home to care for old people and children.

Comment indicates that safety is considered by many to be a responsibility of the family. This older woman described how families keep their young people safe: *'Kids walk at night to rec hall then family come and get them, take them home safe.'*

Comments also suggest that within any household there is a pattern of responsibility for keeping family members safe. Older men have responsibility for looking after younger men and boys, and vice versa for women. In addition older children are responsible for looking after younger children. An older man explained it like this: *'Old men looking after with they son or daughter, and her wife and old women looking after daughter and daughter.'*

Some young people scored their safety at home (both in the day and at night) as 'Not safe at all'. One issue that was identified as a factor in making households less safe was overcrowding, and having houses too close together. One young woman said this:

'There is more underage sexual activity because the houses are too close together.'

While families were more often nominated as being important to young people and children's level of safety, parenting was also raised as an important factor. Essentially the perception was that people with good parents are safe: *'Some young men and women good other are bad - those with good parents are safe.'*

The converse side of this is that people, particularly children, with parents who do not pay them enough attention are at risk as this middle aged woman said: *'Especially worried about people who are not feeding kids proper food and not taking them to the clinic even when they are very sick.'*

One older man identified the problem as being that parents don't follow up on what they tell their children to do: *'Adults try and encourage the kids but some of them don't listen and their own parents sit back and watch them do what they want.'*

One older woman reported that she sees things starting to change: *'I see fathers and mothers are starting to care, also respecting their kids. The kids are now involve in every activities even in church during the evening.'*

7.5 Summary

Respondent's perception of safety at different times of the day, and in different locations around their communities as assessed by the quantitative data, suggest that most people feel safe most of the time. The time of day that is least safe is the night; and the places that are the least safe are those where people might be arguing, such as the football, or community meetings. In addition to this there are a

wide variety of environmental risks such as crocodiles, snakes and dogs that vary between communities, depending largely on whether they are in the desert or the Top End.

On a community level the key factor that functions to decrease safety is the population size of the community, with safety decreasing as community population increasing. In the largest communities (population size over 1100), the safety of some demographic groups is assessed as quite precarious. Conversely small communities are more likely to have the networks and mechanisms in place to allow them to be pro-active on safety issues and take steps such as deciding to close the disco if intoxicated people are around.

The factor that has a key impact on individual safety is the strength or otherwise of an individual's family. It is seen as a family responsibility to keep their members safe, and while individuals are with their family, they are seen as being safe. It is the time that small children and young people spend with their peer group that generates many of the risks to safety. Teasing and bullying (often on line) play a major role in starting fights, and these fights frequently spread to involve the families of the individuals concerned.

8. Leadership, power and authority

There have been enormous changes in leadership, power and authority in remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory over the last three years. The advent of the NTER made some changes; with the Basics Card changing people’s level of autonomy over their income, the nature of land tenure changing, and rules governing the issue of permits all affecting many community residents’ feeling of control over their community. In addition to this the ‘Local Government Act (NT, 2008) was changed to give the responsibility for local government to centrally located Shire authorities, rather than a local Council structure in each community. This meant that local councils no longer exist.

Feedback on leadership and authority was sought in the survey on changes in each community over the last three years.

8.1 Leadership and respect for elders

The terms community elders and community leaders are sometimes used synonymously, however interpretation of these terms tends to be different among different regions. Generally community elders are older people who are very senior in cultural terms and take a lead role in ceremonial activity. In some communities this group also provides community leadership on more political matters. However in many places the political leadership is provided by more middle aged (and often more formally educated) men and women.

The response to the statement ‘There is more respect for elders’ is presented below in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1: Response to ‘More respect for elders?’ by percentage

	Strongly Agree	Agree A Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know	No Response
More Respect For Elders	36.4	27.9	19.4	11.3	4.4	0.6

N=1343

This response shows that 64.3% of respondents believe there to be more respect for elders now than three years ago. There is no significant difference in this response across gender. However for both age and community population size significant differences are evident. People below the age of 25 years are significantly more likely to agree with this statement, than those over 40 years of age – which suggests that perhaps younger people feel that they are giving respect, but older people don't feel they are getting it!

The second significant difference to emerge is once again when the result is analysed by the size of the community. Table 8.2 presents these data.

Table 8.2: Response to 'more respect for elders' analysed by population size of community, by percentage

Population size	Strongly Agree	Agree a bit	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<350	55.9	33.3	8.2	2.6
350 - 699	47.3	34.1	14.0	4.6
700 - 1099	40.3	23.0	21.5	15.2
1100+	20.1	28.6	31.2	20.1

N=1277 p<.01

These data indicate a very marked decline in agreement with the statement 'there is more respect for elders' as population size increases. In the largest communities the community is fairly evenly split, with 48.7% agreeing, compared with 51.3% disagreeing. This is a marked contrast between the smallest communities, where 89.2% agree and 10.8% disagree. It is difficult to interpret this result. It may be that people are in effect saying that respondents are commenting more on the extent of respect for elders in their community, rather than whether or not it has changed over the last three years. Whichever interpretation is taken, it appears that elders in the largest communities enjoy considerably less respect. This is likely to be both a cause and effect of community dysfunction. The table below presents the result for 'Community leaders are stronger.

Table 8.3: Response to 'Community leaders are stronger?' by percentage

	Strongly Agree	Agree A Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
Leaders Are Stronger	33.0	28.0	20.8	10.7	6.4	1.1

N= 1343

The response to this statement is very similar to the 'more respect for elders statement'. Here 61% agree with the statement (combined 'strongly agree' and 'agree a bit') and 31.5% disagree. Further analysis show the same trends as noted for the response to elders, with young people being more likely to agree than older people, and those in larger communities being significantly less likely to agree than those in smaller communities (83.2% agree in communities with populations below 350, and 47.9% in communities with populations over 1100).

It is clear that many people see that strong community leaders will call meetings at which community issues can be discussed and resolved. A middle aged woman from the Top End described how she saw effective leadership when she said *'The community is improving and working together better because they call big meetings at the church centre and they are sorting things out and getting things done at those meetings'*. Other successful leadership strategies were also identified – some young people identified being a role model as important for leaders: *'There is more respect for elders - started playing footy and talk to the young blokes about culture. Married men come along to help - also teaching them respect for women and children, and going to school.'*

Despite the positive result from the quantitative data, the qualitative data tended to be more reflective of a perceived weakening of the role of elders and leaders. Respondents looked to the past when strong leaders had dealt with issues, and commented: *'We don't have community meetings about things like we did before. We dealt with the grog problem because of strong leaders and community meetings.'*

Feedback suggests that being an elder or occupying a leadership role is not easy. Another middle aged woman from a different community said *'Elders trying to help with school attendance and doing cultural tours with the kids, but they are not being listened to'*. One man from the same community gave this as an explanation for the difficulty in providing leadership to young people: *'Too many young people have overwhelmed community leaders, trying to tell the kids they have to go to school, but not enough government enforcement. No one engages with young people, they are the neglected generation. No one made them go to school or engaged with them that is why the elders can't control them.'*

Another cause for frustration in relation to community leadership was leaders with drug and alcohol problems, who went to town for Shire meetings and got drunk.

Probably the most frequently cited cause for a lack of leadership is that so many of the older people have died, and younger people are struggling to take their place. This young man from a smaller community commented *'We don't have many older men now and they don't really stand up for the community'*. An old man from the same community sees it like this *'No leaders are living now - all dying off. Older women still living but not traditional leaders. Young people don't have culture and don't want to learn and take roles and responsibilities'*.

Interestingly many people made a clear distinction between leadership and the community working together to fix problems. People seemed to feel that working together to fix problems revolved around concrete actions. One young man described it like this: *'Seen difference in the community as people are mowing lawns and picking up rubbish, this is how they are starting to fix problems in the community'*. The flip side of this was identified by this older woman - *The community is not working to fix problems because of the Shire - no wood runs [for firewood], no taking cars [wrecks away], no clean up, not much working in the Shire'*. The table below presents the response to the statement: *'Community is working better together to fix problems than three years ago'*.

Table 8.4: Response to 'Community working better together?' by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree A Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
Working Better Together	40.4	28.1	15.9	10.2	4.7	0.7

N=1343

These data show that 68.5% of respondents agree with the statement. Once again the same trends are in action when this response is analysed by age, gender and size of community.

Another frequently identified issue that was identified in the response to *'community working together to fix problems was the need for services and institutions in each community to work together.'* One very young man had this to say *'Things are improving a little, leader one strong, but community organisation need to come together and sort things out instead of working separate.'*

8.2 Shires, the NTER and changes in leadership

Another source of weakness in leadership was often identified as both the NTER and the advent of the Shires taking power away from local leadership, and thereby weakening it. This issue ('Decision-making power taken away from the community') received ten votes in the aggregated community voting analysis, which put it in sixth place in the list of the most important changes to have taken place over the last three years.

The loss of the Community Council structure is the source of this perception. This middle aged woman from a desert community described it like this: *'We don't have the community meetings like we used to have since the Intervention and Shires started. These were our ways of letting people have their say. [Now]They don't know what they can stand up and speak about.'* A middle aged man summarised it like this: *'Community leaders are not as they used to be, if we bring back the local Council we will give our leaders back their strength.* However the loss of local Councils was not the only source of the diminution of power. Several people commented that the way in which the NTER was introduced, and the advent of Government Business Managers has also lessened the power of local leaders. This middle aged woman sees it this way: *'Leaders not good now as power has been taken away from them, now police and GBM do it. We fought for this piece of land, now we're back where we started where people got to look after us, just like old ration time that we fought against.'*

Some people identified new, and less desirable behaviours replacing the old structures of resolving issues. An old man analysed it like this: *'Intervention took personal responsibility away from people. People take problems to authorising outsiders like GBM and Police, when these issues used to be dealt with effectively between families and Elders in the community. The community has always has small core group of strong leaders and an effective alcohol management plan before the Intervention. The Shire amalgamation and loss of local community council eroded local authority.'*

A consequence of the loss of the Local Councils was seen in some places to be a loss of jobs for Aboriginal people, and leadership roles being occupied by non Indigenous people. This young woman said *'Community leadership is largely governed by whites.'* A young man from the same community said *'Only non-aboriginal getting the good job with wages and they giving us rubbish job. Its a waste of time.'*

8.3 Summary

The majority of respondents feel that there is more respect for elders (64.3%), and that leadership is stronger (61.0%) than three years ago. However when this is analysed by size of community it is clear that the most positive changes are seen in small communities, and in larger communities the majority of people perceive that there is less respect for elders (51.3%).

Qualitative feedback suggests that strong leadership is perceived as calling community meetings to address issues, and as 'standing up for' the community in other contexts. The key reasons given why this is occurring less than it used to are because many of the old people are dying, and young people are struggling to replace them; because of the advent of the Shires and the associated demise of local councils mean that community meetings are rarely called, and because young people are disengaged, and have lost their respect of both elders and community leaders.

9. Children

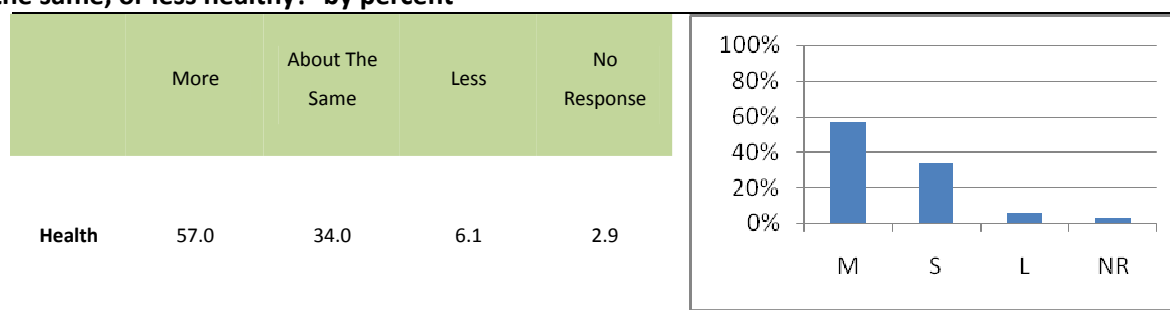
Improving the quality of life for children was a major focus of the NTER. This survey gathered a great deal of material regarding respondents' perceptions, both of changes in the lives of children, and the challenges still to be met in order to achieve the goal of improving their quality of life, and therefore their prospects for the future.

9.1 Changes in children's health

Respondents were asked rate children as being 'healthier' 'about the same' or 'less healthy'.

Table 9.1 presents the results of this question.

Table 9.1: Response to 'In the past 3 years have you noticed whether children are healthier, about the same, or less healthy?' by percent



N=1343

It is clear that the majority of respondents thought that children were healthier at the time of the survey than they were three years prior. Qualitative data indicates that a number of factors have influenced this result. The main reason that was credited with the improvement in children's health was that they were eating more food. This is covered more fully in the following section.

It is clear that both crèche and school nutrition programs are also seen as having contributed to improved child health. One young woman related the experience in her community: *'Little kids more healthy because of the child care. Made a big difference. Mothers come too. Kids putting weight on. The sister [nurse] said the kids' weight is going up and their blood is strong [not anaemic.]* Another young woman had this to say about the school nutrition program: *'Kids look lot more happier and healthier now. They go to school every day knowing they will have breakfast and get lunch at school which is really good.'* An older woman really appreciated the complete service provided by the school nutrition program working with Centrelink: *'School nutrition - good that it's taken out of my bank account and kids fed.'*

There was also some comment about the value of a nutrition education program being run in one community. One older woman observed: *‘Menzies and other agencies coming out and nutrition program at school. Parents know more about diabetes in kids so kids healthier.’*

The other factor to which people attributed their perceived improvement in children’s health was a better quality of food at the store. This older woman said: *‘In the past three years it has changed in health, in the store more food provided e.g. vegetables, fruits healthy food also drinks.’*

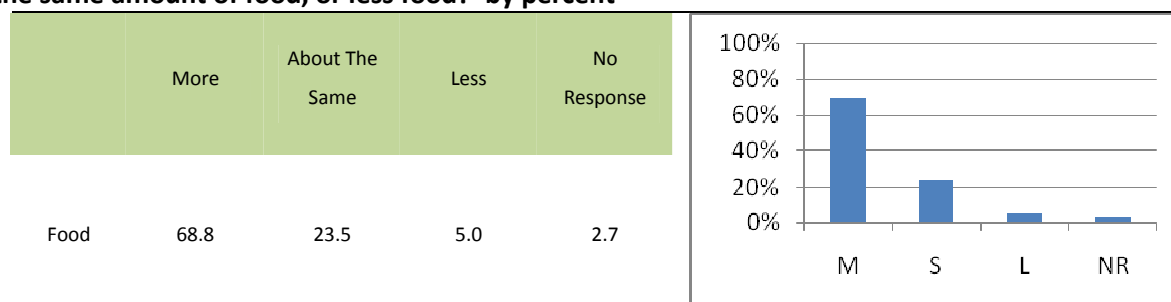
The flip side of this was that many people complained that buying healthy food for their children at the store was prohibitively expensive. One middle-aged man called for an investigation into prices in remote community stores: *‘In Aboriginal communities local people pay 3 times more than in Darwin. They say it’s because of freights either by air or road. It’s a crime. An investigation should take place to check on prices!’* A woman in the same community concurred: *‘Price of food has gone up. I work for child protection and see the problems they have. \$140 per child is only going to buy one paper bag of food. It’s cheaper to buy unhealthy food than healthy - grapes are \$13 for a bag. Coke takes up the most pallets on the barge.’* Another woman made the point that food was much cheaper in towns, but many people had no transport, and therefore no choice but to buy at their store: *‘good food is pricey; cheaper in town but no transport so no choice.’*

Interestingly there were no comments about the contribution of clinics or the child health checks to improvements in children’s health. This may have been because the initial child health checks happened some years ago.

9.2 Change in the amount of food available to children

Respondents were asked whether children ate ‘more food’ ‘about the same’ or ‘less food’ than three years ago. Table 9.2 presents the response to this question.

Table 9.2: Response to ‘In the past 3 years have you noticed whether children eat more food, about the same amount of food, or less food?’ by percent



N=1343

This is a strong result. More than two-thirds of respondents thought that children in their community were eating more than they were three years ago. Within this positive result, responses varied markedly across different communities. In five sites, all in the southern region, more than 80% of respondents thought that children had more to eat now than three years previously (with the highest at 92%). Only in one community did fewer than half of respondents think that children had had more to eat. This was a highly functional community, where a number of respondents commented that their children had always had enough to eat.

There are no significant differences across age groups or between genders with this response. The only variable that does appear to have a significant impact on the result is the size of the community, with communities of more than 1100 having fewer respondents who believed that children were eating more now than three years ago.

The main reason given for the increase is undoubtedly Income Management through the use of the Basics Card. There is a wealth of comment that describes how people have changed the way they spend their money so that they have sufficient funds to buy food for themselves and their children. An older man gave this very honest self-appraisal: *'I look after money better now because of the Basics Card. I realised I was doing the wrong thing, gambling. It really helped and at the moment my family is living much better.'* One older woman describes how it has affected the way she spends her money: *'Before Intervention my money would go in one day, now it lasts for two weeks.'*

There was also some comment to the effect that being able to provide children with more food has influenced other aspects of parental care. One middle-aged man put it this way: *'Kids generally doing better; parents worry more about kids. Drinking less, thinking more about kids. Parents using Basics Card has helped.'*

On a slightly less positive note there was considerable feedback that whilst the children are eating more food, a lot of it is not particularly nutritious. One older man had this to say: *'Kids have more food but too much sweet stuff, ice cream and Coke. Should knock the sweet stuff off the Basics Card.'*

Respondents were asked to give information on how important it was to them to buy healthy food. Table 9.3 gives their responses.

Table 9.3: Response to 'Tell me how important these things are to you and your family – buying healthy food' by percent

	Very Important	Important	Not really Important	Not Important At All	Don't Know	No Response
Buying healthy Food	83.0	13.2	2.1	0.3	0.4	1.0

N=1343

It is clear that many people put a high value on buying healthy food. Qualitative feedback however certainly suggests that many respondents are severely limited as to how much nutritious food they can purchase because of the disjunction between the price of such goods and their income.

Despite the overwhelmingly positive feedback on the issue of kids eating more food over the last three years, it is clear that this is not the case for every child. There is considerable qualitative data which indicates that some children still do not get enough to eat. One young woman said: *'Some people take money from family, then kids got no food. Some families go to town and leave kids behind with no food.'* A middle-aged man described why there is less food in his house: *'Less food because big mob coming from next door to eat.'*

9.3 Change in children's level of activity

Respondents were asked whether they perceived changes over the last three years in the level of activity of children in their community. 'Active' was described as 'playing sport, watching less TV'. Table 9.4 presents the response to this question.

Table 9.4: Response to 'In the past 3 years have you noticed whether children are more active, about the same, or less active?' by percent

	More	About The Same	Less	No Response
Activity	65.8	24.8	6.9	2.5

N=1343

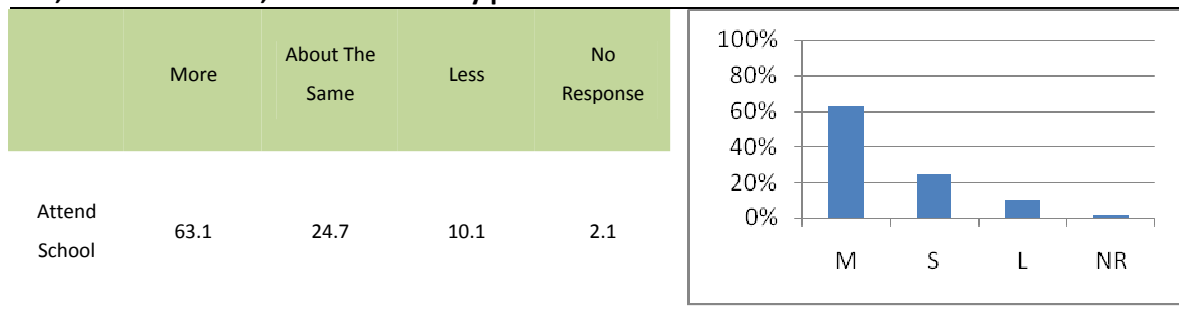
Once more this is a highly positive response. There was remarkable consensus between both genders and age groups on this response. Once again the primary significant difference across the whole sample is the size of the community from which the responses were derived. People living in communities of fewer than 700 people were significantly more likely to think that their kids were more active than those living in communities with a population of over 700 ($p < 0.01$).

Despite the over-all positive response the qualitative feedback on this issue was mixed. It was clear that activities provided in some communities generated a positive response. One young girl said: *This place makes me happier. Playing softball.* This young man’s comment was very similar: *More AFL make kids happier.* There were nonetheless several comments alluding to the under-resourcing of after school and sport and recreation programs.

9.4 Change in school attendance

Respondents were asked whether they thought children were ‘going to school more,’ ‘about the same’ or less than three years ago. Table 9.5 presents the response to this question.

Table 9.5: Response to ‘In the past 3 years have you noticed whether children go to school more often, about the same, or less often?’ by percent



N=1343

This result indicates that almost two-thirds of respondents believe that kids are going to school more now than three years ago. There is some ambiguity in the question, and it is not clear if these responses mean that people perceive that a greater number of children are going to school, or whether all children are going to school more often. It is most likely that responses are a mixture of these two interpretations of the question. Once again there was considerable variation across different communities, with the highest result being 94.1%, and the lowest 35.8%. There was also considerable

variation in whether the perception of school attendance was backed up by data. In many cases the evidence did not support respondents' perception of improved school attendance.

It appears that the most significant factor in determining the perception of increased school attendance was the size of the community. Table 9.6 presents this result analysed by population size.

Table 9.6: Perceptions of change in school attendance over the last 3 years, by community population size, by percent

Population size	Going to school more	About the same	Going to school less	No response
Less than 700	79.0	17.2	2.9	0.9
700 – 1099	62.4	24.0	9.7	3.9
1100+	41.5	35.7	20.1	2.7

N=1343

p<0.01

There was a great deal of feedback on factors that tend either to maximise or to jeopardise school attendance, as well as on strategies employed in different communities to encourage kids to go to school. It was clear in some communities that the simple fact of more children going to school created a snowball effect, enticing others to follow suit. One young girl summarised this sentiment thus: *'School is good because more people go'*. New equipment, extra teachers and computers were also identified as factors that encourage school attendance.

The most commonly cited reason for kids not going to school was fighting between children in the school yard. One middle-aged woman said *'Sometimes kids run away from the school after fighting'*. It seems that fighting between children outside of school also hampers attendance: *'Big fighting between kids stops kids from going to school'*. Some respondents were critical of schools for not doing more to combat bullying, but others commended the school for trying to teach kids not to fight.

Other factors identified as contributing to decreasing school attendance were family problems, drinking at home leading to children staying up very late and not waking up in time, parents drinking in town, and travelling for ceremonial or sorry business.

Respondents noted an array of strategies currently in use across the sample communities for improving school attendance:

- picking kids up in a school bus every morning

- giving kids awards for attendance (*'my kids go to school every day no miss. They gets award and it makes them happy'*)
- night Patrol picking up children and taking them to school
- announcements over the PA system each morning (*'They scream on the PA every day'*)
- the school notifying parents of children who aren't attending
- closing the store if lots of kids aren't going to school; and
- refusing to serve school-aged children at the store during school hours.

The final strategy, which generated considerable comment, was the imposition of fines on parents whose children do not attend school. The actual details were difficult to find, however the rumour of such a penalty was enough to improve school attendance in some places. There was one description of such an event: *'School - \$2000 fine if kids not attending regularly - happened to one person and he spread the word, now kids go to school.'*

School attendance was also included in the survey question that asked respondents to 'Tell me which of these still a problem is' (Q13 – Social Problems). Table 9.7 below presents the responses to this question.

Table 9.7: Response to 'Tell me which of these is still a problem – kids not going to school' by percent

	Very big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Don't Know	No Response
Kids Not Going To School	22.6	23.8	31.6	18.8	1.9	1.3

N=1343

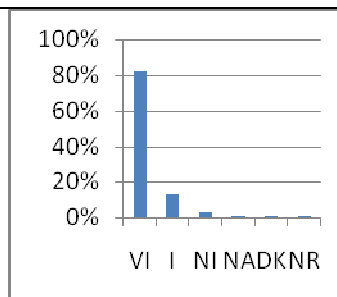
This response indicates that less than half (46.4%) of respondents see kids not going to school as a big or very big problem. There are no significant differences across age groups, gender or work status for this question. It is not possible to interpret how the response relates to the perception described above that kids are going to school more often than three years ago. It may be that many respondents

are relieved that they see more children going to school, and therefore don't see school attendance as being an ongoing issue (which is what the question asks).

It is interesting to compare people's perception of school attendance as a challenge with the value they place on kids being able to read, write and speak English (which they are of course most likely to learn at school). Participants were asked their response to the statement 'Tell me how important these things are to you and your family – kids being able to read, write and speak English'. Table 9.8 presents the response to this question.

Table 9.8: Response to 'Tell me how important these things are to you and your family – kids being able to read, write and speak English', by percent

	Very Important	Important	Not Really Important	Not Important At All	Don't Know	No Response
Read, Write & Speak English	82.2	13.3	3.1	0.6	0.8	0.0



N=1343

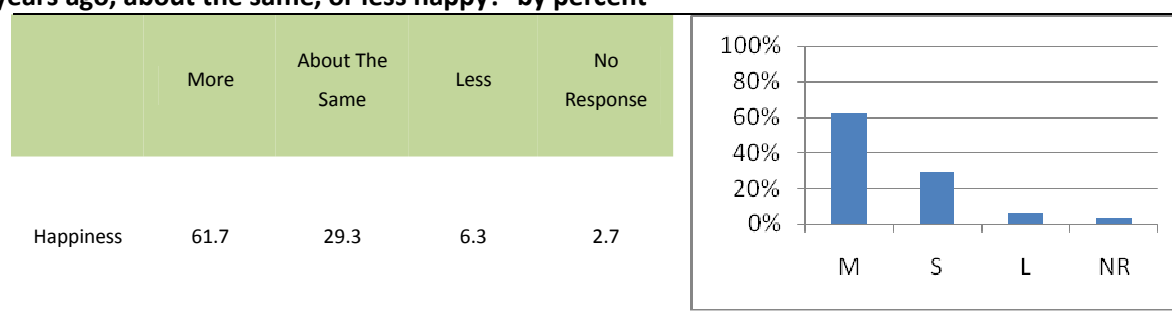
It is clear that this component of children's education is an important issue for the vast majority of respondents. This response varies markedly from the relatively low rating of school attendance as a challenge. It may be that this mis-match is at least in part the result of incorrect impressions about the level of school attendance that many community members appear to hold. It may also be that community residents are relieved that children are staying at school for longer during each day, and this is masking that fact that some children are not attending at all.

It is of concern that there is an apparent disjuncture between what many respondents believe about school attendance, and what NT Department of Education and Training data tell us is the reality.

9.5 Are children happier now than three years ago

The final question in this series was whether or not children are happier now than three years ago. Table 9.9 presents the response to this question.

Table 9.9: Response to ‘In the past 3 years have you noticed whether children are happier than 3 years ago, about the same, or less happy?’ by percent



N=1343

This result is not surprising, given the accumulation of other positive results about the change in children’s lives over the last three years. The reasons people gave for increased happiness are largely what could have been expected – that children are eating more food, going to school more and enjoying more organised activities. Respondents however also cited other improvements that have contributed to children’s happiness. This middle-aged woman referred to changes across the whole community: *‘Kids happier because seen more development around the community, more houses, re-development of the oval, new soil and lawn, spotlights so they can play at night, seeing their families go to work more often.’*

There is an implication in some comments that life has improved for families (not just children), and that adults are behaving differently around their kids. This comment was made by a middle-aged woman: *‘Kids eat more bush tucker, go out hunting, play sports, football, softball, basketball. During the weekend they have disco, go swimming, go fishing, lots of things for kids to do, teach them how to weave make basket and dilly bag.’* Another woman believed that people were thinking more about how to look after their children: *‘Kids seem happier maybe getting out more and parents better educated about how to treat kids.’* Another comment comes at this theme from the opposite angle: *‘Fighting made kids frightened before, it’s better now.’*

Another possible interpretation of some of the qualitative feedback is that the use of the Basics Card has resulted in parents and carers feeding their kids better and that this improvement has flowed to

other elements of their care of children. One older man said: *‘Basic card and income management means people have to buy food, more responsibility’*. Another older man’s comment has the same thrust: *‘For a couple of years back people wasted money on cards and grog, but it has changed now. Rules have made a big difference.’*

9.6 Parenting

Several questions in the survey asked respondents about the way children are looked after by their parents or other care-givers. Participants were asked to respond to the statement ‘More kids are being looked after properly than 3 years ago’. The question was also asked in reverse – whether ‘Kids not being looked after properly’ was still a problem for their community. Table 9.10 and 9.12 present the response to these two questions.

Table 9.10: Response to the question ‘Can you tell us if these things have changed in your community in the last 3 years – more kids being looked after properly’, by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree A Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know	No Response
More Kids Being Looked After properly	43.3	31.9	13.8	5.3	5.1	0.6

N=1343

These figures show that three-quarters of respondents believe that more kids are being looked after properly in their community than three years ago. This is a very positive result. There is a considerable amount of qualitative feedback that suggests that adults finding employment has improved the way they care for their children. This middle-aged man said: *‘My life is good I got job feeding my families.’* An older man had the same story to tell: *‘Got proper job with contractors and now with shop. Kids all going to school, and more food on the table.’* Several parents commented that they feel better about their lives because their children are attending school. This comment is typical: *‘Working now, sending kids to school and stopped being a violent person.’*

The responses to this question do not differ significantly across age groups or gender. Again, however, a significant difference emerges when the size of the respondent community of is analysed. Table 9.11 presents the result of this analysis.

Table 9.11: Perceptions of ‘more kids being looked after properly over the last 3 years’, by community population size, by percent

Population size	Strongly agree	Agree a bit	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 350	62.8	27.0	13.8	5.3
350 - 699	54.3	32.6	7.1	3.1
700 – 1099	49.8	29.5	14.9	5.8
1100+	26.5	42.1	22.4	8.9

N=1343

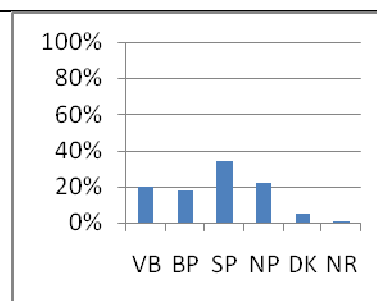
p<0.01

This table presents a clear trend of fewer people agreeing that more children are being looked after properly, as the size of the community increases. It is not clear what factors contribute to this trend. The strength of this evidence, however, suggests that further research is needed into the dynamics of large communities and their effect on the quality of children’s lives.

The second question in the survey on how well kids are being looked after poses the issue of the care of children as a problem. It asks ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem in your community – kids not being looked after properly’. The results for respondents’ perception of ‘kids not being looked after properly’ as a challenge are presented below.

Table 9.12: Response to ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem – kids not being looked after properly’, by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not A Problem	Don’t Know	No Response
Kids Not Being Looked After Properly	20.3	18.1	33.8	21.5	5.0	1.3



N=1343

This result indicates that slightly over a third of respondents perceive that kids not being looked after properly as a ‘very big’ or ‘big’ problem in their community. Another third see it as a small problem. There is remarkable concurrence in these responses across both age groups and gender. Once again a significant difference emerges if the size of the community is factored in to the analysis. Table 9.13 presents this analysis.

Table 9.13: Perceptions of ‘Tell me if this is still a problem – kids not being looked after properly’, by community population size, by percent

Population size	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small problem	Not a problem
Less than 350	5.7	9.1	30.1	51.7
350 - 699	12.0	18.7	35.9	29.2
700 – 1099	34.6	16.1	29.0	13.2
1100+	23.6	24.8	39.5	7.2

N=1343 p<.01

This data shows that in communities with populations above 700, kids not being looked after properly is regarded as a far more serious problem than in those communities with populations below this number.

Despite more than half (55.3%) of participants stating that kids not being looked after properly is either a small problem, or not a problem, the qualitative data presents a mass of concern about the care of some children.

Substance use and gambling are the most commonly cited reasons for parents not looking after their children. This comment by an old woman is typical of many: *‘Some mothers don’t look after their kids, so the kids don’t go to school. They get their kids’ money [child support] and spend it on grog and gunja’*. Another older woman agrees: *‘It is really a big worry in the community especially for young people who have lots of children and don’t look after them properly. Grandmothers sometimes look after grandchildren. When mothers and fathers go to town to drink grog, children find it hard to look after themselves. They rely on grandmothers or grandfathers.’* And finally this older woman, who thinks that children are being looked after more poorly than before the Intervention: *‘There has been a breakdown of disciplinary practices since the intervention. Parents do not supervise their children. Cards and drinking is considered more important than caring for their children.’*

Several people commented that parents’ gambling habits mean that they don’t try to get their kids to school, and that when they lose at cards the family has no money for food. One young woman described it in this way: *‘Playing cards is a problem; people spend too much money and they don’t have enough money for their family’*. An older woman agreed: *‘Kids starve if parents waste money on gambling.’*

Another issue related to parental care of children is that of kids being out at night. This issue was included in the survey as a social problem. Respondents were asked ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem – kids being out at night.’ Responses to this question are presented in table 9.14 below.

Table 9.14: Response to ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem – kids being out at night’, by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not A Problem	Don't Know	No Response
Kids Being Out At Night	43.9	20.6	20.1	12.1	2.0	1.3

N=1343

This issue requires some examination. The way the term ‘kids’ has been used can be taken to mean either small children or young people. Some of the comments indicate that respondents have taken ‘kids’ to mean young people, while others are clearly referring to smaller children. For this reason the topic has been included in both the ‘Children’ and ‘Young people’ sections of the report.

‘Kids being out at night’ is clearly regarded as a problem. Almost two-thirds of respondents (64.5%) rated it as a ‘very big’ or ‘big’ problem, and only 12.1% believe that it is not a problem. Once again there are no significant differences across age groups or gender. When population size is analysed however there is a very apparent difference. Table 9.15 below presents this analysis.

Table 9.15: Perceptions of ‘Tell me if this is still a problem - kids being out at night’, by community population size, by percent

Population size	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small problem	Not a problem
Less than 350	20.1	17.2	33.0	27.3
350 - 699	25.5	21.3	27.7	24.1
700 – 1099	64.2	16.6	13.2	2.8
1100+	56.4	26.2	13.6	2.2

N=1343

p<.01

It is easiest to see the stark differences between communities with populations of over and fewer than 700 people when the categories ‘very big problem’ and ‘big problem’ are merged. Communities with populations of over 700 have 82.6% (pop 1100+) and 80.8% (pop 700 – 1099) of respondents nominating kids being out at night as a big or very big problem. For communities with a population of under 700 the responses are 37.3% (pop <350) and 46.8% (pop 350 – 699). These data indicate that problems associated with children being out a night are far more serious in larger communities.

There were several reasons proffered as to why children being out at night is seen as problematic. Many respondents perceive the issue as part of a cluster of problems involving child neglect and the associated insufficient supervision of children. One young man puts it like this: *'No not enough services, kids need to be kept in at night. More patrols could help. Parents need counselling or training about looking after their kids instead of playing cards and drinking home brew while letting their kids roam'*. This young woman had the same idea: *'Lots of kids are still not being looked after, that why they are out at night and is a big problem.'*

This young woman's observation about the anti-social behaviour that occurs while kids are out at night highlights one issue: *'When children goes out and mix in with other kids and they use very foul language and don't want to listen to grown-ups.'* Other respondents said that kids get into a lot of trouble at night: *'When children being out night they get into trouble by breaking in and also get involve fighting.'*

This middle-aged man identifies cultural disintegration as resulting from kids and young people roaming at night without supervision: *'There is a big issues with kids roaming or walking around at night. Particularly with all kids including teenagers. Because no one at home to feed them etc. The family way of life is slowly being dismantled and dysfunctionally. Continuous Western influence keep coming so rapidly'*.

9.7 Summary

The survey provides strong evidence of improvements in the lives of children over the last three years in sample communities. The change most highly rated is in the amount of food children are now eating. Increasing the food available for children and improvements in the quality of food at community stores was also credited with improvements in children's health. Improvements in levels of activity, school attendance and happiness also received strong endorsement. Table 9.16 below presents the results on changes in children's lives over the last three years.

Table 9.16: Responses to 'In the last three years have you noticed any of these changes with children?'

Variable	More	About the same	Less	No response
Health	57.0	34.0	6.1	2.9
Food	68.8	23.5	5.0	2.7

Activity	65.8	24.8	6.9	2.5
School attendance	63.1	24.7	10.1	2.1
Happiness	61.7	29.3	6.3	2.7

N=1343

Despite the positive result, serious concern was also expressed about the continuing neglect of some children.

10. Young people

Young people and issues relevant to them emerge as a consistent theme throughout the survey. For the purpose of this report ‘young people’ are deemed to be aged between approximately 13 and 25 years. Respondents (including the 28% who are under the age of 25years) expressed pride in and worry about young people throughout the qualitative material gathered. This section considers those issues that relate to the quality of life of young people.

The safety section of this report gives details of the various dynamics within cohorts of young people that jeopardise both their own safety and that of other community members. To summarise, it would seem that many young people are involved in fights with other young people, and also across other age demographics within the community. People report various dynamics within this fighting. The first is same sex fights. Boys tease each other and fight, and girls often have ‘jealous fights’ over boyfriends. Another common source of fights was identified as being between young couples. As well as fights between couples, fights occur between groups of young men and women who hang around together. In communities with mobile phone coverage, many of these fights are triggered by texts or posts on chat room sites.

10.1 Young people not listening to their parents and older people

Young people not listening to their parents is something commonly lamented across all cultures, and the communities participating in this survey are no different. Participants were asked whether young people not listening to their parents and older people was a problem for their community. Table 10.1 below presents the response.

Table 10.1: Response to ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem – young people not listening to their parents and older people’, by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not A Problem	Don't Know	No Response
Young People Not Listening	47.1	23.5	19.1	6.6	2.4	1.3

N=1343

These data show that 70.5% of respondents perceive young people not listening to their parents as a ‘very big’ or ‘big’ problem. Interestingly this response does not vary significantly on either the age group or gender of the respondent.

10.2 Cyber bullying

Survey data indicate that the internet and cyber bullying, in the form of mobile phone and chat rooms, now plays a very significant role in these fights. A typical scenario is that someone sends a derogatory message about another person, and the fights begin. Respondents were asked to rate ‘people sending nasty phone messages’ as a problem in their community. Table 10.2 below presents the results.

Table 10.2: Response to ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem –people sending nasty phone messages’, by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not A Problem	Don’t Know	No Response
Nasty Phone Text	46.8	10.9	7.0	16.2	8.1	11.0

N=1343

These data indicate that just under half of all respondents consider people sending nasty phone messages as a very big problem. This is likely to be an under-estimate because six communities (270 respondents) in the sample do not have mobile phone coverage, and therefore do not have experience of this problematic activity. This explains the high number of ‘don’t know’ and nil responses. If these categories are excluded from the calculation just over 76.0% of respondents classify nasty phone texts as a ‘very big’ or ‘big’ problem, giving this issue the highest rating as a problem.

One older man expressed his anger over text messaging in this way: *‘Of course we have our social problem but we can fix it our way - but one thing that make community so angry is nasty phone messages. All the other things problems we have we talk to our leaders’*. This young man described how the messages are often intended to start ‘jealous fights’: *‘Young people sending bad and nasty messages. Girlfriends and boyfriends lots of trouble with phone’*. In one community residents reported that the nasty messages often include pornographic material that upsets the recipient. There was also some feedback that young people are filming their own pornographic material and broadcasting it through mobile phones.

Respondents report that several communities have found their own ways to address problems created through use of the internet. This middle-aged man describes how the school has tried to deal with the problem: *‘We do have teachers talk to children about nasty phone messages. Parents also involved too. The parents tell them that it is not good saying nasty things on the phone.’* This young woman has her own strategy with her children: *‘Phone problem are the problem in the community even in school. I think don't buy young kids phone, it could happen to them.’* One community has addressed the problem through holding a community meeting: *‘Phone text message happened once, we had a meeting, now stopped’.*

10.3 Dangerous driving

Another issue that was often associated with young people is dangerous driving, or cars ‘spinning round’. Respondents stated that this generally happens when people are intoxicated, and or when they are very angry. Respondents were asked to rate this issue as a social problem in their community. Table 10.3 below presents the results.

Table 10.3: Response to ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem –dangerous driving’, by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not A Problem	Don't Know	No Response
Cars Spinning Round	26.1	16.2	21.8	25.8	8.0	2.1

N=1343

These data show that 42.3% of respondents believe dangerous driving to be a ‘very big’ or ‘big’ problem, and a slightly larger number (47.6%) consider it a small problem, or not a problem at all. Again, this activity is seen as a more serious problem in larger communities. This might be explained by more roads, better roads and higher volumes of traffic.

10.4 Young people hurting older people

There has been media coverage and other public comment in relation to the issue of young people harassing older people for money. One of the benefits claimed to result from income management is the reduction of available cash and therefore reduced pressure (social pressure and violence) on older

family members by younger ones. Consequently respondents were asked if this was a problem in their community. Table 10.4 below presents the results for this question.

Table 10.4: Response to ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem – young people hurting older people’, by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not A Problem	Don't Know	No Response
Young People Hurting Older People	17.6	15.9	22.6	35.1	7.2	1.6

N=1343

These data suggest that respondents tend to see this issue as either a small problem, or not a problem (combined 57.7%). There is nevertheless a considerable number who do see this as a difficulty. Ironically, people under 25 years of age are more likely to see such treatment of older people as a serious problem than any other age group, whereas those over the age of 40 are the least likely to perceive it as a very big problem.

In addition to items in the survey that concern young people the participatory process also gathered a lot of feedback voicing concern about options and quality of life for young people. More activities for young people was voted as fourth most important constructive change to have occurred over the last three years. It was also voted as the second most important challenge. Both of these results indicate that young people rank highly in people’s thoughts on what is happening in communities. The services section of the report has further material about programs that deliver activities for young people.

10.5 Summary

Material presented in the safety and challenges sections and in this section indicates that young people and their issues are a significant driver of community difficulties. Two key issues are identified, firstly dis-engagement from their community, in the form of not listening to the older generation, and secondly incessant fighting amongst themselves (sometimes resulting in dangerous driving), which affects the quality of life and safety for everyone else in the community.

11. Substance misuse

Substance misuse has long been acknowledged as a problem in many remote Indigenous communities. Through the use of the survey we sought to elicit respondents' views on the extent and nature of the problem, and whether they thought there had been any change since the commencement of the NTER. The 'Changes and Challenges' section of this report presents material on perceived changes in the prevalence of substance use over the three years in question, and the extent to which it still remains a problem. This section explores the patterns of use and the nature of the resulting difficulties.

11.1 Patterns of substance use

The survey results generated a considerable amount of material on the patterns and effects of substance misuse. Respondents were asked how often alcohol ('grog') and cannabis (marijuana, 'gunja') presented a problem. Table 11.1 and 11.2 below present their responses.

Table 11.1 : Response to 'How often is grog a problem in your family?' by percent

	Most of the Time	Some of the Time	None of the Time	Don't Know	No Response
Grog	14.3	40.4	31.0	11.8	2.5

N=1343

Table 11.2: Response to 'How often is gunja a problem in your family?' by percent

	Most of the Time	Some of the Time	None of the Time	Don't Know	No Response
Gunja	16.7	30.3	35.6	13.1	4.3

N=1343

The patterns of response differ between grog and gunja. In relation to grog, the largest group (40.3%) reports that grog is a problem 'some of the time,' whereas with gunja the largest group (35.6%) states that gunja is a problem 'none of the time'. The size of the groups reporting that problems arise 'most

of the time' is similar – 14.3% for grog; 16.7% for gunja. In numerical terms, that is 187 respondents who report that alcohol is a problem for them 'most of the time,' and 215 who say that marijuana is a problem 'most of the time'. It is important to note that this question seeks the respondent's own view of the problem – and the response does not reveal whether the problem is generated by their own consumption, or that of others.

Interestingly, there is very little variation in the responses across age groups. There is however a noteworthy difference in the answers by gender for alcohol, but this is not so for marijuana. Men are significantly more likely than women to report problems relating to alcohol 'some' or 'most' of the time (p value .003).

There is quite a startling difference when results from communities in the north of the NT are compared with those in the south, with the southern communities recording significantly lower levels of problems. In response to the question about whether alcohol is a problem, 18.8% of respondents from the northern communities agreed that 'most of the time' it was, whereas the parallel response from the southern communities was 6.6%. The difference is even more marked for marijuana, with 24.9% of respondents from northern communities recording it as being a problem for them 'most of the time' compared with 2.6% from the southern communities. Despite the small figure for the south, qualitative data indicates that gunja is also a problem in the south.

There is also a significant difference between communities that do not have a police station, those that have a new station, and those that already had a police station before the NTER. There are significantly lower levels of problems reportedly caused by gunja use (and therefore presumably lower levels of use) in communities with no police station or with a Themis station. Communities with existing police stations, even where additional police were posted under the NTER, experience significantly higher levels of problems. Policing status may be a proxy for the size of the community, with communities with no police or a new police presence tending to be smaller communities.

11.2 Impact of alcohol

Those respondents who had answered that either (or both) grog or gunja was a problem were then asked to elaborate on the sorts of problems they encountered. Respondents who had indicated 'none of the time' in response to the questions above were not asked to give further details. Consequently the 'no response' category for these questions is very large. The answers to the subsequent questions about the types of problems caused by alcohol are presented in Tables 11.3 to 11.12.

Fighting of one form or another comes through clearly as a major alcohol-related problem. People get drunk and then fight, either with fellow drinkers, or with family or community members who may not have been drinking. This middle-aged man outlines a variety of ways in which drunken people fight: *‘Drunks use nulla nulla to hit people, or axe to attack people, or knife or spear - causes big problem and family fight.’* Table 11.3 below presents the data on family fighting as a consequence of alcohol use.

Table 11.3: Response to ‘What grog problems are there in your family - family fighting or arguing?’ by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Don't Know	Not asked
Family Fighting Or Arguing	18.3	15.6	18.1	3.9	0.9	43.2

N=1343

These data indicate that more than a third of those with alcohol-related problems in their family experience family fighting. The result is consistent across age groups and both genders. The question below seeks a more specific response on the issue of fighting between partners.

Table 11.4: Response to ‘What grog problems are there in your family - husband wife, boyfriend/girlfriend troubles?’ by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Don't Know	Not asked
Grog Husband /Wife Troubles	20.0	13.7	14.1	6.9	2.2	43.1

N=1343

Respondents clearly identified excessive alcohol use as leading directly to domestic (and other) violence, as this old man from a Top End community said: *‘Men hitting women was worse when drinking, but also more fights when drinking.’*

Money issues also arise in families with alcohol-related difficulties, with money that is spent on alcohol not available to meet essential needs. Table 11.5 below presents the response to this question.

Table 11.5: Response to ‘What grog problems are there in your family – money problems?’ by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Don't Know	Not asked
Money Problems	19.4	15.1	14.4	5.3	2.4	43.3

N=1343

The response to this question is quite consistent across age groups and both genders, and indicates that more than a third of respondents who experience grog problems in their family also encounter money troubles as a result. It is interesting to note that communities with alcohol outlets experience much more intense problems with money with a 25% more residents of communities with clubs reporting a ‘very big’ problem’ with money than in those communities without alcohol outlets.

The money problems detailed above influence other aspects of a family’s operations. For example, alcohol also affects children, who may not receive food or supervision while their parents are drinking. It is likely that this is partly because all the family’s money has gone to purchase alcohol, and also because while the parents are focused on drinking, they are not caring properly for their children. This young woman commented: *‘When people are drinking they don’t buy food. Not fair for other people’*.

Table 11.6 presents data on this issue.

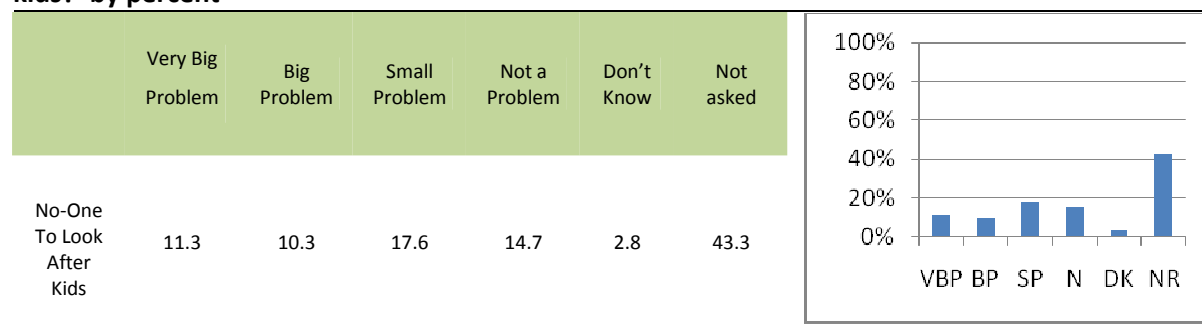
Table 11.6: Response to ‘What grog problems are there in your family - not enough food in the house?’ by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Don't Know	Not asked
Not Enough Food In House	14.4	13.3	17.8	9.7	1.8	43.0

N=1343

Once again the responses to this question are consistent across age groupings and both genders. The issue of the supervision of children in families with alcohol problems is covered in the table below.

Table 11.7: Response to ‘What grog problems are there in your family - no one to look after the kids?’ by percent



N=1343

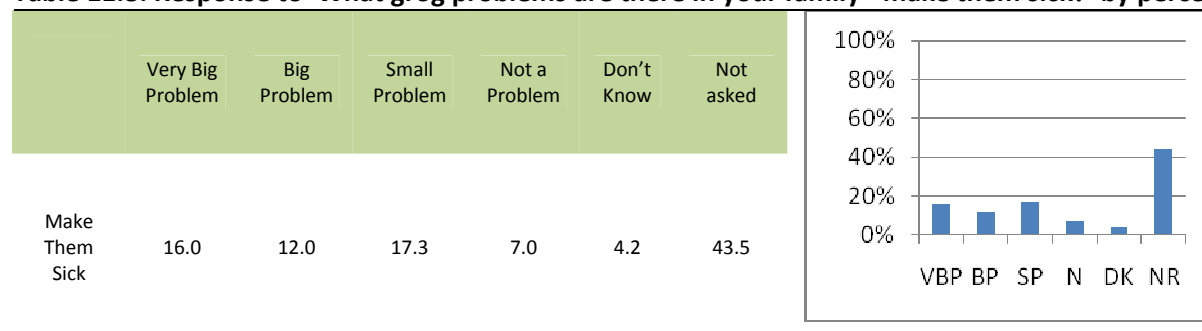
This is perceived as less of a problem than the other issues above. Qualitative data suggest that many parents who drink leave their children to be minded by other family members - often grandparents. Some grandparents commented that they struggle with this role.

In addition to fighting, many people identified dangerous driving by people who were drunk as a significant problem caused by alcohol. This middle-aged woman describes her fears like this: *‘Drunks not so safe for little kids. The drunks speed up, little kids hang outside, might get run over.’*

Another middle-aged woman linked parents’ drinking to low school attendance and children being out at night when she said: *‘Some kids not going to school because of their parents drinking, that's why they walk around at night.’* One middle-aged man speculated that this lack of care may of itself lead to problems: *‘Maybe there is substance abuse because the kids are not being looked after - it's mostly young boys with substance problem.’*

There is no direct qualitative data on the effects of alcohol on health. When respondents were asked where they could go for help with substance use related problems however, 24% nominated the clinic (among other places). This suggests that people experience considerable health consequences, both as a result of their own drinking, and of alcohol-related violence. The table below presents data on the health implications for drinkers.

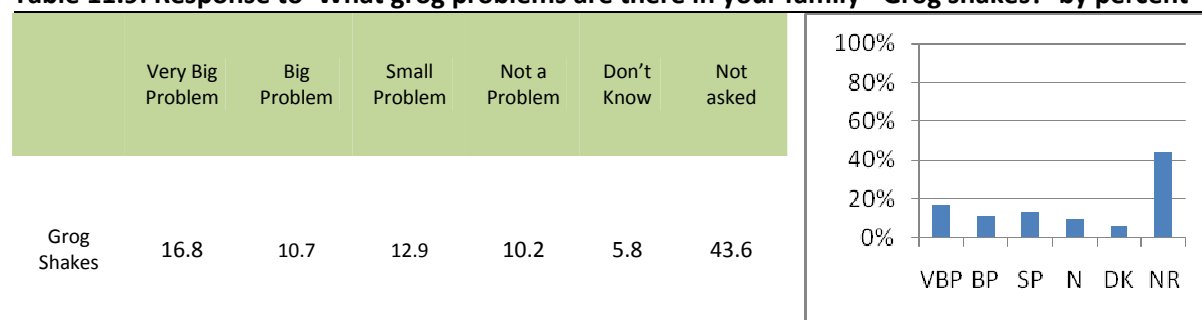
Table 11.8: Response to ‘What grog problems are there in your family - make them sick?’ by percent



N=1343

Another symptom of alcohol addiction is the experience of withdrawal when the drinker stops their regular consumption. The DTs (delirium tremens) is a severe form of withdrawal commonly known as the ‘grog shakes’ among many Indigenous people in the NT. These are often experienced by drinkers who live primarily in remote communities, as they tend to be binge drinkers when they have money and access to alcohol. The next survey question was about grog shakes.

Table 11.9: Response to ‘What grog problems are there in your family - Grog shakes?’ by percent



N=1343

This result suggests that many of the drinkers to whom this response refers (27.5% when ‘very big’ and ‘big’ problem are combined) drink often enough, and in large enough quantities, to go into withdrawal when they stop.

When the responses to these questions about various alcohol-related problems are compared, issues of violence and lack of money are the most serious, followed by health difficulties. Not having enough food in the house, and no-one being available to look after children appear to be less severe.

Although not an area covered by the quantitative question, qualitative data shows that respondents also identified alcohol misuse as leading to the break-up of families, as people leave remote communities for towns in order to be able to get grog. This middle-aged woman from the desert

(where most communities are 'dry') said: 'If the big drinking continues the cycle will just continue. People follow grog into town and that's where they end up.' Many people also get caught up in alcohol-related offending, and may then spend considerable periods in gaol. This woman explained the adverse effects of alcohol on her family: 'My nephew is in gaol because of grog and my sister is not here as she has to be near the grog in town'. Conversely, some people noted that they had stopped drinking, and returned to live with family: 'Because I like what I see happening here, and I'm keeping off the grog, keeping away from town and grog, doing painting and looking after my family'. And: 'Stopped drinking and got a house and a job. And I'm back living in my country and community'. This last comment conveys a sense of what people give up when they leave their community and go to town to follow the grog trail.

11.2.1 Impact of community population size on the extent of alcohol-related problems

There is substantial correlation between respondents' perceptions of the frequency of alcohol problems in their family and the population size of the community in which they live. There is a clear distinction between communities with a population of more than 700, and those with a population below this number. Table 11.10 presents the frequency of alcohol problems cross-tabulated with population size.

Table 11.10: Response to 'How often is grog a problem in your family,' by population size, by percent

Population size	Most of the time	Some of the time	None of the time	Don't know/don't want to say	No response
<350	5.2	45.2	43.3	5.2	1.1
350 - 699	5.3	36.8	47.6	9.7	0.6
700 - 1099	27.9	36.7	17.1	14.4	3.9
1100+	14.8	44.2	22.3	14.6	4.1

N=1343

p=<.01

It is easy to see this distinction in the 'most of the time' response, where in communities with populations of fewer than 700 register below 5.5% of respondents recording that they experience troubles with grog 'most of the time'. Communities with populations above this number jump to almost three times this level.

This result is influenced by one community (which has a club) and which recorded almost 40% for this 'most of the time' answer. It is clearly of concern that almost 40% of those interviewed in this particular community reported experiencing such frequent problems with alcohol.

This difference is even more marked when the sorts of problems caused by alcohol are analysed. Table 11.11 below presents the problem nominated as the most serious (fighting between couples) analysed by population size.

Table 11.11: Response to ‘What grog problems are there in your family - boyfriend/girlfriend problems,’ by population size, by percent

Population size	Very big problem	Big problem	Small problem	Not a problem	Don't know	No response
<350	10.7	16.1	42.0	25.9	5.3	43.2
350 - 699	14.7	30.8	33.3	19.9	1.3	43.2
700 - 1099	48.0	20.6	21.0	6.3	4.1	43.2
1100+	46.1	27.2	15.6	6.6	4.5	43.2

N=1343

p=<.01

The difference between the larger and smaller communities is extremely marked. The final prism through which to analyse these figures on problems associated with excessive drinking is to compare communities in which alcohol is available through a club or canteen, with those that are ‘dry’. Table 11.12 below presents this analysis.

Table 11.12: Response to ‘How often is grog a problem in your family?’ by communities with and without clubs, by percent

With/without alcohol available	Most of the time	Some of the time	None of the time	Don't know/don't want to say	No response
Alcohol available	22.6	38.9	22.2	14.3	2.0
Alcohol not available	12.4	40.7	33.0	11.2	2.7

N=1343

p=<.01

These data suggests that in communities with clubs there are significantly more people who experience problems with alcohol ‘most of the time,’ and fewer who never do so. It is interesting that the ‘some of the time’ category is approximately similar between those communities with and without an alcohol outlet. It may be that alcohol makes its way to the ‘dry’ communities some of the time, or alternately people travel to communities with an alcohol outlet some of the time.

11.3 Impact of marijuana

‘Fighting hungry for gunja’

Whereas respondents commonly described the harm that ensues from the excessive of alcohol as occurring when people were drunk, the ill effects of marijuana use seem mainly to occur either when

users cannot get supplies, or when they have used too much over time, and ‘go mad’. This middle-aged man describes what happens in his community: ‘*Gunja - lot coming here. When [they] have smoke [gunja] - ok - but if not have smoke gets pressured, desperate*’. A woman commented in the same vein: ‘*People get mad when they don't have it and do mad things - break things, drive dangerously.*’

The questions about gunja use are the same as those for alcohol. The first is about the extent of family fighting triggered by marijuana consumption. Table 11.13 below presents the response to this question.

Table 11.13: Response to ‘What gunja problems are there in your family - family fighting or arguing?’ by percentage

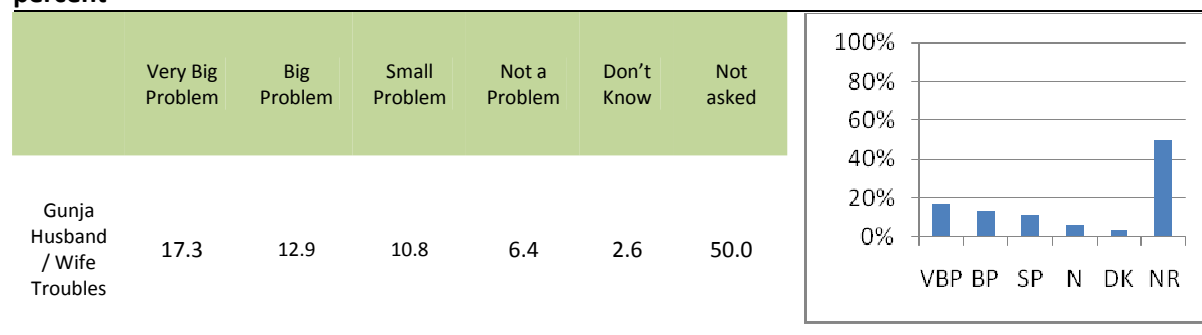
	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Don't Know	Not asked
Family Fighting Or Arguing	16.8	12.9	13.8	5.1	1.3	50.1

N=1343

The responses are consistent as between men and women; younger people however are slightly more likely than their older counterparts to report problems occurring ‘most of the time.’ Qualitative data suggests that many people see gunja as more of a youth issue.

The responses suggest that the use of gunja causes family fighting marginally less frequently than does alcohol misuse (16.8% and 18.3% respectively). It would be a mistake however to assume a clear separation wherein some families struggle with alcohol, and others with marijuana. In reality it is more likely that usage alternates between the two, depending on availability and individual preference. It is also entirely possible that some families deal simultaneously with alcohol- and marijuana-related issues.

Table 11.14: Response to ‘What gunja problems are there in your family-husband/wife troubles?’ by percent

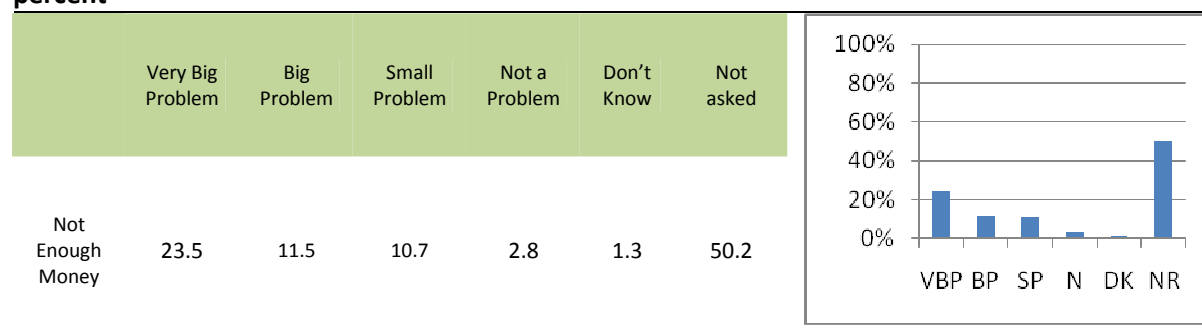


N=1343

Respondents also identified marijuana as a contributing factor to domestic violence. As one older man put it: *‘Violence against women because of gunja’*.

The table below presents the response to the question of whether gunja use leads to problems of a shortage of money.

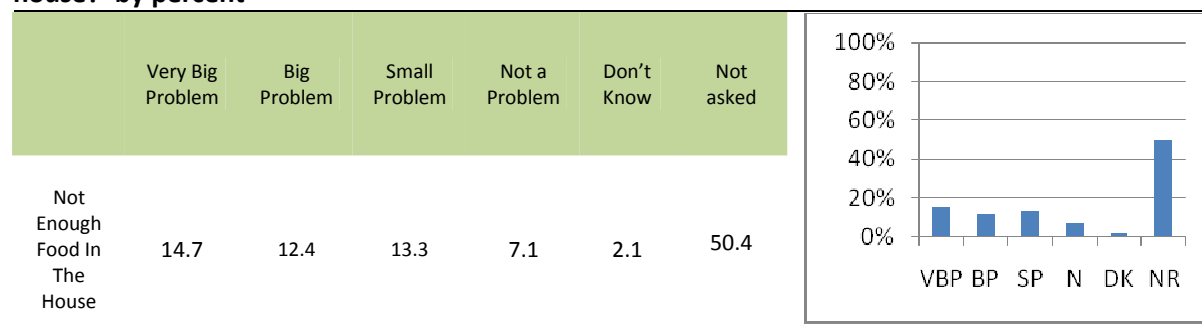
Table 11.15: Response to ‘What gunja problems are there in your family - not enough money?’ by percent



N=1343

Another particularly difficult aspect of marijuana use relates to food. Users spend a lot of their money on marijuana, but they also get very hungry and eat a lot when they are high. The story of this woman illustrates the consequences for family members: *‘A lot of fighting over money for gunja. I work hard and shop but people on gunja take it all, so I sometimes stop buying food from the store and just buy take-away and eat that and go to bed’*. The table below presents data on this issue.

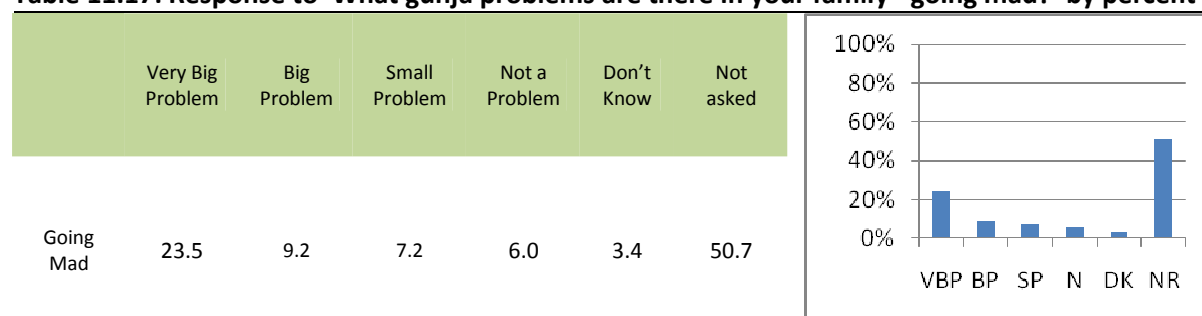
Table 11.16: Response to ‘What gunja problems are there in your family- not enough food in the house?’ by percent



N=1343

The figure for ‘very big problem’ (14.7%) here is almost exactly the same as for problems with food shortages due to expenditure on alcohol (14.4%). This suggests that when there is insufficient food in house, the main reason is that income has instead been spent on grog or gunja. The most serious adverse effect of marijuana use, however, appears to be on health, and in particular, mental health. Altered states of mind can be temporary, but may also be long-lasting. This middle aged man said: *‘Gunja make them bad in the head and make suicide’.*

Table 11.17: Response to ‘What gunja problems are there in your family - going mad?’ by percent



N=1343

This response is the highest for ‘very big problem’ (23.5%) from all those included in the question, for both alcohol and marijuana.

Although it was not an issue not covered in the survey questions, several people identified alcohol and marijuana use as a reason for young people’s lack of engagement with their families and their culture. This older man summarised it thus: *‘Old men teach the right way to follow the culture and the law, but young people who drink grog and smoke gunja won't listen to them’.*

11.3.1 Impact of community population size on the extent of marijuana-related problems

Once again there is strong evidence that larger communities experience higher levels of problems related to the use of gunja. The table below presents the frequency of such problems analysed by population size of the community.

Table 11.18: Response to ‘How often is gunja a problem in your family,’ by population size, by percent

Population size	Most of the time	Some of the time	None of the time	Don't know/don't want to say	No response
<350	1.0	16.7	72.4	9.0	0.9
350 - 699	3.6	30.9	53.8	10.6	1.1
700 - 1099	28.5	30.1	16.3	15.5	9.6
1100+	25.7	36.9	18.0	15.3	4.1

N=1343 p<=.01

This table shows a very clear demarcation between communities with above and below 700 people; those below this size having significantly fewer frequent problems.

The same analysis has been applied to what the evidence presented above shows is the most serious gunja-related problem: ‘going mad.’

Table 11.19: Response to ‘What gunja problems are there in your family-going mad,’ by population size, by percent

Population size	Very big problem	Big problem	Small problem	Not a problem	Don't know	No response
<350	4.8	3.3	4.8	5.7	1.0	80.4
350 - 699	8.6	9.2	9.2	8.4	0.8	63.8
700 - 1099	36.5	8.8	8.0	5.5	5.8	35.4
1100+	34.5	12.6	6.1	4.6	4.6	37.6

N=1343 p<=.01

These responses also demonstrate that mental health problems are far more serious in larger communities. This is unsurprising, as the higher incidence of gunja use is very likely to lead to greater problems. It is important, however, not to play down the problem, and it is worrying that such a high number of individuals (274) experience ‘going mad’ as a problem most of the time.

11.4 Changes in level of substance use over the last three years

In the first question of the survey respondents were asked whether or not levels of drinking, smoking and sniffing had changed over the previous three years. Table 11.20 to 11.22 below presents their responses.

Table 11.20: Response to 'Can you tell us if these things have changed in your community in the past 3 years - less drinking grog,' by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree a Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
Less Drinking Grog Over Last 3 Years	23.8	33.4	20.9	10.8	5.6	5.5

N=1343

This table shows that a majority (38.8%) of respondents agreed with the statement.

Table 11.21: Response to 'Can you tell us if these things have changed in your community in the past 3 years - less smoking gunja,' by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree a Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
Less Smoking Gunja Over Last 3 Years	18.8	20.0	20.4	24.3	14.4	2.1

N=1343

The response to this question does not produce a clear majority either in agreement or disagreement. There is a high ‘don’t know’ response, which may be the result of people not wanting to talk about illegal behaviour. Table 11.22 below presents the data collected on petrol sniffing.

Table 11.22: Response to ‘Can you tell us if these things have changed in your community in the past 3 years - less sniffing petrol,’ by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree a Bit	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
Less Sniffing Petrol Over Last 3 Years	17.0	16.2	12.5	11.6	21.7	21.0

N=1343

This question also elicited a high number of ‘don’t know’ and ‘no response’ answers. This reflects both the absence of sniffing in several of the samples sites, and the fact that the question was simply omitted in some communities that do have petrol (or other inhalant) sniffing.

In summary these results suggest that respondents agree that there has been a reduction in drinking and sniffing petrol. More respondents however disagreed than agreed with the proposition that there is less gunja being smoked than there was three years prior to the survey. The over-all picture created by respondents’ comments is that while alcohol problems have declined, they have been replaced by problems with marijuana. This response from a middle-aged man exemplifies this view: *‘When they drink most of them drink in town and some bring it back into the community. Gunja is a big problem now and there is a lot of men smoking a lot of gunja’*. This middle-aged woman concurred: *‘Alcohol stopping has changed a lot but that has led to more gunja and more DV and fights because of lack of gunja; and kids don't get food because of gunja.’*

There is qualitative feedback that the Basics Card has helped people to cut down on their drinking and marijuana use. One woman related her story: *‘I used to drink with my husband and fighting too. But we have stopped now. New rules have helped me and my husband stop drinking’*. This woman’s story is similar: *‘I used to be a drinker, used to live in town. Got some kids now to look after. Get good help from Centrelink - parenting payment, Basics Card been helping, really good.’*

Some people also commented that having a job helps them to keep their substance use under control. This comment is typical: *'I'm working and not drinking too much. It's keeping me busy'*. And: *'Husband doesn't fight with me. He is drinking less; he has a job and thinks less about grog'*. This story from a young man reinforces these observations:

'My name's C. I live with my Mum. I sometime live with my Dad. My Mum, Dad sort of married, it's complicated for them. I don't know if they're married. I use to smoke marijuana when I was thirteen. Every day in the morning. I could get up walk to the shop and hang around with my marijuana mates, look for money to buy marijuana. We could not find it we could get stressed out, look for fights and that. In three years' time I realised I was going the wrong road. When I turned 17 I found a job with the power and water and my life was enjoyed.'

There is very little feedback on solvent use, but there was some suggestion that people are using solvents when they cannot find any alcohol or marijuana, as this young man explains: *'People only drinking grog for birthdays and Mass; people turning to solvents when they run out of gunja.'*

11.4.1 Impact of 'new grog rules' on alcohol use

The NTER introduced new rules about where alcohol may or may not be consumed, and on the limits that can be purchased at 'wet' clubs and canteens in remote communities. The changes essentially mean that alcohol cannot be consumed within prescribed community boundaries.

Table 11.23 below presents the response to the question 'Have new grog rules made a difference to safety in your community?'

Table 11.23: Response to 'Have these things made a difference to safety in your community - new grog rules?' by percent

	A Big Difference	A Little Bit of Difference	No Difference	Made it Worse	Don't Know	No Response
New Grog Rules	23.5	24.1	19.0	5.8	13.0	14.6

N=1343

There is very little variation in this response across age groups or gender, or in relation to the presence or absence of a police station. A variable that does produce significant difference is, once again, the size of the population. Those respondents living in communities with fewer than 350 people thought

that the new rules had made the greatest difference, with 41% of respondents nominating the 'big difference' option. By contrast, the number in communities with populations of more than 1100 people who chose 'big difference' was 12.4%.

A discernible thread in the responses to this question was that people felt that their communities were safer, not because residents were on the whole drinking less alcohol, but because they were not drinking as often *within* the community. An older woman described the change in these words: *'People still drink a lot of grog but only on pay days and they go into town to drink. If they bring it back they drink it at the boundary and when they finish their grog they can walk back home, it's not too far'*. The negative side of this is that some people feared for those who these days drink more often in towns, where life is seen in general as more dangerous: *'Grog - dangerous for those going far away to drink but better, safer for community.'*

Associated with this change is the perception that the seizure of alcohol by police is making a difference to the amount of grog getting in to communities.

The other clear theme to emerge from changes to grog rules came from people living in communities where alcohol is sold. There are three communities in the sample in this category. The proportion of respondents nominating 'big difference' and 'little bit of difference' in communities with alcohol outlets was 66.8%, compared to 43.7% in 'dry' communities. This suggests that changes to rules about opening times and limits on the types and amount of alcohol sold in community clubs has had a greater impact than alterations to rules about where alcohol may be consumed. It may also be a factor that the change in alcohol laws that impacted community based alcohol outlets are more well-known because the Club is part of everyday life, and this contributed to the higher response.

Comment was mixed on the changes to the regulation of community-based alcohol outlets. This young man felt that a move away from the sale of full-strength beer had made the community safer: *'Because we only had [have] mid-strength beer; when we had heavy beers there were more arguments'*. Another man however thought that shorter opening hours at the local canteen had encouraged binge drinking: *'New grog rules have encouraged binge drinking, more trading hours would help reduce this problem. Club has trading hours reduced from 26 hours a week to a 12-hour week.'*

11.5 How challenges presented by substance use are rated by respondents

Respondents were also asked whether substance use issues remain a challenge for their community. Tables 11.24 to 11.26 present the response to the three substance use questions.

Table 11.24: Response to ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem in your community - drinking too much grog’ by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Don't Know	No Response
Drinking Too Much Grog	32.4	19.7	29.7	10.4	2.8	5.0

N=1343

Excessive alcohol consumption was considered either a ‘very big’ or a ‘big’ problem by more than half of all respondents (52.1%) Very few rated it as ‘not a problem.’

Table 11.25: Response to ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem in your community: drugs - too much gunja’ by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Don't Know	No Response
Drugs – Too Much Gunja	43.6	18.1	16.0	11.8	8.6	1.9

N=1343

Here again, marijuana issues are seen as very big and big problems by well over half the respondents. Once again there is a high ‘don’t know’ response to this question.

Table 11.26: Response to ‘Tell me which of these is still a problem in your community - sniffing too much petrol’ by percent

	Very Big Problem	Big Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Don't Know	No Response
Too Much Sniffing Petrol	14.3	9.2	15.6	27.9	18.0	15.0

N=1343

The proportion of people nominating petrol sniffing as either a ‘very big’ or ‘big’ problem is 23.5% - almost a quarter of respondents.

The responses to these questions indicate that people consider both alcohol and marijuana to be serious problems. When the ‘very big problem’ and ‘big problem’ categories are combined, however, marijuana (61.7%) is perceived to be more serious than alcohol (52.1%). Solvent use is seen as a relatively small problem on 23.5%. This question did however attract a high rate of ‘don’t know’ and ‘no response’ answers from people in communities where there is no sniffing, which means that the proportion of people rating it as a problem may have more weight than at first appears.

Once again there were no significant differences in these responses across age groups, by gender, or by region. As noted above, however, the response to all three of these substance misuse questions varies significantly when analysed by size of community.

11.6 Where people go to seek help for substance mis-use problems

Respondents were asked an open-ended question on where they could go to for help with problems associated with substance mis-use. Their responses regarding the services they would look to can be summarised as follows:

- Police - 33%
- Clinic - 23%
- Night Patrol - 12%
- AOD services - 7%
- Safe house - 7%

Centrelink staff, mental health workers, pastors, prison staff and youth workers were also nominated as sources of help by a small number of respondents. It is interesting to note that specialist AOD services received a low level of response.

There was some indication that many people struggle to make use of the services that are available. One young woman said: *'Don't really want to go for help locally - don't want to say you have a problem. Don't want to admit it to clinic or police.'* For others the difficulty in asking for help lay in the nature of the service provider, as this young man observed: *'Nowhere. Don't go to X care because it belongs to one clan and not others. If you belong to the family of the local worker it's okay, you feel comfortable; otherwise you won't go.'*

In addition to formal services that might provide assistance, many people (20%) nominated their family members or elders in the community. This middle-aged man from a small community with very limited facilities said: *'Family strong - best person'*. For some people, help from family was used because there were no alternatives, as this young man said: *'No counselling program here so who do we go? Is our parents the only people can help sort things out - problem we have.'* Others simply said there was no help at all: *'No - just walk away and go home. No help here.'*

The sort of help that families and communities provide was most often described as taking people out bush. The philosophy behind this is described by this middle-aged man: *'Go to outstation to get away from the gunja, when you are there try to clean up the rubbish and make yourself busy while out there; there is no drug counselling in the community.'*

The final theme that came through in the responses to this question was that many people affected by substance misuse don't seek help. One old woman sees it this way: *'They don't go for help, they can't stop'*. A young woman said: *'Most people who smoke gunja don't think they need help'*. And finally, a young man from the Top End: *'It's their problem.'*

11.7 Summary of the patterns and impacts of substance use, and changes over the three years

Quantitative data show that respondents consider marijuana use to be a more serious challenge than heavy alcohol consumption, although both are regarded as 'big' or 'very big' problems by more than half of all respondents. Data suggests that problems with alcohol decreased over the three years since the NTER began, whereas in the case of marijuana they have gotten worse. There is some suggestion

that the restrictions on alcohol have led people to use marijuana in its stead. The upshot of the over-use of both substances is fighting, dangerous driving and the neglect of children. The most severe effect nominated was 'going mad' from smoking too much marijuana. The view was also put that the excessive use of marijuana causes young people to become lazy and lack interest both in work and in engaging with their community and culture.

There is some evidence to suggest that the new grog rules have been effective in reducing the amount of alcohol consumed in communities, particularly in communities with alcohol outlets. However it seems likely that some people - the most dedicated, habitual drinkers - who are very determined to drink - now go to towns to do so, and thus are not necessarily consuming less alcohol over-all. Some in this category would have sought out grog in town prior to the NTER, but it is possible that they do so more often since the advent of extended 'dry' areas and more dedicated policing. It is not possible to determine whether there has been a significant permanent (or semi-permanent) drift to town that is greater than what has routinely occurred since non-Aboriginal settlement and the establishment of towns. Police are credited with an important role in cutting down the amount of alcohol getting in to communities.

One argument that might be made is that habitual drinkers who are so determined to get hold of grog and who travel to town to do so, are at least not causing disturbances in their home communities, and will also have access to more programs and services in urban areas.

Some individuals credit the Basics Card with helping them to control their drinking and use of other substances.

12. Attitudes to violence

The survey contained several questions designed to elicit respondents' attitudes to violence:

- when (if ever) it is OK for partners to hit each other
- what ways are there to solve conflict without violence
- how people feel when they witness violence and
- where women can go if they are hurt.

The survey also, more broadly, generated considerable material on what people have called 'fighting' and 'teasing,' as well as on domestic violence. The gist of much of this qualitative material is to explain the causes of such violence, and the material does not itself reveal the interviewees' attitudes to the violence itself. This style of response has been covered in various sections of the report, depending on the context of the comment. For example, comments on the extent and causes of violence among young people have been included in the section on young people.

12.1 Men and women hitting their partners

The first of the 'attitudes to violence' questions asks whether violence is 'OK' in any of six proposed situations. The first half of the question asks if it is OK for a man to hit a woman in these situations, and the second half reverses this, asking if it is OK for a woman to hit a man in the same circumstances. The complete answers for this question are at Appendix 1.

The average response across all parts of the questions was that 20% of respondents thought that it was acceptable to hit in the given situation, and 63.5% thought it wasn't. The remainder of the responses was 'Don't know.' (This response was quite high for the whole of this question, as some people were uncomfortable with the subject matter, while others felt that they couldn't decide because the question did not give sufficient detail on the situation). Feedback from some data collectors suggested that a proportion of the 'No' (it is not OK to hit) response may have reflected the respondents' desire to say the right thing, rather than their real opinions. It would certainly seem however that the majority of respondents think that men and women hitting each other are not 'OK.' There are no significant differences between genders or across age groups in these responses.

There were two parts of the question for which the responses did not follow these patterns. The first is 'If she argues with or refuses to obey him is it OK for him to hit her?' The response to this question is presented below in table 12.1.

Table 12.1: Response to ‘Please tell us what you think - If she argues or refuses to obey him is it ok to hit her, by percent

	Yes	No	Don't Know	No Response
If she argues or refuses to obey him	9.1	79.0	7.6	2.8

N=1343

Interestingly, there are no significant differences between genders or across age groups in the responses to this question. It would seem that it is a commonly held belief that it is not acceptable for men to hit women for arguing with or refusing to obey them.

The second scenario that produced an atypical response was ‘If he wastes a lot of money on gambling/alcohol/drugs is it OK for her to hit him?’ Table 12.2 below presents the responses to this question.

Table 12.2: Response to ‘Please tell us what you think - If he wastes a lot of money on gambling/ alcohol/ drugs is it OK for her to hit him’, by percent

	Yes	No	Don't Know	No Response
If He Wastes Money	26.4	59.7	11.0	2.9

N=1343

This is a higher ‘Yes’ response than for any other question. Here again there were no significant differences between genders or across age groups. It would seem that there is increased licence for women to hit men if they waste a lot of money. Interestingly the reverse did not hold true; it was not considered acceptable for men to hit women who wasted a lot of money.

When the questions are paired, however, so that the licence for men and women to hit each other in the same circumstances is analysed, some significant difference does emerge –although not as much as might be expected. Tables 12.3 to 12.5 present the three circumstances that generate statistically

significant differences between the responses as to when it is OK for men to hit women, when compared to when it is OK for women to hit men.

Table 12.3: Paired response for the question of whether or not it is OK to hit if the partner has wasted a lot of money, by frequency

	Yes	No	Don't know	
If she wastes a lot of money on gambling/alcohol/drugs is it OK for him to hit her	271	862	172	X-squared = 14.9855
If he wastes a lot of money on gambling/alcohol/drugs is it OK for her to hit him	354	802	148	p-value = 0.0005571

As discussed above this indicates that it is significantly more acceptable for a woman to hit a man who has wasted money, than it is for a man in the same situation to hit a woman. This may be because the money that was wasted should have been used to feed children, which is more often seen as the woman's responsibility.

Table 12.4: Paired response for the question of whether or not it is OK to hit if the partner has wasted a lot of money, by frequency

	Yes	No	Don't Know	
If she is jealous, is it OK for him to hit her	242	847	213	X-squared = 10.0238
If he is jealous, is it OK for her to hit him	306	804	189	p-value = 0.006658

Here again it is considered more acceptable for a woman to hit a man, than the other way around.

Table 12.5: Paired response for the question of whether or not it is OK to hit if the partner has not looked after the kids properly, by frequency

	Yes	No	Don't know	
If she argues is it OK for him to hit her	122	1061	123	X-squared = 33.9737
If he argues is it OK for her to hit him	202	936	166	p-value = 0.000

In this final scenario it is once again seen as more acceptable for the woman to hit the man. Interestingly there is no significant difference between the answers of men and woman to any of these pairs of questions, which suggests that there are commonly acknowledged cultural factors generating the responses.

Not everyone agrees with the sentiments that are evident in the above tables. This middle-aged man put the men’s position in these words: *‘If a woman hits a man and it really hurts then he hits her back, she calls the police and he gets into trouble. Men do time, women play up and then there’s lots of jealousy. The man does the time for nothing’*. This older woman from a desert community observed: *‘Some women start swearing so husband will hit them and then they will go to jail.’*

The fact that the weight of opinion doesn’t sanction inter-personal violence is reinforced in the responses to Question 22: ‘How do you feel when you see people hitting each other?’ Twenty-one percent of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement ‘I think that He/She has a right to hit them’; whereas 68.7% disagreed (37.5% ‘disagree’, and 31.2% ‘strongly disagree’). These are similar proportions to those seen in the previous question. The responses for the whole of this question are at Appendix 1.

12.2 Individuals’ responses to violence

There was considerable acknowledgement that most people don’t feel good when they see people hitting each other. The response to the statement ‘I feel no good’ (when I see people hitting each other) drew a lot of agreement. Table 12.6 below presents the response to this question.

Table 12.6: Response to ‘How do you feel when you see people hitting each other – I feel no good’, by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don’t know	No Response
I Feel No Good	49.4	28.4	9.1	5.1	4.5	3.5

N=1343

There was particular comment to the effect that men and women shouldn't hit each other in front of their children. One young woman said: *'Don't hurt each other front of their kids' face'*. This older man said the same thing: *'Get together men and women to sort out any problem, respect one another - children are watching'*

People were also asked to respond to the statement 'I think it's not my business' when they see violence. Table 12.7 presents the response to this statement.

Table 12.7: Response to 'How do you feel when you see people hitting each other – I think that its not my business', by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	No Response
Not My Business	23.6	28.2	23.8	11.6	9.5	3.3

N=1343

More than half of the respondents agreed with this statement. This response may have been guided by the lack of detail in the question. For example if the question had indicated that it was members of the respondent's family that were hitting each other, the response is likely to have been very different.

Question 20 asks 'How can men and women sort out arguments a better way without hurting each other.' The responses illustrated how many people view inter-personal violence. A surprising number of people responded 'I don't know' (6%) It may be valid to take this response literally – that many people don't in fact know about other strategies for resolving conflict.

Despite this, a wide range of strategies were offered. A common suggestion was to walk away and distract yourself, as this middle-aged woman described: *'Talk about things, do things that aren't hitting. Go outside and do other things - tidy the yard.'* Many people also recommended leaving the house, family or community for a while – until things had calmed down. One middle- aged man had this advice: *'Go away. Sleep at someone else's house and come back and sort out proper way.'* This middle-aged woman felt it was better to leave for a longer period: *'Go to family. Stay away for a while. Maybe one month'*. An older woman respondent said that this was a normal progression: *'If a woman from outside is married to a man, she goes away for a week, and that man thinks of his wife and kids and go and get them.'*

Finally, one young man had the following confused response when asked how conflict could be resolved without hitting: *'Smash things up. Hang myself. Sit down quiet, calm down.'*

12.3 The role of the family in the response to violence

Another very common response to this question was to go to family for help. A young woman explained thus: *'Men will help the men, and the woman help woman. Sometimes women run for help to their parents. Other family split them up and stop them before they hurt each other.'* This woman also said that conflict should be resolved in the family: *'Family work it through; family don't walk away from each other - don't take it wide, keep it here (in the home).'* Family also has a role in protecting members: *'Family can hide woman for a while. Then talk together, stay quiet for a while together.'*

There are also cultural determinants to who has the right to try to stop people fighting. As one young woman observed: *'If one of my brothers or sisters is fighting it's okay for me to say walk away'*. The table below presents responses to the statement: *'I try to stop them fighting'*.

Table 12.8: Response to 'How do you feel when you see people hitting each other – I try to stop them fighting', by percent

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	No Response
I Try To Stop The Fighting	38.2	30.1	13.8	7.6	7.1	3.2

N=1343

It is not possible to know to what extent people disagreed with this statement because they felt that it may not be their role to stop others fighting, or whether fear or other influences held them back.

12.4 The role of services in the response to violence

A wide range of services was cited as providing assistance to people to solve conflict without using violence. The most common service mentioned was the police (19%), followed by the Night Patrols (8%), and to lesser extent safe houses (5%). Several people also suggested seeing a counsellor (6%), however this was sometimes accompanied by the acknowledgement that there was no counsellor available: *'Counselling - talk about money, grog, problems; sort it out. But there is no counsellor here;*

maybe in Alice Springs'. Mediation services and youth workers were also mentioned as possible sources of help.

Members of one community mentioned their domestic violence services: *'If the partners have fights they attend the Domestic Violence programme for 3 weeks'* as being effective; and another remembered a large meeting about domestic violence as a source of help: *'Talk and go to meetings like one last year in Ross River; that was a big talk about Domestic Violence. My son went to jail for domestic violence; now he is out and living in community with assistance from family.'*

12.5 The cultural position on violence

Some people acknowledged that there is pressure to change cultural attitudes to hitting women. One older man said: *'We used to hit our wives but now we have changed the law and don't hit our wives. Sometimes I go to local pastor to get counselling. Go to Night Patrol. Maybe to police. Pastor has been a good help'*. Others, conversely, held fast to their own cultural notions of who is sanctioned to hit whom, as this younger man from the Top End stated: *'It's not in our culture for a woman to hit a man'*. This young woman from a Central Australian desert community agreed: *'Get frightened from the man. Kungkas [young women] down from the man, wati [initiated men] really high.'*

An older man explained why women shouldn't hit men: *'Some men are bad and hurt their women, but I talk to my wife as I know she can't hit back. Women should have respect for man as they run the ceremony and song lines'*. And this older man explained what he believes can eventuate when a man hits a woman and the woman uses services that are set up to protect her: *'Man is too strong, he shouldn't hit women. Under Yolngu law man and woman respect each other. Now even when woman is locked up in a safe house she might be sneaking out the back door and mucking around with another man. This is what happens under Balanda [non Aboriginal] law. When husband finds out what she has been doing he might kill her or himself.'*

There was some suggestion that there are cultural rules governing inter-personal violence. A young man from the Top End alluded to this when he said: *'Only right skin woman can hit a man - wrong skin shouldn't do it.'* This complexity extends to who should try to help husbands and wives who are hitting each other. This older man explained how difficulties should be solved in the right way, without violence: *'People have to come in the middle and talk it through – relatives, but must be right side and right relationships - right connection like uncle and aunt - woman's family for her and men's family for him.'* One middle-aged man urged people to sort out violence in their own way, and without the

police: *'Call family meeting for her and his clan groups and they can solve problems instead of going to the police, as the police won't help you they will lock them up.'*

12.6 Summary

Throughout the survey there are frequent references to the causes and experiences of violence. This section addresses respondents' attitudes to violence. The overall finding is that the large majority of people do not sanction people hitting each other. However an average of 20% of respondents for each question felt that it is OK to hit your partner when there is conflict. Feedback from data collectors also suggests that some of the responses may have been what the participant thought that they ought to say, rather than what they really thought – which suggests that the true level of sanction for inter personal violence, may be higher than appears here.

Within the general perception that violence is not an acceptable way to solve conflicts there are some clear areas where a different cultural framework is evident. There is significantly higher level of agreement to violence for one scenario – for a woman to hit a man who has wasted a lot of money. There is also a significantly lower level of acceptance for a man to hit a woman who is arguing or refusing to obey him.

13. Key findings

The survey and participatory process has amassed a great deal of information that draws a picture of life in individual communities, and when aggregated draws out themes that describe life in remote communities in the NT.

The key findings section is focused on the aggregated picture across the whole sample. However when reading and thinking about these key findings it is important to keep in mind that the results from different communities vary a great deal from each other. For example some communities struggle with and prioritise the problems caused by 'nasty text messages', while others don't have mobile phone coverage and instead struggle with stopping their young people spending all their time watching Astar. Some communities report widespread and serious problems with alcohol, while others do not – and so on.

13.1 Changes

A great deal of positive feedback was given about the nature and extent of changes that have taken place in the communities in the sample over the last three years:

- more people thought that their community was on the 'way up' (47.4%), than 'no change' (42.1%) or 'way down' (7.6%). The main reason cited by respondents as to why their community was on the 'way up' was that there are now more jobs and training opportunities (13% of all responses). Other commonly cited reasons were the construction of new facilities, better sport and recreation programs and improved community safety
- the majority of respondents (58.7%) felt that their own lives had improved over the last three years. The most common reasons given for this were getting a job, engaging in less substance use, having a new or renovated house and looking after their family better
- improvement in service provision by schools, Centrelink, clinics, police and stores were the most widely recognised changes, with an average of 80% of respondents agreeing that it was easier to get help from these services now than three years ago. Improvement in service provision was also ranked as the most important change to have occurred over the last three years through the voting process
- improvements in policing (new stations and additional police) were voted the most important change, followed by improved schools, the Basics Card, better housing, more things for young people to do, better services from Centrelink, the school nutrition program and Night Patrols in that order

- there is very strong quantitative evidence to indicate that the impact of increased services/change under the NTER over the past three years has been greater in small and medium sized communities (population less than 700) than it has been in the larger centres. This finding is particularly strong for changes in community functioning and safety. It is not possible to be definitive about why this is the case, however it may be partially because smaller communities were coming off a lower base of services and infrastructure. An element is also likely to be that the social complexity of large communities, with a mixture of clan groupings, create dysfunction which obscures the benefits that can be derived from the new service provision and infrastructure. Finally there is the simple fact that in a larger community it is easier for individuals to be unaware of, and unaffected by changes that occur
- improvements in community functioning, leadership and respect for elders were also widely recognised, with an average of 66% of respondents agreeing that these aspects of community life have improved and
- a majority (57.2%) agree that there is less drinking alcohol in communities. However many stress that a lot of drinkers have left remote communities to live in towns where alcohol can be more easily accessed. This result has particularly strong variation across individual communities.

There was also considerable feedback on changes that have not worked to improve life, or where individuals had not benefitted from changes implemented in the community:

- many respondents reported that they have less control over their community services and decision making, and that as a result they are disempowered, and their community leaders can no longer provide meaningful direction for the community
- the combination of the implementation of the NTER and the demise of local Community Councils (through the change to local governance by the Shire structure) has left many respondents, particularly middle aged men, feeling powerless and angry
- many respondents report receiving poor service delivery through the Shires, with high staff turnover, slow repairs and inadequate consultation being the most often cited deficits
- the most common reasons given for the perception that nothing had changed were continuing to live in overcrowded housing, having lost a job, and community dysfunction and
- the majority of respondents indicated that the consumption of marijuana in their communities has increased over the last three years.

13.2 Challenges

- the most serious challenges identified in many communities and across the sample as a whole relate to young people. The behaviours nominated in survey as problematic are sending nasty text messages - 76.1% (adjusted to exclude sites with no mobile phone coverage), young people not listening to their parents and older people (70.5%), kids being out at night (64.5%), and too much gunja (61.7%). Qualitative feedback clearly indicates the power of having a job to reduce individual's use of alcohol and marijuana, and increase their constructive engagement with family and community. This is recognised by many respondents who clearly believe that young people should be working. There are three key challenges to increasing the number of young people in work, the first is the availability of jobs, the second is developing skills that make individuals employable, and the third is making individual young people want to work. A lot of qualitative material was gathered that described how young people don't want to work, and that they prefer to 'party'. It is an enormous challenge to create conditions in which the party lifestyle is less viable, and work is a realistic option
- the provision of activities for young people also comes through clearly as a challenge, and was voted as the second most serious challenge. Qualitative feedback suggests that the key challenge for youth programs is getting sufficient resourcing, the right staff, and the right balance of local Indigenous workers and experienced youth workers
- poor housing was also identified as a serious challenge. The need for housing was voted as the most serious challenge facing communities by a considerable margin. Improved housing was identified as one of the most positive changes to have occurred over the last three years, but respondents clearly identified the need for continuing improvement and
- inadequate roads were also voted as a serious challenge.

13.3 Services

- respondents clearly identified improved service provision as the most important change to have taken place over the last three years. They also nominate ongoing improvement, particularly in housing, employment and training, and activities for young people as the most important challenges still facing their communities
- night Patrols were found to be the service that has been most effective in improving safety (74.8%), followed by Safe houses (69.9%) and youth diversions (65.4%). The strengths of Night Patrols are seen to be their cultural competence and the range of roles that they fill within any given community. Youth programs are perceived as important in keeping children and young people off the streets, particularly at night. The activities are also seen as enhancing communities working together and decreasing substance use among young people
- qualitative data also indicates that new police stations and increased numbers of police have also been effective in improving safety and limiting the amount of alcohol consumed within

community boundaries. However the quantitative results for this question are problematic because of the range of different policing arrangements in place across communities

- the services that were nominated as 'Easier to get help now than three years ago' are schools (83.3%); Centrelink (80.6%); clinics (78.3%); the police (76.3%) and stores (also 76.2%). Qualitative data stress the key role that Centrelink and the Basics Card have played in improving people's ability to manage their money and purchase more food and clothing than they were able to prior to the Basics Card. Feedback on stores indicate that people appreciate the increased amount of fresh food, however store prices are very high, and many people find it difficult to buy healthy food because it is more expensive than junk food. Some people struggle to buy enough food at all and
- the most persistent feedback on the sort of service that is needed is for drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and parenting support services.

13.4 Safety

- almost three quarters (72.6%) of respondents report that safety has improved in their community over the last three years. This proportion decreases significantly as community population increases, however even in the largest communities a significant majority (62.7%) report that safety has improved
- qualitative feedback indicates that many respondents perceive that small communities are the safest because they tend to be family based communities that have their own mechanisms for responding to threats. Also in small communities everyone knows each other, whereas in large communities there are a lot of visitors. Visitors are seen as a source of threat, and some people report feeling less safe when they visit other communities than they do in their home community
- respondents report high levels of feeling safe at home in the day, and slightly lower for being at home at night (88.4% and 72.8% respectively). The proportion of respondents rating their safety as 'safe all the time' combined with 'safe some of the time' tended to be slightly higher than the results of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008. However the results are not directly comparable because the NATSISS specifies that the respondent is alone, whereas this survey does not
- high levels of safety were also reported for places in the community where people are most likely to go during their day to day lives – the school, store, Centrelink and so on. Youth drop in centres, sporting events and community meetings where people might be arguing are perceived as less safe. It is interesting to note that two of these locations revolve around young people, which reinforces the earlier finding of the centrality of young people and their behaviour in efforts to improve community functioning

- young women are seen as the least safe demographic group in the community, closely followed by young men (75.7% and 79.7% combined 'safe some of the time' and 'safe all of the time' respectively). Children are seen as the next most at risk group, with 80.5% being perceived as safe. Men, women, old men and old women have fairly comparable levels of safety, with an average of 86.4%
- there is a strongly significant relationship between the perceived levels of safety of children, young women and young men and the population size of the community, with 22.5%, 36.8% and 30.1% respectively of respondents perceiving members of these demographic groups as unsafe in communities with a population over 1100. Compared to 8.7%, 6.3% and 5.8% in communities with populations below 350
- qualitative feedback indicates that fighting within peer groups is a key risk for safety. Children fight with each other, and parents often become involved and the fight spreads on family lines. Young people fight with same sex peers and in couples. Jealousy and postings on internet chat sites and/or text messages are key trigger points for these fights. Fighting across demographic groups also occurs, but much less regularly and
- a wide range of environmental threats were identified. The most common one is 'cheeky' dogs, which limit people walking around the community, and are seen as a particular risk for young children playing outside. Horses, crocodiles, buffaloes, camels and snakes are also perceived as threats.

13.5 Leadership

- the majority of respondents feel that there is more respect for elders (64.3%), and that leadership is stronger (61.0%) than three years ago. However when this is analysed by size of community it is clear that the most positive changes are seen in small communities, and in larger communities the majority of people perceive that there is less respect for elders (51.3%)
- qualitative feedback suggests that strong leadership is perceived as calling community meetings to address issues, having personal behaviour that provides a good role model, and as 'standing up for' the community in other contexts and
- despite the quantitative result suggesting that respect for elders and leadership have improved, qualitative comment largely explains a perceived lessening of respect and leadership. The key reasons given why there is less respect and a weaker leadership are because many of the old people are dying, and young people are struggling to replace them; because of the advent of the Shires and the associated demise of local councils mean that community meetings are rarely called; and because young people are poorly educated and disengaged, and have lost their respect of both elders and community leaders.

13.6 Children

- the survey results indicate consistent perceptions of improvement in several key aspects in children's quality of life. A majority (57%) of respondents consider that they are healthier, 68.8% believe that they eat more food, 65.8% perceive them to be more active, 63.1% that they attend school more often, and finally 61.6% that they are happier than three years ago
- the Basics Card, and its impact in facilitating more money being spent on food, is given as a reason why many children are eating more. The benefits of this are perceived to flow through to improved health. However some commentators note that while kids are eating more, a lot of what they eat is not healthy food, but more likely to be 'junk'. School nutrition programs and crèche are also given credit for the improvement in the amount of food children eat and their health, with school nutrition programs being voted as the fifth most important positive change over the last three years
- there is some qualitative evidence to suggest that when parents are able to provide their children with more food they also step up their commitment to getting their children to school, and other aspects of being a more vigilant parent
- perceptions of school attendance are often at variance with the facts (indicated in school attendance data). School attendance was not seen as a big problem in most communities (46.4% report that it is a 'big' or 'very big' problem); and this may be because people think that more children are going to school, and that they do not need to worry. There may be a case for widely publicising school attendance data within each community
- there is a sharp decline in the perception of increased school attendance in larger communities, with 20.1% of respondents in communities with a population of over 1100 judging that fewer children are attending school, compared to 2.9% in communities with fewer than 350 people
- reasons given for poor school attendance were bullying between children at school (some of which is the continuation of family fights within the community), and some parents being focused on gambling and substance use, rather than getting their kids to school
- school bus runs, letting parents know when their children are not at school, parents attending school with their children, closing the store when school attendance is very low, refusing to serve school aged children at the store within school time, and the school nutrition program were all seen as strategies that work to improve school attendance and
- qualitative data indicate that there is still concern over some children being neglected, mainly by parents who gamble, drink alcohol and smoke marijuana to excess.

13.7 Substance Use

- there is a perception that there is less drinking now than three years ago by the majority of respondents (57.2%). The most serious alcohol related problem is reported to be fighting, followed by health impacts
- the changes to laws governing alcohol consumption (grog rules) are perceived by 43.4% of respondents to have made a difference to levels of alcohol consumption in their community. However many respondents make the point that people may not actually be drinking less overall, but they are drinking less within community boundaries, and this makes life safer for many community residents. A higher police presence and resulting enforcement of 'grog rules' was also credited with having made a difference to the amount of alcohol consumed within community boundaries. There was some qualitative feedback that considerable numbers of people have left their 'dry' communities to travel to larger towns where there is easy access to alcohol
- there is some evidence to suggest that changes to alcohol rules at community clubs have had more impact than prohibiting consumption of alcohol within community boundaries, and enforcing that prohibition. Communities with alcohol outlets recorded 66.8% of people who perceive that changes to grog rules have made a difference, compared to 43.7% in 'dry' communities
- there is strong evidence that alcohol problems are at different levels in different communities. Those communities with a population level above 700 residents are significantly more likely to experience alcohol related problems 'most of the time'. Similarly those communities that have alcohol outlets are significantly more likely to experience alcohol problems 'most of the time' (22.6% for communities with outlets, 12.4% for those without) and
- the majority of respondents report that they disagree with the statement that marijuana use has declined over the last three years, and 61.7% of respondents view it as a 'very big' or 'big' problem. The most severe problem associated with marijuana use is 'going mad'. Marijuana is perceived to be more of a young people's issue, with people commenting that excessive use makes young people disinclined to work or to engage in cultural activities. Marijuana use follows the same trend as alcohol in the extent of the problem in communities of different sizes, with communities with over 700 residents significantly more likely to experience problems 'most of the time'. In the rating of social problem marijuana is perceived as a more serious problem than alcohol in (61.1% and 57.2% 'very big' + 'big' respectively).

13.8 Attitudes to violence

- the large majority of people do not sanction people hitting each other. However an average of 20% of respondents for each question felt that it is OK to hit your partner. Feedback from data collectors also suggests that some of the responses may have been what the participant thought that they ought to say, rather than what they really thought – which suggests that the true level of sanction for inter-personal violence may be higher than appears here and
- within the general perception that violence is not an acceptable way to solve conflicts there are some clear areas where a different cultural framework is evident. There is significantly higher level of agreement to violence for one scenario – for a woman to hit a man who has wasted a lot of money. There is also a significantly lower level of acceptance for a man to hit a woman who is arguing or refusing to obey.

14. Conclusion

This report provides a primary analysis of the data that was gathered through the survey and participatory process. The results from these data present a mixed picture of some triumphs and some seemingly intractable problems continuing to create difficulties for community residents.

The findings also raise a number of questions that need to be considered in more depth. The most obvious of these is to ask what characteristics of very large communities are driving the poor results that those communities have tended to record in many areas of this survey when results from larger communities are compared to smaller communities. There may be some answers to this question that can be gleaned from a secondary analysis of this data. However it is most likely that this question will need to be answered through further research.

Another question raised through the findings presented is to further explore the impact of community based alcohol outlets on alcohol consumption and alcohol related problems. With the current political environment creating conditions for the possible expansion of community based alcohol outlets an informed understanding of this issue is crucial. Here again some insight can be found within the dataset presented here, however further research will be needed.

Finally, acknowledgement needs to be made of the achievements of this survey. It has been a large project that has made important contributions to the creation of an evidence base on which good policy can be built. It has also created a comprehensive resource that can, and will, be used at the community level to inform future development in the sixteen participating communities.

Appendix 1- Frequencies and percentages for all questions

CHANGES

Question 7: Responses to ‘Can you tell us if these things have changed in your community in the past three years?’ by frequency and percent

Variable	Strongly Agree		Agree A Bit		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know		No Response	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
School is better	774	57.6	345	25.7	112	8.3	49	3.6	51	3.8	12	0.9
Easier to get help from Centrelink	739	55.0	344	25.6	96	7.1	42	3.1	106	7.9	16	1.2
Easier to get help at the clinic	688	51.2	364	27.1	154	11.5	64	4.8	58	4.3	15	1.1
Easier to get help from the Police	611	45.5	414	30.8	174	13.0	83	6.2	51	3.8	10	0.7
Store is better	619	46.1	404	30.1	184	13.7	87	6.5	37	2.7	13	1.0
More kids being looked after properly	581	43.3	429	31.9	186	13.8	71	5.3	68	5.1	8	0.6
Community is safer	550	41.0	424	31.6	197	14.7	97	7.2	63	4.7	12	0.9
Community is working better together	543	40.4	337	28.1	213	15.9	137	10.2	63	4.7	10	0.7
More respect for elders	489	36.4	375	27.9	261	19.4	152	11.3	59	4.4	7	0.6
Less people making trouble	336	25.0	487	36.3	256	19.1	161	12.0	93	6.9	10	0.7
Community leaders are stronger	443	33.0	376	28.0	280	20.8	144	10.7	86	6.4	14	1.0
Less drinking grog	320	23.8	449	33.4	281	20.9	145	10.8	75	5.6	73	5.4
Less family fighting	313	23.3	474	35.3	287	21.4	176	13.1	82	6.1	11	0.8
Less sniffing petrol	228	17.0	217	16.2	168	12.5	156	11.6	291	21.7	283	21.1
Less smoking gunja	252	18.8	269	20.0	274	20.4	362	24.3	194	14.4	20	2.1

N=1343

Question 8: Responses to ‘Do you think these things have made a difference to safety in your community’ by frequency and percent

Variable	A big difference		A little bit of difference		No difference		Made it worse		Don't know		No response	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Safe house (n= 777)	321	41.3	222	28.6	93	12.0	12	1.5	79	10.2	50	6.4
New grog rules	315	23.5	323	24.1	255	19.0	78	5.8	174	13.0	198	14.6
New rules for sexy pictures	118	8.8	103	7.7	242	18.0	149	11.1	639	47.6	91	6.8
Better Night Patrols	582	43.3	423	31.5	225	16.8	45	3.4	49	3.6	19	1.4
New police station (n=350)	170	48.6	110	31.4	46	13.1	10	2.9	10	2.9	4	1.1
Additional police (n= 405)	131	32.3	104	25.7	103	25.4	24	5.9	36	8.9	7	1.9
More things for young people to	532	39.6	346	25.8	323	24.1	36	2.7	88	6.6	18	1.3

N=1343 unless specified

Question 9: Responses to ‘In the past three years have you noticed any of these changes with children (or for yourself, if speaking to a 15 – 19 year old?) by frequency and percent

Variable	More		About the same		Less		No response	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Health	763	57.0	456	34.0	82	6.1	42	3.1
Food	924	68.8	316	23.5	67	5.0	36	2.7
Activity	884	65.8	333	24.8	92	6.9	34	2.5
School attendance	847	63.1	332	24.7	134	10.1	30	2.2
Happiness	827	61.6	393	29.3	84	6.3	39	2.9

N=1343

VALUES

Question 10: Responses to 'Please tell me how important these things are to you and your family'. by frequency and percent

Variable	Very important		Important		Not really important		Not important at all		Don't know		No response	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Having a strong connection to your culture, living traditionally, speaking language	1225	91.2	70	5.2	14	1.0	6	0.4	15	1.1	13	1.0
Being close to family and friends	1241	92.4	55	4.1	15	1.1	10	0.7	10	0.7	12	0.9
Buying healthy food	1115	83.0	177	13.2	28	2.1	4	0.3	5	0.4	14	1.1
Kids being able to read write and speak English	1092	81.3	177	13.2	41	3.1	8	0.6	11	0.8	14	1.0
Having a proper job	1090	81.2	143	10.6	44	3.3	10	0.7	41	3.1	15	1.1
More housing	1122	83.5	108	8.0	50	3.7	7	0.5	30	2.2	26	1.9

N=1343

SAFETY

Question 11: Response to 'How safe do you feel in the following situations in your community?' by frequency and percent

Variable	Safe		A bit safe		A little bit not safe		Not safe		Don't know		No response	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Being home in daytime	1187	88.4	89	6.6	19	1.4	19	1.4	14	1.0	15	1.1
Being home at night time	978	72.8	194	14.4	89	6.6	55	4.1	10	0.7	17	1.3
Walking around in the daytime	1111	82.7	126	9.4	37	2.8	31	2.3	19	1.4	19	1.4
Walking around at night time	486	36.2	263	19.6	197	14.7	335	24.9	41	3.1	21	1.6
Going to the shop	1191	88.7	91	6.8	22	1.6	11	0.8	13	1.0	15	1.1
Going to the school	1188	88.5	68	5.1	23	1.7	14	1.0	29	2.2	21	1.5
Going to the clinic	1221	90.9	70	5.2	13	1.0	9	0.7	9	0.7	21	1.5
Going to Centrelink or Shire offices	1178	87.7	94	7.0	23	1.7	8	0.6	27	2.0	13	1.0
Being at a community sporting event	942	70.1	219	16.3	94	7.0	34	2.5	32	2.4	22	1.7
Being at a community meeting when people might be arguing	447	33.3	385	28.7	217	16.2	222	16.5	49	3.6	23	1.6
At the playground/football oval/basketball court	888	66.1	236	17.6	115	8.6	55	4.1	33	2.5	16	1.2
Youth drop in centre	741	55.2	129	9.6	49	3.6	27	2.0	177	13.2	220	16.4

N=1343

Question 12: Response to ‘How safe you think your community is for people of different ages?’ by frequency and percent

Type of person	Safe all the time		Safe some of the time		Not safe of the time		Not all the time		Don't know		No response	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Little kids	667	49.7	414	30.8	146	10.9	73	5.4	20	1.5	23	1.7
Young fellas	595	44.3	455	33.9	178	13.3	54	4.0	35	2.6	26	1.9
Young women	552	41.1	445	33.1	217	16.2	67	5.0	35	2.6	27	2.0
Women	750	55.8	369	27.5	131	9.8	35	2.6	33	2.5	25	1.9
Men	847	63.1	323	24.1	85	6.3	25	1.9	36	2.7	27	2.0
Old men	919	68.4	217	16.2	103	7.7	41	3.1	38	2.8	25	1.9
Old women	907	67.6	221	16.5	109	8.1	46	3.4	33	2.5	27	1.9

N=1343

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Question 13: Response to 'Tell me which of these is still a problem in your community' by frequency and percent

Problem	Very big problem		Big Problem		Small Problem		Not a problem		Don't know		No response	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Young people not listening to their parents and older people	633	47.1	314	23.4	257	19.1	88	6.6	32	2.4	19	1.4
Kids being out at night	589	43.9	277	20.6	270	20.1	162	12.1	27	2.0	18	1.3
Drugs – too much gunja	585	43.6	243	18.1	215	16.0	159	11.8	115	8.6	26	1.9
People sending nasty phone messages	629	46.8	147	10.9	94	7.0	217	16.2	109	8.1	147	10.9
Other types of family fighting	345	25.7	378	28.2	445	33.1	118	8.8	40	3.0	17	1.3
Men hurting women	399	29.7	306	22.8	419	31.2	127	9.5	70	5.2	22	1.6
Drinking too much grog	435	32.4	265	19.7	399	29.7	140	10.4	38	2.8	66	4.9
Humbugging old people	390	29.0	272	20.3	294	21.9	298	22.2	70	5.2	19	1.4
Kids not going to school	303	22.6	320	23.8	424	31.6	252	18.8	25	1.9	19	1.4
Cars 'spinning round' or other dangerous driving	350	26.1	218	16.2	293	21.8	346	25.8	108	8.0	29	2.2
Sorcery	348	25.9	190	14.1	186	13.8	354	26.4	228	17.0	37	2.8
Kids not being looked after properly	273	20.3	242	18.0	454	33.8	289	21.5	67	5.0	18	1.3
Payback	312	23.2	145	10.8	214	15.9	442	32.9	187	13.9	43	3.2
Adults hurting kids or younger people	224	16.7	231	17.2	410	30.5	351	26.1	101	7.5	26	1.9
Young people hurting older people	236	17.6	214	15.9	303	22.6	472	35.1	97	7.2	21	1.6
Too much sniffing petrol, glue, paint	192	14.3	123	9.2	209	15.6	375	27.9	242	18.0	202	15.0

N=1343

Question 14: Response to ‘How often does grog cause a problem for your family?’ by frequency and percent

Most of the time		Some of the time		None of the time		Don't know/don't want to say		No response	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
192	14.3	541	40.3	415	30.9	158	11.8	37	2.8

N=1343

Question 15: Response to ‘What grog problems are there in your family?’ by frequency and percent

Problem	Very big problem (happens all the time)		Big problem (happens a lot of the time)		Small problem (happens a bit of the time)		Not a problem (doesn't happen here)		Don't know		Not asked	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Money problem	261	19.4	203	15.1	194	14.4	71	5.3	32	2.4	582	43.3
Trouble in the house – partying, smashing things	199	14.8	167	12.4	207	15.4	163	12.1	28	2.1	579	43.1
Husband/wife; boyfriend/girlfriend troubles	268	20.0	184	13.7	190	14.1	92	6.9	29	2.2	580	43.1
Family fighting or arguing	246	18.3	209	15.6	243	18.1	53	3.9	12	0.9	580	43.2
Not enough food in the house	193	14.4	178	13.3	239	17.8	130	9.7	24	1.8	579	43.0
No one to look after the kids	152	11.3	138	10.3	237	17.6	197	14.7	37	2.8	582	43.3
Make them sick	215	16.0	161	12.0	232	17.3	94	7.0	56	4.2	585	43.5
Grog Shakes	226	16.8	144	10.7	173	12.9	137	10.2	78	5.8	585	43.6

Question 16: Response to ‘How often does gunja cause a problem for your family?’ by frequency and percent

Most of the time		Some of the time		None of the time		Don't know/don't want to say		No response	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
223	16.6	407	30.3	478	35.6	176	13.1	59	4.3

N=1343

Question 17: Response to “What gunja problems are there in your family?” by frequency and percent

Problem	Very big problem (happens all the time)		Big problem (happens a lot of the time)		Small problem (happens a bit of the time)		Not a problem (doesn't happen here)		Don't know		Not asked	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Money problem	314	23.5	155	11.5	144	10.7	37	2.8	18	1.3	675	50.2
Trouble in the house – partying, smashing things	182	13.6	156	11.6	168	12.5	140	10.4	21	1.6	676	50.3
Husband/wife; boyfriend/girlfriend troubles	233	17.3	173	12.9	144	10.8	86	6.4	35	2.6	672	50.0
Family fighting or arguing	225	16.8	173	12.9	185	13.8	68	5.1	18	1.3	674	50.1
Not enough food in the house	198	14.7	166	12.4	179	13.3	95	7.1	28	2.1	677	50.4
No one to look after the kids	166	12.4	123	9.2	193	14.4	140	10.4	45	3.4	676	50.3
Make them sick	203	15.1	149	11.1	168	12.5	85	6.4	61	4.5	677	50.3
Going Mad	315	23.5	123	9.2	97	7.2	79	6.0	45	3.4	684	50.7

ATTITUDES TO VIOLENCE

Question 19: Responses to 'Attitudes to violence – men and women hitting their partners' by frequency and percent

MEN'S SIDE	Yes		No		Don't know		No response	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
If she argues with or refuses to obey him is it OK for him to hit her	122	9.1	1060	79.0	123	9.1	38	2.8
If she wastes a lot of money on gambling/alcohol/drugs is it OK for him to hit her	267	19.9	861	64.1	172	12.8	43	2.8
If she doesn't look after the kids properly is it OK for him to hit her	302	22.5	844	62.9	157	11.7	40	2.9
If she calls him names and swearing is it OK for him to hit her	282	21.4	854	63.7	163	12.1	44	2.8
If she throws something at him or hits him, is it OK for him to hit her	276	20.6	849	63.4	175	13.0	43	2.9
If she is jealous, is it OK for him to hit her	242	18.0	844	63.1	213	15.9	44	3.1
WOMEN'S SIDE	Yes		No		Don't know		No response	
If he argues with or refuses to obey her is it OK for her to hit him	202	15.0	934	69.7	165	12.4	42	2.9
If he wastes a lot of money on gambling/alcohol/drugs is it OK for her to hit him	351	26.4	801	59.7	148	11.0	43	2.9
If he doesn't look after the kids properly is it OK for her to hit him	294	21.9	837	62.5	168	12.5	44	3.1
If he calls her names and swearing is it OK for her to hit him	261	19.4	866	64.7	173	12.9	43	3.0
If he throws something at her or hits her, is it OK for her to hit him	318	23.7	815	60.8	167	12.4	43	3.1
If he is jealous, is it OK for her to hit him	306	22.8	803	59.9	189	14.1	45	3.3

Question 22: Responses to ‘How do you feel when you see people hitting each other?’ by frequency and percent

	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Don't know		No response	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I think that it is not my business	317	24.4	378	29.2	320	24.6	156	12.0	128	9.8	44	3.3
I feel that I am not safe	351	27.0	487	37.4	243	18.7	124	9.5	97	7.5	41	3.1
I think that she/he has a right to hit them	121	9.3	154	11.9	486	37.5	405	31.2	131	10.1	46	3.4
I feel no good	663	49.4	381	28.4	122	9.1	69	5.1	59	4.5	49	3.5
I try to stop them fighting	513	38.2	404	30.1	185	13.8	101	7.6	95	7.1	45	3.2
I think they just shouldn't hit each other	739	55.0	319	24.0	84	6.3	85	6.3	69	5.1	47	3.3

N=1343

EXPERIENCES OF CRIME AND TROUBLE

Question 24: Response to 'In the last year did anyone start a fight with you?' by frequency and percent

Yes		No		Don't want to answer		No response	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
165	12.3	1026	76.7	109	8.2	43	2.8

N=1343

Question 25: Response to 'Did you report this to the police?' by frequency and percent

Yes		No		Don't want to answer		No response	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
101	7.5	152	11.3	60	4.6	1030	76.6

N=1343

WHAT DO YOU THINK

Question 26: Response to 'Do you think your community is on the way up or the way down?' by frequency and percent

Way up		No change		Way down		No response	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
637	47.4	565	42.1	102	7.6	39	2.9

N=1343

Question 26: Response to 'Do you think your own life is on the way up or the way down?'

Way up		No change		Way down		No response	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
789	58.7	417	31.1	82	6.2	55	4.1

N=1343

Appendix 2

Community Safety and Wellbeing Survey

Part of the

Community Safety and Wellbeing research project

CODE:

ABOUT YOU

First we want to ask a bit about you.

1. Gender

Female

Male

2. Age (Circle one)

15 – 19

35 – 39

0 – 54

20 – 24

40 – 44

55 – 59

25 – 29

45 – 49

60 – 64

30 – 34

50 – 54

65 and over

3. Marital status

Married / partner

Separated

Single

Partner died

4. Do you work here?

Yes

No

5. In the last year, where have you mainly lived?

- In this community
- Somewhere that is not this community
- Sleeping rough / have no place to live

6. Who do you live with at the moment? Please put a tick against all of the choices that apply to you.

- Living with spouse / partner
- Living with your children
- Living with your parents
- Living with other family
- Living with friends
- Living on your own



CHANGES

These questions are about whether you think <insert community> has changed since 2007

7. Can you tell us if these things have changed in your community in the past 3 years:

	Strongly agree	Agree a bit	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Less people are making trouble than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
There is less family fighting than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
People are drinking less grog than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
People are smoking less gunja than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
People are sniffing petrol less than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
More kids are being looked after properly than they were 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
There is more respect for elders than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
Community leaders are stronger than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
The community is working better together to fix problems than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
The community is safer than it was three years ago	4	3	2	1	0
It is easier to get help at the clinic than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
It is easier to get help from the police than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
It is easier to get help from Centrelink than it was 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
The school is better than it was 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0
The store is better than 3 years ago	4	3	2	1	0

Comments (explore why things are better or worse)

The next question is about the different services in <insert community>.

8. Do you think that these things have made a difference to safety in <insert community>?
(only ask those that apply in this community)

	A big difference	A little bit of difference	No difference	Made it worse	Don't know
Safe house	4	3	2	1	0
New grog rules	4	3	2	1	0
New rules for sexy pictures and movies	4	3	2	1	0
Better night patrols	4	3	2	1	0
New police station	4	3	2	1	0
Additional police	4	3	2	1	0
More things for young people to do	4	3	2	1	0

Comments

VALUES

10. Please tell me how important the following things are to you and your family

	Very important	Somewhat Important	Not so important	Not important at all	Don't know
Having a strong connection to your culture and living traditionally, speaking language	4	3	2	1	0
Being close to family and friends	4	3	2	1	0
Buying healthy food	4	3	2	1	0
Kids being able to read, write and speak in English	4	3	2	1	0
Having a proper job	4	3	2	1	0
Housing	4	3	2	1	0
Anything else _____	4	3	2	1	0

Comments

SAFETY

These questions are about how safe <insert community> is now.

11. How safe do you feel in the following situations in your community?

	Safe	A bit safe	A little bit not safe	Not safe	Don't know
Being home in daytime	4	3	2	1	0
Being home at night time	4	3	2	1	0
Walking around in the daytime	4	3	2	1	0
Walking around at night time	4	3	2	1	0
Going to the shop	4	3	2	1	0
Going to the school	4	3	2	1	0
Going to the clinic	4	3	2	1	0
Going to Centrelink or Shire offices	4	3	2	1	0
Being at a community sporting event	4	3	2	1	0
Being at a community meeting when people might be arguing	4	3	2	1	0
At the playground/football oval/basketball court	4	3	2	1	0
Youth drop in centre	4	3	2	1	0

Comments

12. How safe you think your community is for people of different ages

Type of person	Safe all the time	Safe some of the time	Not safe some of the time	Not safe all the time	Don't know
Little kids	4	3	2	1	0
Young fellas	4	3	2	1	0
Young women	4	3	2	1	0
Women	4	3	2	1	0
Men	4	3	2	1	0
Old men	4	3	2	1	0
Old women	4	3	2	1	0

Comments

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

This next part of the survey is asking you what things you think might be keeping <insert community> back – making it a worse place to live.

13. Tell me which of these are still a problem in <insert community>.

Problem	Very big problem (happens all the time)	Big problem (happens a lot of the time)	Small problem (happens a bit of the time)	Not a problem (doesn't happen here)	Don't know
Men hurting women	4	3	2	1	0
Other types of family fighting	4	3	2	1	0
Adults hurting kids or younger people	4	3	2	1	0
Young people hurting older people	4	3	2	1	0
Young people not listening to their parents and older people	4	3	2	1	0
Drinking too much grog	4	3	2	1	0
Drugs - too much gunja	4	3	2	1	0
Too much sniffing petrol, glue, paint	4	3	2	1	0
Humbugging old people	4	3	2	1	0
Kids not being looked after properly	4	3	2	1	0
Kids being out at night	4	3	2	1	0
Kids not going to school	4	3	2	1	0
'Spinning round' or other dangerous	4	3	2	1	0

Problem	Very big problem (happens all the time)	Big problem (happens a lot of the time)	Small problem (happens a bit of the time)	Not a problem (doesn't happen here)	Don't know
driving					
People sending nasty phone messages and trying to make other people jealous	4	3	2	1	0
Sorcery (Use local word)	4	3	2	1	0
Payback	4	3	2	1	0
Other – please specify	4	3	2	1	0

Comments

Prompt – do you think there are enough services in <insert community> to help people who have any of these problems?

These next questions are just about grog and gunja and your family.

14. How often does grog cause problems for your family?

- None of the time (Skip to Q16)
- Some of the time (Go to Q15)
- Most of the time (Go to Q15)
- Don't know/don't want to say (Skip to Q16)

15. What grog problems are there in your family?

(Answer these questions if answered 'some of the time' or 'most of the time' for question 14)

Problem	Very big problem (happens all the time)	Big problem (happens a lot of the time)	Small problem (happens a bit of the time)	Not a problem (doesn't happen here)	Don't know
Money problem	4	3	2	1	0
Trouble in the house – partying, smashing things	4	3	2	1	0
Husband/wife; boyfriend/girlfriend troubles	4	3	2	1	0
Family fighting or arguing	4	3	2	1	0
Not enough food in the house	4	3	2	1	0
No one to look after the kids	4	3	2	1	0
Make them sick	4	3	2	1	0
Grog Shakes	4	3	2	1	0

16. How often does gunja cause problems for your family?

- None of the time (Skip to Q18)
- Some of the time (Go to Q17)
- Most of the time (Go to Q17)
- Don't know/don't want to say (Skip to Q18)

17. That gunja problems are there in your family?

(Answer these questions if answered 'some of the time' or 'most of the time' for question 16)

Problem	Very big problem (happens all the time)	Big problem (happens a lot of the time)	Small problem (happens a bit of the time)	Not a problem (doesn't happen here)	Don't know
Money problem	4	3	2	1	0
Trouble in the house – partying, smashing things,	4	3	2	1	0
Husband/wife; boyfriend/girlfriend troubles	4	3	2	1	0
Family fighting or arguing	4	3	2	1	0
Not enough food in the house	4	3	2	1	0
No one to look after the kids	4	3	2	1	0
Make them sick	4	3	2	1	0
Going mad	4	3	2	1	0

18. Is there anywhere you can go to get help with any of these problems? Where?

ATTITUDES TO VIOLENCE

This part of the survey is asking you what you think about why people hit each other and if it is OK. Your answers to this help staff and people in government to work out what is the best way to help people in remote communities to live longer and happier lives.

19. Men and women hitting their partners

For each of these please tell us what you think.

MEN'S SIDE	Yes	No	Don't know
If she argues with or refuses to obey him is it OK for him to hit her			
If she wastes a lot of money on gambling/alcohol/drugs is it OK for him to hit her			
If she doesn't look after the kids properly is it OK for him to hit her			
If she calls him names and swearing is it OK for him to hit her			
If she throws something at him or hits him, is it OK for him to hit her			
If she is jealous, is it OK for him to hit her			
WOMEN'S SIDE	Yes	No	Don't know
If he argues with or refuses to obey her is it OK for her to hit him			
If he wastes a lot of money on gambling/alcohol/drugs is it OK for her to hit him			
If he doesn't look after the kids properly is it OK for her to hit him			
If he calls her names and swearing is it OK for her to hit him			
If he throws something at her or hits her, is it OK for her to hit him			
If he is jealous, is it OK for her to hit him			

20. What else can men and women do to sort out arguments instead of hurting each other?

21. Is there any help for women if they get hurt? If so, where, and who do they go to?

22. How do you feel when you see people hitting each other

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I think that its not my business	4	3	2	1	0
I feel that I am not safe	4	3	2	1	0
I think that He /She has a right to hit them	4	3	2	1	0
I feel no good	4	3	2	1	0
I try to stop them fighting	4	3	2	1	0
I think they just shouldn't hit each other	4	3	2	1	0

EXPERIENCES OF CRIME AND TROUBLE

We have talked a bit about the problems in <insert name of community>. Now we want to ask you who helps out with these problems.

23. If you were frightened for yourself and your family in the middle of the night who would you go to for help?

24. In the last year, did anyone start a fight with you or beat you up?

- Yes
- No (Skip to Q 26)
- Don't want to answer (Skip to Q 26)

25. Did you report this to the police?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

26. After all these questions and thinking about <insert community> and how things have changed, do you think <insert community> is on the way up, or on the way down.

- Way up
- Way down
- No change

Why?

27. What about you? Has your life got better now than it was three years ago?

- Way up
- Way down
- No change

Why?



WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THE FUTURE

28. The government would like to hear your ideas on what you think are the 3 most important things needed to make this community more safe?

1

2

3

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME