



“The Only Queer From A CALD Background”:

Addressing Sexuality, Sexual Health and
Homophobia Within CALD Communities
in St George and Sutherland

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A report for the GLYSSN Project at St George Youth Services Inc.

SOUTH EASTERN SYDNEY
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NSW HEALTH



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Contents

List of tables.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Background.....	5
Method.....	6
Web Based Literature Review	9
SSAYP CALD Project Questionnaire	16
SSAYP CALD Focused GLYSSN Meetings.....	18
Target group results.....	21
Arabic and GLBT.....	21
Questionnaire for CALD SSAYP.....	21
Interview of SSAYP CALD Project Community Contact: Salwa.....	21
Interview of CALD SSAYP: Karim.....	23
Interview of CALD SSAYP: Mike.....	27
Chinese and GLBT.....	29
Questionnaire for CALD SSAYP.....	29
Interview of SSAYP CALD Project Community Contact: Ann.....	30
Interview of CALD SSAYP: Michelle.....	32
Macedonian and GLBT.....	34
Interview of SSAYP CALD Project Community Contact : Elizabeth.....	34
Macedonian web based forum	37
Oceanic and GLBT.....	40
Questionnaire for CALD SSAYP.....	40
Interview of SSAYP CALD Project Community Contact: Tui.....	41
Interview of CALD SSAYP: Kaupiri	42
Service Provider Training Sessions.....	45
Twenty10's <i>Ready or Not</i> Training program.....	45
Twenty10's <i>Ready or Not</i> Evaluation.....	45
Concluding Remarks and Recommendations.....	55
Bibliography.....	57
Biographies.....	58
Appendices.....	59
Appendix A: Web-page addressing the relationship.....	59
Appendix B: SSAYP CALD Project Questionnaire	61
Appendix C: Twenty10's <i>Ready or Not</i> training program overview.....	64

List of Figures & Tables

Figure 1. Project method and sequence.....	7
Table 1. What it's like to be GLBT in St George/Sutherland.....	45
Table 2. Participant demographics.....	46
Table 3. Participant training goals.....	47
Table 4. Acquired learning and development.....	48
Table 5. Learning outcomes.....	49
Table 6. Future learning needs.....	50
Table 7. What participants liked most about the training.....	51
Table 8. What participants liked least about the training.....	51
Table 9. Usefulness of provided resources	52
Table 10. What participants would like added to the program.....	53
Table 11. What participants would like removed from the program.....	53
Table 12. Additional comments.....	53

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Background

The findings of The Australia Institute's report *Mapping Homophobia in Australia* (2005) indicated that the highest rate of homophobia within Sydney was found amongst residents within Sydney's Southern suburbs (including Sutherland and St George). Within this study, homophobia was defined as holding the belief that being same-sex attracted is immoral.

The implication of this for GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender) young people within Sutherland and St George is highlighted by GLYSSN's (2004) report *Beaches, Bushland and Isolation: A Report on the Needs of Same-Sex Attracted Young People in St George and Sutherland*. This report found that whilst GLBT young people had a positive attachment overall to the St George and Sutherland area, 50% of participants had experienced or witnessed homophobic violence. This figure is consistent with the findings of the NSW Attorney General's Department's (2003) report *You Don't Have To Hide To Be Safe: Homophobic Hostilities and Violence Against Gay Men and Lesbians in NSW*.

Beaches, Bushland and Isolation (2004) made a number of recommendations. Those relevant to the current study include: to explore the needs of GLBT people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds within St George and Sutherland and to facilitate the provision of training opportunities regarding issues pertaining to young GLBT people to local services.

In response to these recommendations a partnership was developed between GLSSYN, the South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service (SESIAHS) and Hurstville, Kogarah and Rockdale Councils. Funding was acquired from these services for a SSAYP (same-sex attracted young people) CALD project, focusing on the needs of young GLBT people from Arabic, Chinese, Macedonian, and Oceanic backgrounds.

An Advisory Group was then established by GLYSSN, which included: individual workers who were based in St George and Sutherland and who identified with the target communities, The Drug and Alcohol Multicultural Education Centre, SESIAHS, St George Migrant Resource Centre, St George Sexual Health, and Twenty10 GLBT Youth Support.

In February of this year an Education Consultant was appointed by the Advisory Group to assist the GLYSSN Project Co-ordinator in addressing the above-mentioned recommendations made by *Beaches, Bushland and Isolation* (2004). In particular, the Education Consultant's roles were to create a web page specifically for GLBT young people from the SSAYP CALD Projects target groups, to co-facilitate two GLYSSN meetings exploring culture, and to co-facilitate with Twenty10 the provision of their 'Ready or Not' training package to services in the St George and Sutherland area. Funding was attained for the Consultant for 2 days per week for four months.

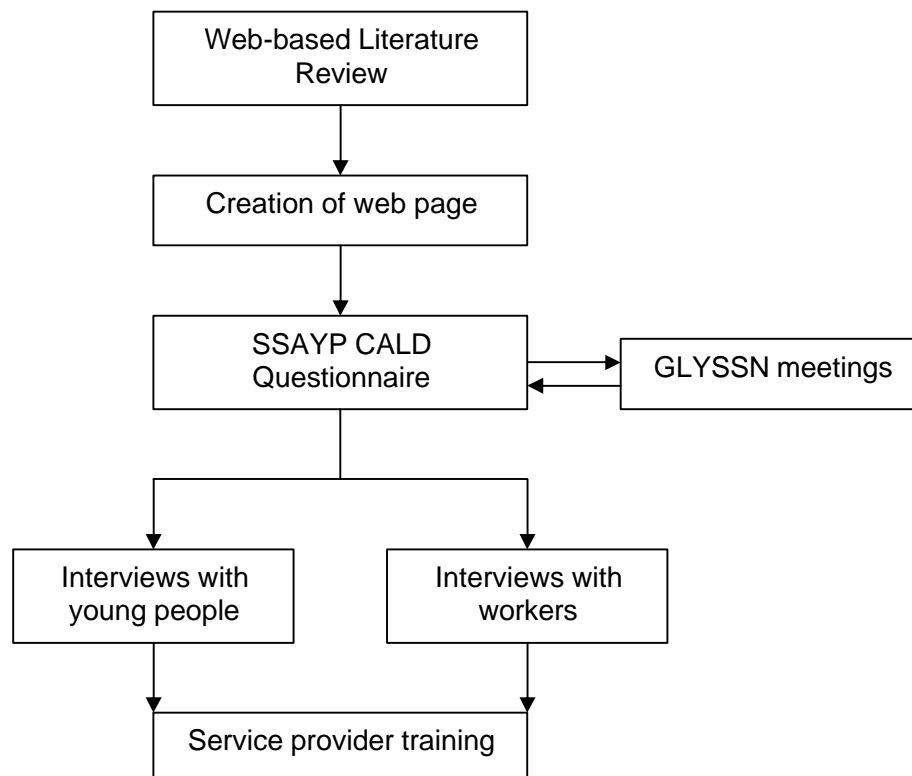
Method

As specified within the Background section of this report, research for this study was conducted over a four-month period. The Education Consultant and St George Youth Services agreed upon the aims and objectives of this research, which were set forth as follows:

- 1) Organising, promoting, delivering and evaluating two (2) training sessions to workers from local CALD services, youth services and other referred organisations:
 - a. Training will be in partnership with Twenty10 GLBT Youth Service,
 - b. Training to be held in the first week of May 2006;
- 2) Co-facilitating up to four GLYSSN meetings [GLYSSN meetings are held on the first and third Thursday of each month]:
 - a. Providing supervision and support to young participants;
 - b. A minimum of two GLYSSN meetings over the four-month period will be focused on addressing issues related to SSAYP from CALD backgrounds.
- 3) Ensuring the content of the GLYSSN website is relevant and appropriate to young people from CALD backgrounds, their families and the services who work with them:
 - a. Authoring a page addressing the relationship between sexuality and culture.
 - b. Identifying key CALD web links for the GLYSSN website
 - c. Working with the web designer updating the GLYSSN website
- 4) Liaising with relevant local networks and interagencies of youth and ethnic-specific services:
- 5) Provide recommendations for the future of the SSAYP CALD project
- 6) Other relevant duties as negotiated with the GLYSSN Project Coordinator

Figure 1 depicts the methods utilised within this project, and the sequence in which they were utilised. An exploration and analysis of each of the methods and their related outcomes/recommendations are explored within the body of this report under the relevant sections.

Figure 1.
Project Method and Sequence



In the initial phase of this project a web-based literature review was conducted in order to meet the 3rd aim and related objectives, as specified above. The results of this review suggested that there were no relevant websites for young GLBT people in Australia, from Macedonian, Arabic, Oceanic or Chinese backgrounds. In order to meet the agreed upon benchmarks for this phase of the project, a web page was put together which generally explored the relationship between culture and sexuality. However, it was strongly recommended that for resources to be appropriate for this projects target groups, they should be created in direct consultation with them.

It was recommended that in order to create appropriate web-based resources, focus groups should be held for each target group. The hosting of focus groups was beyond the scope of this current project. For this reason a self-directed questionnaire was then constructed for young people. The first aim of this questionnaire was to ascertain directly from young people, how important is it to them to have a website which is culturally and GLBT relevant. Secondly, the input of these young people was sought in terms of what they would like the GLYSSN website to include.

The SSAYP CALD Project questionnaire was forwarded by GLYSSN throughout its networks. Only eight (8) questionnaires were completed and returned. Questionnaire responses were collated and the results were explored further with GLYSSN participants

during the second GLYSSN meeting focused on culture, as specified by the 2nd aim and related objectives.

Whilst eight (8) questionnaires were completed, only four (4) related to this project's target groups. For this reason it was decided to conduct individual targeted interviews with CALD young people. A list of appropriate GLYSSN participants was provided to the consultant. Young people were offered \$25.00 for their time. 4 interviews were conducted.

Given the low response rate and the lack of relevant web-based literature, the interviews that were held with young people are included in their entirety within this report. Pseudonyms have been used to protect their confidentiality and identifying information has been withheld. It is important to note when reading these interviews that these are the individual experiences and opinions of these particular young people and should not be generalised to be indicative of community values as a whole.

It is important at this stage to note that no questionnaires were attained from a GLBT young person from a Macedonian background. Further, the GLYSSN project was unaware of any GLBT young people from a Macedonian background. Due to concerns that it may not be possible to include the voices of young Macedonian GLBT people in this report, and following a conversation with a Macedonian community based worker, a notice was placed on a popular web-based Macedonian community forum. Whilst the response to this forum was great, unfortunately, this exercise was unsuccessful in terms of locating a young person to interview. For this reason, two pages of forum entries are included within the body of this report.

During the period in which interviews were conducted with young people, interviews were also conducted with target group community representatives. Once again, it is crucial to note that the points raised within these interviews are based on individual experiences and opinions and should not be generalised to be indicative of community values as a whole. For this reason pseudonyms were used and the organisations that they currently work with were not identified. This is to ensure that individual opinions are not mistaken for the opinions of the organisations with which they work.

The information attained via the SSAYP CALD Project questionnaire, young peoples interviews, related comments by GLYSSN participants and target community representative interviews, were utilised in the provision of service provider training (as specified by the 1st aim and related objectives of this project). Specialist GLBT training was provided by Twenty10 GLBT Youth Support. The consultant co-facilitated with Twenty10, their *Ready or Not* training program. An evaluation of the service provider training sessions was conducted by Twenty10 GLBT Youth Support and is included in the body of this report.

Web based literature review

A review of web-based literature pertaining to GLBT young people from Macedonian, Arabic, Chinese and Oceanic backgrounds was conducted from 15 February 2006 to 6 March 2006. Yahoo, Google and Altavista search engines were used during this review. Academic specific search engines were not utilised in this review, as it was specifically intended to ascertain what information was readily available on the Internet for this projects target groups.

The rationale for focusing on the Internet was two fold. Primarily, the outcome for this phase of the project was to identify key culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) web links for the GLYSSN website, and to use this information to create a web page addressing the relationship between sexuality and culture. Secondly, recent research has found that for young GLBT people the Internet is the most important source of information pertaining to GLBT issues. This research includes Hillier, Horsely and Kurdas's (2005) study *"It made me feel braver, I was no longer alone": The Internet and Same-Sex Attracted Young People* and Hillier, Turner and Mitchell's (2005) research *Writing Themselves In Again: 6 Years On*.

Seven (7) hours was allocated to 'surfing the web' for each target group. Search terms included the target group followed by terms such as gay, lesbian, GLBT, homosexual, sexuality, etc. Relevant countries/nationalities were then utilized as search terms for the Arabic, Chinese and Oceanic target groups. For example, when looking at Oceanic communities, New Zealand, Samoa and Tonga were included as were many other Oceanic countries. Culturally appropriate search terms were also used. For example, Takatapui and Fafafine were used as search terms when 'surfing the web' for information for GLBT young people from Oceanic backgrounds, and Tongzhi was used when surfing the web for information for GLBT young people from Chinese backgrounds.

In the first instance 'Australia' was included as a search term in order to attempt to locate information that was specifically relevant and useful for GLBT young people from the specific target groups within Australia. An overall finding regarding searches related to all target groups was that there were very few Australian specific websites. For this reason, after it had been ascertained that 'Australia' was not a useful search term, this term was no longer used.

A further finding of the current review was an overall lack of websites or pages that offered support for GLBT young people from the target groups. There were very few web pages which were specifically designed for young people or which contained the stories of young people. Most pages were found to be of news events or discussions about the implications of political environments for GLBT people. I would suggest that these pages are crucial for providing an insight into the socio-political context from which parents or grandparents of GLBT young people from the projects target groups may have come from. However, I would argue that these sites provide very little insight into what the particular issues are for GLBT young people from the projects target groups who live in Australia.

Websites that were found to be the most appropriate are as follows (please note this list does not include every website considered or reviewed):

"The Only Queer From A CALD Background":

Addressing Sexuality, Sexual Health and Homophobia Within CALD Communities in St George and Sutherland.

HeLeM

Web address: <http://www.helem.net/>

HeLeM is a Lebanon based not-for-profit human rights organization. HeLeM's website offers health information for GLBT people, including an article on lesbian safe sex. HeLeM also has a coming out section that includes the stories of young GLBT people. Stories in this section also include the stories of friends and family members reactions to coming out. One story in particular reinforced that coming out is a matter of personal choice. Young people can also add their stories. Reports of the socio-political status of GLBT people in Lebanon are also listed. This web page is updated regularly and additions are recent. HeLeM's website also offers a regular newsletter available which can be downloaded. The website appears to be youth friendly in appearance.

The Gay and Lesbian Arabic Society

Web address: <http://www.glas.org/>

The Gay and Lesbian Arabic Society (GLAS), is a long-standing international organisation, which 'aims to promote positive images of Gays and Lesbians in Arab communities worldwide, in addition to combating negative portrayals of Arabs within the Gay and Lesbian community.' This page has some good links, with current news events that have been recently and regularly updated. The GLAS website also offers a blog and stories. While this seems to be an appropriate website, based on appearances it seems that it may appeal to an older target group than HeLeM's site.

Huriyah: A Queer Muslim Magazine

Web address: <http://www.huriyahmag.com/>

As this website explains 'huriyah is an arabic word that means "freedom"'. Huriyah offers links to international support organizations, book reviews, stories, chat site, forum, links and music and film reviews etc. The magazines are updated regularly. The recent magazine includes the following articles: 'Faisal Alam, of queer Muslim organization *Al-Fatiha*, is giving you some [New Year's Resolutions](#), in which he recommends for the community five practical ways to change our lives' and 'Burcu G's deeply emotional article [Dear, Mother](#), one of the many letters she writes to her mom in Turkey who refuses to acknowledge her'. There is also a section called voices containing peoples personal stories, community based articles, cartoons, and an advice section. This site is visually appealing and appears to be appropriate for young people.

Macedonia Gay Rights Organization

Web address: <http://www.cgcp.org.mk>

The CGCP is the first and only GLBT rights group in Macedonia. '...We are lawyers, journalists, economists, political scientists, psychologists, social care workers, and other dedicated professionals of different nationalities and diverse backgrounds.' CGCP's website is up-to-date and offers news about current events, movies, art, music etc. Its appearance is very youth friendly. A Macedonian language version of their web page is available and at moment the English language version of their web page is being updated and therefore unavailable. A click on their contact button (???????) will provide you with the email address: e-mail: info@cgcp.org.mk. Through this email address I made contact with Nino, who forwarded to me a copy of two reports that CGCP has been involved in over the last 4 years, 'Borders of Freedom and Choice: Homosexuality in the republic of Macedonia' and 'Rainbow Over Macedonia: The First Macedonian National Conference on the Rights of Homosexuals'. It may be argued, however, that these articles may be of more interest to workers than the GLBT young people per se.

ACON's Asian Gay Men Project

Web address: http://www.acon.org.au/community/index.cfm?cat_id=66&subcat=70

'The Asian Project is an ongoing project of ACON (AIDS Council of NSW) to provide information, support and referral assistance to primarily Asian gay & bisexual men, as well as other members of our Asian queer community in NSW, Australia.'

ACON's Asian Gay Men Project website offers information pertaining to getting community support services and social groups such as Silk Road and Asia Plus. This website also offers links to social clubs such as the Asian Marching Boys, Long Yang Club and Asian Racial Harmony Collective (QARHC). Website visitors can also join a confidential email list to regularly update members on relevant community information and events. The information on this web page is more specific compared to the websites above. The appearance of the web page would appear to be less attractive to young people than websites such as the HeLeM and CGCP websites. It is also not relevant for young women. However, this website does offer information pertaining to Australian based support, which the other websites I have located cannot offer.

Grinding Tofu

Web address: <http://www.geocities.com/Tokyo/Towers/4289/>

Grinding Tofu is a page that was created by students of UCLA in the United States as a project for their Chinese History Class. The web page authors write:

'...Growing up as a Chinese American is hard enough. The added complexities of growing up as a queer Chinese American could make the experience even more difficult. The queer Chinese community is one which not only faces the difficulties of living in a racist country, it is one which also has to survive the heterosexism blatant in patriarchal society. Through all these barriers, the stories of the queer community end up being lost, ignored, or completely erased. Our purpose in doing this project was to revive and share the unique experiences and stories of queer Chinese Americans. The stories of these individuals, and of the community in general, have been buried for far too long. We hope that in documenting these coming out experiences, people will not only acknowledge, but also appreciate, the existence of the queer Chinese American community.'

Whilst this web page is based on the experiences of young people in America who come from Chinese speaking backgrounds the biographies which are shared by the young people on this site may also be relevant for GLBT young people from Chinese backgrounds in Australia. These biographies address issues such as coming out and family expectations, which may also be relevant to an Australian based reader. This website has been put together by and for young people which may additionally appeal to young people.

GayNZ

Web address: <http://www.gaynz.com/>

This is a New Zealand based website which features numerous sections including: daily news, daily TV guide, family matters, politics and religion, HIV/AIDS and health etc. The family matters section provides the responses of members of the community to one issue a week that is forwarded to them by visitors to this site. These members of the community include; Jacquie Grant, 'affectionately known as the "tranny granny" ...Bill Logan a counsellor, celebrant, gay activist ...He's been on the Gay Helpline in Wellington since 1982, was a co-founder of the Aids Foundation, and played a significant role in the struggle for homosexual law reform...Previous advisors include

secondary school teacher Carol Bartlett, gay activist Jim Peron and GayNZ.com editor Jay Bennie.’

This page is updated on a daily basis and its appearance seems to be very youth friendly (think ‘GLBT *Who* magazine’). GayNZ also offers some great links to other websites. They have a well-developed links section that includes links to web pages that are Maori specific. It is important to also note that while the description for this website includes GLBTQ, Takatapui and Fafafine this is no information specifically related to being Maori and sexuality or gender diverse. This is a common finding for the current reviews search for information for GLBT young people from New Zealand.

The current review found overall that whilst there were many GLBT websites and web pages in New Zealand only a few were Maori specific. These were not included as they were either news, theoretical or project based web pages. For example, the impressive looking website for the NZ project Out There, <http://www.outthere.org.nz>. The graphics look very youth friendly, however the resources are presented in a way that appears to be more accessible for workers. Other reasons that a majority of the New Zealand based web-pages were not recommended included: that they were sites which were directly related to support groups in New Zealand that were therefore not accessible for this projects target groups (i.e. www.rainbowyouth.org.nz and <http://ftmaotearoa.tripod.com>) or that they were sites containing email chat groups and it was not possible to ascertain the appropriateness of these groups (i.e. <http://www.bgayanzo.com>). Some pages were also not included because they did not offer information to young people or contain young peoples stories (i.e. <http://www.nzaf.org.nz>). Web pages and sites that were found for Oceanic communities other than New Zealand were sparse and were not included as recommended web links for the same reasons.

In conclusion, the websites specified above appeared to be the most appropriate websites for GLBT young people from this projects target groups. Please note that within the current review websites were deemed most appropriate if they met the following criteria:

- ? They contained information pertaining to young people.
- ? They did not just present theory, socio-political analysis or news reports but also contained information, which provided support to young people. For example they contained information about family, coming out, dealing with homophobia, safe sex etc.
- ? They contained the stories of young people.
- ? They physically appeared to be youth friendly.
- ? They were not sites which were specifically related to a social or community group that was not accessible to young people in this projects target areas and which did not contain additional information which might offer support to SSAYP who could not access these groups.
- ? They were not chat sites or pornographic sites.
- ? They were not email group sites, such as a yahoo group listing. These sites were excluded as the appropriateness of the content of these group email discussions could not be ascertained.
- ? They were not travel sites.

There are several important limitations to this review, which should be taken into consideration. As mentioned in the introduction to this review, an overall finding was that there were very few Australian specific websites. For this reason the current review found little if any information about the experiences of young people from the current projects target groups, which were specific to living in Australia as a young person who is same sex attracted and from a CALD background. In fact, the current review found that there were very few web pages that contained information directly related to the experiences of young GLBT people in particular. The current review also found that there was a general lack of young GLBT voices from these target groups on the Internet.

A majority of the web pages found were regarding news events or discussions about the implications of political environments for GLBT people in particular countries. I would argue that these web pages are still of value to the current project in that they provide insight into the socio-political context from which GLBT young people, their parents or grandparent may have come from. However, I would also argue that these sites provide very little insight into what the particular issues are for SSAYP from the projects target groups who live in Australia.

A further important limitation faced by the current review was the broadness of the categories Arabic, Chinese, Macedonian and Oceanic, and the existence of significant geographical related differences within each category. For example the Bgay Oceania website covers the following areas: American Samoa, Bali, Cook Islands, Coral Islands, Easter Island, East Timor, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Hawaii, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia The Federated States, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Norfolk Island, Northern Marianas, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tahiti, Tokelau, Tonga, Vanuatu, Western Samoa.

The results of the current reports literature review and interviews with workers and young people highlight significant geographical based differences between target community members based on their country of origin (or the origin of their parents or grandparents etc). For example, research by authors such as Loretta Ho and Rosie Wu show that there are significant differences in the experiences and definitions used by GLBT people from Chinese speaking backgrounds in Beijing and Hong Kong. One significant difference is the preference for the term Tongzhi in Hong Kong (Wu) and the preference for the terms gay or lesbian in Beijing. It is important to note that these differences are not purely linguistic but are related to complex socio-political factors, such as the changes in Hong Kong's identity since returning to the mainland.

A further example, of the significance of geographical variables is the finding of significant differences in attitudes towards GLBT people amongst different religious and cultural groups within Macedonia. This is highlighted within the report *Borders of Freedom and Choice: Homosexuality in the republic of Macedonia* (2002) carried out by the Macedonian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution and the Centre for Civic and Human Rights. This historical and politically significant report presents the first research ever conducted regarding the conditions faced by same sex attracted people in Macedonia.

This report found significant differences in the responses 'among persons belonging to different ethnic groups.' For example, according to this report 53% of respondents indicated that they believe same-sex attracted people 'should not work in education and with children.' Of this 53%, 'as different from other ethnicities (64% of the Roma, 62% of

the Albanian and 52% of the Turkish ethnic communities), 36.2% of the persons belonging to the Macedonian ethnic community consider that homosexuals should not work in education and with children.'

Another limitation of the current review is the barrier of language. Whilst, there may well be other websites that might be more appropriate, this project's consultant's language proficiency is limited to English. For this reason, this project's consultant was unable to ascertain the appropriateness of many Chinese language based websites in particular. For example, Loretta Ho, author of the article *Opening Up: Articulating a Same-sex Identity in Beijing* responded to my request for websites that are supportive of young GLBT people from Chinese speaking backgrounds by providing me with a list of 32 websites. However, these websites are Chinese websites without English versions. For this reason I am unable to ascertain the appropriateness of these sites. Loretta writes: '...According to a Chinese gay Webmaster whom I interviewed, there are currently around 300-400 Tongzhi (a Chinese person who is attracted to the same sex) websites. Here are some of them:

- 1 <http://www.gaychinese.net/>
- 2 <http://www.gaybyte.com/>
- 3 <http://www.boysky.com/>
- 4 <http://www.csssm.org/>
- 5 <http://friend.qdeol.com.cn/20031213.htm>
- 6 <http://www.homosky.com/2002/>
- 7 <http://xzz.9xc.com/2003/index.htm>
- 8 <http://www.nmtz.net/>
- 9 <http://www.gengle.net/>
- 10 <http://www.notearsky.com/>
- 11 <http://www.chinalala.com/>
- 12 <http://www.21cnboy.com/>
- 13 <http://www.lescn.net/main.asp>
- 14 <http://www.lalacub.net/>
- 15 <http://www.5iboy.net/>
- 16 <http://www.xiaobie.com/>
- 17 <http://www.99575.com/map.htm>
- 18 <http://www.bjboy.net/>
- 19 <http://lalachat.xiloo.com/>
- 20 <http://www.weandwe.com/2002/>
- 21 <http://zqlala.9126.com/>
- 22 <http://www.chinatongzhi.com/>
- 23 <http://www.98boy.com/>
- 24 <http://www.tianyaclub.com/>
- 25 <http://www.gaychina.com/>
- 26 <http://www.boyair.com/>
- 27 <http://www.lescn.net/index2004.asp>
- 28 <http://www.lalabar.com/>
- 29 <http://www.aladao.net/>
- 30 <http://www.bjtongzhi.com>
- 31 <http://www.gztongzhi.com/>
- 32 <http://www.tianjincool.com/>

To conclude, the current review found no appropriate websites that addressed the experiences of SSAYP from Oceanic, Arabic and Macedonian backgrounds within Australia. A website addressing issues pertaining to Asian men in Australia was found (ACON's Asian Gay Men Project). The current review also found that very few websites offered the direct voices and experiences of SSAYP from this projects target groups. However, it must be acknowledged that the current reviews findings have been limited by the consultant's inability to speak the languages of the target groups. Overall, the findings of this review suggested that young people from the current project's target groups may find it difficult to locate information via the Internet that validates their experiences.

In light of the above, and taking into consideration the findings of recent research, which has found that the Internet is the most important source of information for GLBT young people; the findings of the current review strongly suggest that Internet based resources may need to be developed for GLBT young people from the projects target groups. Further, the findings of this review strongly suggest that given the apparent lack of direct voices and experiences of SSAYP from this projects target groups in Australia and the lack of relevant sites for these young people, that any information that is put together for these groups in done in direct consultation with them.

The outcome of phase two of the project was to have conducted a web-based literature review and to utilise the findings of this to produce a web page addressing the relationship between sexuality and culture. As the current web based literature review found that it was difficult, if at all possible to locate the voices and direct experiences of young CALD GLBT people, a web page was put together generally discussing the relationship between culture and sexuality. This page is included as Appendix A.

Whilst this web page was created in order to satisfy the requirements of the second phase of this project, it was strongly recommend that in order to construct an appropriate web page to meet the needs of young people, that the experiences and needs of these young people should be ascertained directly from them. It was strongly recommended for focus groups to be formed to provide a forum for the voices and experiences of SSAYP from each target group. It was suggested that these focus groups would be most appropriate for deciding which websites are most appropriate for them. It was argued that not only would the target groups be in a better position than this projects consultant to decide what is more appropriate/ suitable for them, but also on a practical level the current reviews limitation of language barrier would be removed.

SSAYP CALD Project Questionnaire

As reported above, the web-based literature review found no websites containing the voices and direct experiences of young GLBT people in Australia, from Macedonian, Arabic, Oceanic or Chinese backgrounds. It was also found that there were no Australian based websites that offered information or support to these groups. It was strongly recommended that due to these glaring omissions that any information that was to be put together for these target groups should be done in direct consultation with them. It was recommended that focus groups be held for each target group.

The holding of focus groups was beyond the scope of this current project. For this reason a self-directed questionnaire was constructed in order to ascertain the following pieces of information directly from young people from this projects target groups. The first aim of this questionnaire was to ascertain directly from young people from these target groups, how important is it to them to have a website which is culturally and GLBT relevant. Secondly, the input of these young people was sought in terms of what they thought such a website should be like, or what information it should contain. A copy of the SSAYP CALD Project Questionnaire is included within the body of this report as Appendix B.

The SSAYP CALD Project Questionnaire was forwarded to members of GLYSSN via email. It was also forwarded through GLYSSN's networks and presented to young people during a GLYSSN meeting focussed on issues pertaining to culture.

Eight (8) questionnaires were completed. Of these only four (4) related to this projects target groups. All respondents resided in Southern Sydney and identified as being GLBT. The mean age of the target group respondents was 21.1 years. A detailed discussion of each completed questionnaire is included under the individual findings for each target group. In summary, two of the participants identified as having a Chinese speaking background, one Arabic speaking background and one from an Oceanic background. As raised within the methods section, no responses were obtained from a GLBT young person from a Macedonian background.

Of the respondents, three (3) knew someone other than themselves who identified as being GLBT and having the same cultural background as them. The young person who responded that he did not know anybody else, responded that he may want to meet others who are GLBT and from the same cultural background, but that this was not important to him. Of the remainder of participants two (2) indicated that they would like to meet other people who were GLBT and from the same cultural background. One (1) of these participants said it was very important to know others who were GLBT and from the same cultural background, the other two (2) indicated that this was important to them.

Three (3) of the young people indicated that they felt great about being GLBT and one (1) indicated that he felt okay about this. The young person who indicated that it was not important to know others who were GLBT and from the same cultural background, is the only participant to indicate that no one in his family knows about his sexuality. All participants indicated that they had friends who knew that they were GLBT.

In terms of where participants went to get information about being GLBT, three (3) respondents indicated counsellor, two (2) friends, two (2) support group, one (1) internet, one (1) other, which they specified as including, queer media, TV and public libraries.

Regarding the Internet, one (1) of the young people had found The Gay and Lesbian Arabic Society website to be useful, another had found ACON's Asian Gay Men Project not useful. None of the young people had visited the remainder of websites, which were recommended by this project following the web based literature review. Of the young people three (3) indicated that it was important to them to have websites that were GLBT focused and culturally relevant. The young person who indicated that it was not important to know others who were GLBT and from the same cultural background was the only participant to indicate that this was not important to him.

In response to the question, 'what would your ideal website include?' two (2) young people suggested stories by people, one (1) suggested a list of support services, one (1) 'an interface that has the word 'queer' written in different languages (if the translation is appropriate)', one (1) 'maybe some good statistics', one (1) general information, one (1) 'different faces and info on other cultures', one (1) 'chat rooms profiles emails event info venues to meet others'.

Overall the results of this survey suggest that the participants are more likely to get information and support from a counsellor (75%), friends (50%) or a support group (25%) rather than the Internet (25%). However, a majority of participants (75%) indicated that it was important to them to have websites that have information or support for people who are GLBT and from the same cultural background as them. The findings of this questionnaire were explored with young people within a GLYSSN meeting; the results of this discussion are discussed below.

SSAYP CALD Focused GLYSSN Meetings

As mentioned within the Method section, the 2nd responsibility of the consultant was to co-facilitate up to four GLYSSN meetings, two of which would focus of SSAYP from CALD backgrounds. The first two GLYSSN meetings attended by the consultant were intended to, firstly, familiarise GLYSSN participants with the consultant and the project and, secondly, to familiarise the consultant with GLYSSN participants and the format of the group.

Within the third GLYSSN meeting attended by the consultant the issue of being GLBT and from a CALD background was raised. Ten (10) young people attended this meeting, in relation to the projects target groups; one (1) young person identified as Maori, one (1) as from an Arabic speaking background, and one (1) from a Chinese speaking background.

To begin, a general conversation was held about stereotypes about being GLBT. The young people brought up their frustrations with stereotypes. For example, one young woman (not from this projects target group) talked about her frustration related to her perceived stereotype that all lesbians hate men. The group were then asked to break up into two groups and to draw a picture of what they thought a stereotypical gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person looked like.

Prior to this meeting the consultant had spoken to a young man who identified as being gay and Maori. During this discussion the young man talked about his frustrations about stereotypes that he perceived to be held by the GLBT community. He explained that he felt isolated from the mainstream GLBT community because of the ideals projected by what he perceives to be, the popular Anglo-centric GLBT media. To make his point he picked up a copy of two of the major GLBT papers. He flicked through these explaining that he perceived that the advertisements and photos in these papers were predominantly of Anglo Saxon men who had well defined muscles. He explained that in his experience the only place where images of non-Anglo Saxon men appeared were in the community photos pages or in advertisements for sex services.

Regardless of his individual reasons for feeling isolated from the GLBT community, this was a shared theme amongst SSAYP within the project [further individual reasons are expressed in the young people's interviews under their relevant target group section in this report]. This issue of 'isolation' was relevant to explore with young people within the GLYSSN meeting. It was hoped that through the drawing exercise the idea of stereotypes could be raised with the young people. From here we could explore ideas around whether they feel that the GLBT community also holds stereotypes about what it means to be GLBT, and what this means for young people from CALD backgrounds.

After finishing their drawing the group came back together and discussed their creations. When each group had shared their reasons for depicting their character in the ways that they did, a general discussion was then held about what stereotypes the mainstream GLBT community might hold about what it means to be GLBT. One group who drew a lesbian character with short spiky blond hair, discussed that their perception to fit into mainstream GLBT culture, you have to dress a certain way. Some young women talked about feeling pressured to wear 'boy's clothes' and to have short hair. Some of the men talked about feeling a pressure to wear designer clothes and to be well toned. A

discussion then took place about stereotypes about body image and on a lighter level, how hard it was to find bigger sizes for women's clothes and smaller sizes for men's clothes.

After some time, the consultant raised the issue of culture and whether anyone had thought about this in terms of the community. The consultant explained the young man's example of the two GLBT newspapers. The Maori and Arabic speaking young men agreed that they felt that the mainstream image of the scene was predominantly Anglo Saxon. Two (2) other young men who identified as being Anglo Saxon also agreed with this. A few of the participants got up to look at one of the mentioned newspapers to see whether the young persons perceptions were correct. The SSAYP CALD Questionnaire was then discussed and handed out to participants who filled this in and handed it back to the consultant.

At the fourth GLYSSN meeting six (6) young people were present. Only one (1) of these had been present at the meeting above. Of these young people, two (2) identified as having a Chinese speaking background. At this meeting the questionnaire was reintroduced and the results were shared. The young people were then asked to extrapolate on what they thought that the GLYSSN website would ideally be like.

The young people said that they would like:

- ? For the site to utilise keywords that would be obvious to the search engine
- ? To have links for other support groups in the area
- ? To have links to pages that talked about religion and sexuality.
- ? To have statistics that normalised their experiences (When asked for an example, they explained they wanted to see statistics like the 1 in 10 statistic).
- ? An updated news page and articles about events that are directly related to them as young GLBT people.
- ? A moderated forum.

The results of the SSAYP CALD questionnaire showed that young people wanted stories on the GLYSSN website. The consultant asked the young people what type of stories they wanted. The group explained they wanted stories that explored:

- ? Where can I go to meet people?
- ? Where is it okay to go to meet people? Where isn't safe?
- ? What's the scene like?
- ? Stories that show that GLBT people can have long-term relationships
- ? Coming out stories
- ? Creative stories
- ? Personal stories

The young people also said that they would like to be able to see personal poems and drawings, a gallery section for their artwork. The young people specified that they wanted to be able to add their own stories, poetry and artwork to the GLYSSN website rather than seeing stories that workers may have created. However, they stressed that it was important to them that a worker would monitor this process.

Within this section I have reported the input of all of the young people present at the two GLYSSN meetings focused on CALD SSAYP. It is important to note that of the sixteen (16) young people who attended these meetings overall, only five (5) identified as having

a CALD background. Of these young people, one (1) identified as having an Oceanic background, two (2) a Chinese background and one (1) an Arabic speaking background. It was neither possible nor appropriate to focus only on the experiences of these young people alone. It was also difficult to engage the young people who did not identify as being from a CALD background in discussions about culture. Although at times they appeared interested they would generally not engage in discussion centred on this issue. Further, only two (2) of the young people who identified as being from a CALD background appeared to be confident in expressing their opinions in a group format. For this reason it was decided to carry out individual interviews with GLBT young people from this projects target groups, in order to attain more a more in-depth understanding of their experiences and needs.

Young people on GLYSSN's contact list, who were from this project's target groups, were contacted and asked if they would like to participate in this project. These young people were offered twenty-five dollars and were invited to either, complete a list of questions themselves, to meet in person for an interview, or to be interviewed over the phone.

Five young people were interviewed from the project's target groups. One (1) of these young people identified as having a Chinese background, two (2) an Arabic background, and one (1) an Oceanic background. As mentioned within the methods section, no responses were obtained from a GLBT young person from a Macedonian background. For this reason a message was placed on a web based Macedonian community forum. Some of the responses to this message are included in this report in the place of an interview with a young Macedonian GLBT person.

Interviews were also conducted with SSAYP CALD Project community contacts. These were workers who identified with either the Arabic, Chinese, Macedonian or Oceanic communities, and who worked in the community sector with these communities. Pseudonyms have been given to the young people and the workers to protect their confidentiality. In the case of the workers, this was also done so that their experiences and opinions would not be considered to be the opinions of the organisations with which they work.

Both the young people and the workers reiterated during their interviews, that the views expressed in the interviews cannot be generalised to be the views held by the entire community with which they identify. On a number of occasions each participant was careful to explain that there are many differences within their communities. This point was particularly salient for Michelle, who commented: 'workers shouldn't think that because someone is Chinese that they'll face more homophobia'.

Participants also highlighted that many families were different, and that some families, as within any community, were accepting of their GLBT children. It is also important to note that for some of the young people, for example Karim and Kaupiri, community seemed to refer to their immediate family.

Within the body of this report, questionnaire responses, interviews with young people and workers are included together within their specific target groups, i.e. Arabic, Chinese, Macedonian or Oceanic. It is intended that by doing so, that similar themes within target groups may be readily visible.

Target group results

Arabic and GLBT

Questionnaire for CALD SSAYP¹

Of the questionnaire respondents, one (1) male participant identified as being queer and Australian Arabic, in his early twenties and living in Southern Sydney. This participant responded that although he knew others who identified as being from the same cultural background as him and same sex attracted that he would like to meet other people who were from an Arabic speaking background and queer. He explained that this was important to him because he 'finds it rare' for people to be GLBT and from an Arabic speaking background, also, he added 'it would be nice to'.

This participant indicated that he felt great about being queer and that he is '...happy with who I am but find it difficult to find other genuine guys relationship wise.' In regards to what he perceived people from the Arabic speaking community thought about being GLBT, the participant commented 'they think badly and lowly'. The participant indicated that his siblings and mother knew about his sexuality, as did all of his friends. Of his friends, the participant commented that '...they are fine with it'.

This participant indicated that he went to friends and his counsellor for information or support about being GLBT. In terms of how important it was for him to have websites, which contained information or offered support for young people who identified as being GLBT and from the same cultural background as him, the participant indicated that this was somewhat important.

Interview of SSAYP CALD Project Community Contact: Salwa

Salwa² identifies with the Lebanese community. She holds many years experience working in the community sector with the Arabic speaking community in Southern Sydney. Salwa explained that Arabic is spoken in over 24 countries and the Arabic speaking community is the second largest (1st Chinese, 3rd Macedonian) CALD community in Southern Sydney and is growing rapidly.

When asked, how would you describe the Arabic speaking community in Australia's approach to issues of sexuality and sexual diversity? Salwa emphasized that within some families 'it is okay to talk about it.' However, she explained, in her experience the dominant view towards being GLBT is that it's '...a sin...it's taboo, shame, sin, unacceptable behaviour, hidden'. These opinions were accentuated when Salwa was asked whether the Arabic speaking community had other terms to describe being GLBT, Salwa replied: 'shame, bad reputation, isolate yourself from them, contagious disease and forbidden.'

Salwa explained that '...sex is a taboo subject, no one wants to talk about it'. She said that this is partly to do with the shared belief in '...no sex before marriage, particularly for those who are Muslim.' Salwa said that '...there are four things that were taboo to be discussed within Arabic speaking communities. The first is domestic violence, which is a

¹ Please refer to the section, SSAYP Project Questionnaire for overall results

² Salwa is a pseudonym

shame to women. The second is child abuse, the sexual assault of children and incest. The third is sexuality. The fourth is divorce, the stigma of this label is too big for women.'

In regards to the impact of these attitudes on young GLBT people and their capacity to participate in the Arabic speaking community in Australia Salwa said '...GLBT and being a member of the Arabic speaking community cannot co-exist.' She explained '...a GLBT person would have to sacrifice their family to put what they want to do first. If they change back to being heterosexual then that is okay, the family will accept them back.' Salwa explains further:

'If the person chose this is what I want to do no matter what anyone else thinks or feels then they would isolate themselves...distance themselves... wouldn't dare to say that they were Arabic speaking. They would have to live in their own world, their family wouldn't accept them and due to the families negligence the young person would be at risk of suicide, homelessness, depression and a life of crime.'

To highlight this Salwa recounted a program she watched on television in Lebanon recently. She explained that in this program young GLBT people were interviewed about the impact of their sexuality. Salwa said that one young woman '...said that she wasn't accepted within her community because she was unacceptable within her family.' A young man explained how his family kicked him out of home. Salwa explained that '...in Lebanon, family is the backbone and the foundation of society, if there is instability in the family there is instability in society. If you are stigmatized this puts family down.' Salwa said that in Lebanon, as within the Arabic speaking community in Australia, '...sexuality is a closed topic, forbidden.'

Salwa indicated her surprise that this show was screening in Lebanon due to the taboo status of discussions around sexuality within the Arabic speaking community. It was then brought to Salwa's attention that there existed a number of websites for GLBT people from Arabic speaking backgrounds. As examples, Salwa was shown details from the websites for, HeLeM, the Gay and Lesbian Arabic Society, and Al-Fatiha Foundation³. Salwa was surprised to see that these websites existed. She suggested that the presence of these websites, within the context of current attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity within Arabic speaking communities in Australia, meant that '...the Internet was the safest place for young people to get information, sometimes it could be the worst.'

Following a discussion about the program she had seen in Lebanon and the existence of the HeLeM website which is also from Lebanon, Salwa was asked about whether she thought that there were any differences in changes in attitudes towards being GLBT between Lebanon and the Lebanese community in Australia. She said that '...as with other CALD communities many Arabic speaking families stop with the values that they came to Australia with.' As an example, Salwa referred to a family that she knows of who '...have been here for 25 years and they still haven't moved with the attitude changes that have happened in Lebanon.'

Salwa made the following recommendations based on her experience working with the Arabic speaking community. Firstly, she recommended that a specific service to be provided for GLBT young people from CALD backgrounds, including a drop in centre for people from every culture. Salwa specified that this service should not be specifically

³ For more information regarding these websites please see Web Based Literature Review

focused on any one CALD group, as young people would most likely want to speak to someone from another CALD group due to shame and stigma.

Salwa suggested that workers at this service could provide family mediation to 'explain to families that it's not the end of the world.' Salwa emphasized the need to have a service in 'the St George area' with 'bilingual workers' and that is open '9-5 Monday to Friday.'

Salwa suggested that translated material should also be made available for families and GLBT young people. She explained that brochures are useful because even though people might not want to talk about it certain issues that they will take a brochure home to read. Salwa gave an example of a time when she put 50 domestic violence pamphlets out and they were gone in one day.

Salwa suggested that brochures should be provided to address the following issues:

- ? About how we can help as a family, individual and as a community.
- ? About where families can find help.
- ? About a healthy lifestyle for disease prevention (i.e. AIDS).

Salwa also recommended that workshops be provided for CALD community workers, 'showing how to use the right tool to help SSAYP recover or do it (*be GLBT*) the right way, safely, a positive outcome, decreased risks, a healthy lifestyle for disease prevention, AIDS is a key issue for prevention.'

Salwa was then asked 'Given the needs or issues that are specifically faced by GLBT young people within the Arabic community, what specific issues do you think should be included on the GLYSSN website?' Salwa responded: 'to give advice and keep them safe, i.e. to reduce the risks/impact of related homelessness, suicide, family breakdown, engagement in crime due to not having family support, and STD prevention.'

Finally, Salwa was asked based on her experience, what she would suggest to be the best way to approach this issue with Arabic young GLBT people, their families and communities. Salwa said that she thought 'the most important thing was public education...public education is the right word in every community for every situation.' However, Salwa explained that it was not useful to directly discuss sexuality or to have focus groups, which talked only about sexuality. She said that the best way to approach this issue was indirectly. Salwa said that this was 'the same with information about DV you have to go in a circle.'

Interview of CALD SSAYP: Karim⁴

Karim is a young man in his early twenties who lives in Southern Sydney. He was born in Australia and identifies as being queer and Egyptian. Karim explained that he identifies with the Queer community. He said that he does not identify with the Arabic speaking or Egyptian communities. Karim explained, '...a few years ago I went to an Egyptian community youth group. I couldn't fit in because it's more religious based... I can't fit in because of the focus on religion (*Muslim*).'

When asked about how he would describe the Arabic speaking communities approach to being GLBT, Karim said:

⁴ Karim is a pseudonym

'...it's not talked about. Me and my brother's wife, we talk a lot, but with all my other relatives they avoid it a lot. One of the times I was talking with my brother's wife and my cousin walked over and overheard me say I can't have feelings for women and she walked away. The worse thing is she's a school teacher so you would think that she would be more open minded about this.

When asked why he thinks that being GLBT is not talked about, Karim replied '...the religious factor has a big thing to do with it and general homophobia... They haven't been exposed to a lot, they are very sheltered.' It is important to note at this stage that when asked about the Arabic speaking community that Karim refers to his experiences within his family. Karim explained that because sexual or gender diversity is not discussed that he feels uncertain as to what community attitudes may be regarding these issues. According to Karim:

'...I don't really know because no one will talk to me about it. When I told my family I only told who was there at the time. Only my...brothers were okay with it... My sister she doesn't admit it to herself and goes behind my back to ask my brothers about me...if it's true. Mum doesn't talk about it, she knows it but one day I was watching *Head On* with Alex Dimitriades, at the part when Alex is having sex with that Asian guy in the laneway my mum came in and said "what are you doing watching this disgusting movie?" I don't really know if Dad knows, last year I was at the Mardi Gras and my parents called me and tried to get me away from there, but I don't think he knows I think he thinks that I just wanted to hang around there (Mardi Gras).'

The silence that Karim has experienced around GLBT issues has led to feelings of isolation for Karim. When asked about the impact being queer has had on his ability to participate in the Arabic speaking community Karim responded:

'...I didn't even know that there were queer things in the Arabic speaking community. I just thought...I never saw it whenever I was with other Middle Eastern people, I thought "F__k man, I must be the only one". It was really hard but then my brother's fiancé ...works at a youth service, she put me onto GLYSSN⁵ and then David⁶ told me about Twenty10⁷.'

Karim explained that David let him know about a support group for young men from Arabic speaking backgrounds. Karim said that he went to one of this groups meetings '...and it was okay but I still didn't feel fully comfortable...I had to restrict myself to a limit to fit.' When asked why he didn't feel fully comfortable Karim responded '...they had really, really weird ideas.' When asked to extrapolate on this Karim said:

'They go to the mosque and pray four or five times a day and yet they were at a pub drinking and being gay. I wanted to say, "can't you see what you're doing is contradicting, being Muslim and smoking cigarettes, drinking bourbon and holding a guys hand!" It's either one or the other, or you need to find another way to be with God.'

Karim emphasized, '... it's not real there, it's so deluded that you can be gay and go to the Mosque and pray.'

⁵ For more information regarding GLYSSN please see Background

⁶ David Moutou GLYSSN Project Coordinator

⁷ For more information regarding Twenty10 please see Service Provider Training Sessions.

Karim explained that the impact being GLBT has on his ability to participate in the Arabic speaking community is that he cannot be Muslim, '...the Koran says it straight there, if that says it there that it's wrong, then I don't have any right to follow.' Karim indicated that this has been a significant issue for him and that as a result he has looked at a number of religions to find a way that he can '... be with God'. Karim explained '...I've even tried going to a Christian church that said it was okay to be gay (*The Metropolitan Community Church*)...but I don't agree with them because it says no in the bible.' Karim said that he has also '...looked at a lot of websites and I've been to a fair few religious groups, mainly Christian and Muslim...Buddhist...but I can't win with religion because of what I am.'

When asked about the personal impact of his decision that he cannot be queer and Muslim Karim explained, '...as soon as I realized my orientation and what it was and God forbids it, I knew that I can't be a Muslim, a Christian or a Jew.' At this stage of the interview, Karim became visibly upset. When this was checked with him, Karim confirmed:

'...it bothers me, it makes me pissed off. There are all of these people following these religions who are hypocrites, but I can't follow it because I'm gay. It doesn't seem fair. I don't understand why God would make me in a way that he won't accept. It's evil, why would he do this, make me gay, and then punish me when I die?'

Karim explained '... if I wasn't queer I'd really get into being Muslim.'

Karim talked about not being able to be with God due to his sexuality as not only something that bothers him but also as a position which has forced him to analyse the structures which he feels outcast from. Karim explains:

'...but then being queer has made it obvious that religion is all a bunch of lies. It's kind of like being queer is a way to break through and realize it's a bunch of lies... When you go through so much you have to question everything... It's frustrating talking to people who have been sheltered and haven't thought very much about things that you just accept.'

Karim then expressed his frustration that, in his experience, many people don't understand the complexity of what it means to be GLBT and from an Arabic speaking background. He explained that due to this people in positions of power over young people make decisions and carry out actions which may not be appropriate and may hold immense ramifications for young people from CALD backgrounds. To exemplify this, Karim recounted a story from when he was 'in year 8 or 9' and 'had a crush on a guy at school.' Karim explained, 'I wrote a letter and to him and they kicked me out of school.'

Karim continued, 'well, I actually went to his house and put the letter in his letterbox. His parents got scared and went to the school and I got kicked out. The school rang my mum and told them what happened but she didn't understand it. The next day there was a meeting at school.' Karim explained that he was extremely fearful of his family's response. As articulated above, for Karim sexual diversity was something that was not spoken about within the Arabic speaking community and not to be spoken of. He also believed that the Koran, which his family adhered to, said that it was wrong to be GLBT.

Regardless of his concerns the school contacted Karim's mother. He said that although he was extremely worried that his parents would find out that he was queer '... in the end

it was okay because she didn't understand what they said to her.' Karim explained that his mother interpreted the school discussion as follows:

'...I want to be friends with their son but he doesn't want to be friends with me and then all the legal stuff about stalking. I was scared when they called my mum, because you don't talk about being queer. It was okay because we were moving anyway and mum said don't worry because we were leaving this place.'

Karim said that being expelled from this school had little impact on him as he had to leave the school in any case as his family were moving house. He also said he was '...over the school anyway' due to the impact of homophobia; 'People would yell out at me at school 'are you gay?' I'd say yeah because I was over it. So I was over the school anyway.'

The interview then shifted its focus to what it meant for Karim to be from a CALD background in the GLBT community. Karim explained that he has '...found that the Anglo Saxon GLBT community is more accepting than the Arabic people I meet.' Karim extrapolated that he finds 'the Arabic community is more conservative.'

By conservative Karim explained that people within the Arabic speaking community found it hard to accept his style of dress, which is relatively alternative. As another example, Karim recounted, 'there was this queer Arabic guy that I was talking to through Gaydar. I told him I'd been out drinking and he said that was f__ked up.'

Karim said in regards to the GLBT community that GLYSSN has been a positive experience for him. However, he expressed disappointment with the GLBT community in general, which he sees as being a bar based culture focused on designer clothes and wealth:

'I stay away from bars... everyone there has a closed mind. I want to say to them "you're not meant to be closed-minded; you are the people that a majority of the world is meant to hate, so why treat each other badly? Why are you like that?" It's all about clothes and money. They've turned themselves into a product. There's a lot of pretentiousness and arrogance, a majority of the GLBT community is now turning superficial, it's annoying.'

Karim explained that because of feeling he doesn't fit into the Arabic speaking community, the Arabic speaking GLBT community or into the 'majority' GLBT community that the Internet is the place that he feels a sense of connection. In Karim's words: 'I spend about 4 hours a day on chat sites. I stay away from bars and even from families, I can't be there and sit with them because they don't agree with it (*being gay*) and there are more of them than one of me.'

Karim was then asked, based on his personal experience, how he felt that workers could best support young GLBT people with Arabic backgrounds. He responded that he'd like a support group that was activities based. Karim also explained that 'a chat site or forum would be the most useful to me.'

Interview of CALD SSAYP: Michael (Mike)⁸

Mike is a young man in his early twenties who lives in Southern Sydney. Regarding a sexuality with which he identifies, Mike responded, ‘...usually I don’t like to identify myself as a sexuality, Its not the penis or vagina that attracts me’ In terms of gender Mike’s response suggests that it is important for him to make a distinction between the gender with which he identifies and socially constructed gender roles, ‘...I am MALE⁹. But that does not mean I drink beer and watch footy.’

Mike indicated that he is Australian born of Lebanese parents. In terms of the community with which he identifies, he explained, ‘...I’m Australian, but that does not mean I love cricket and sausages. My background is Lebanese, I enjoy the food, music, and gatherings associated with the culture but I don’t identify myself as Lebanese.’

When asked how he would described the Arabic speaking communities approach to being GLBT, Mike explained that in his experience being GLBT is considered to be ‘bad’. According to Mike, ‘... it is bad because of two reasons 1. They were told it was bad 2. Everyone around them thinks it is bad and therefore they are scared of being embarrassed, not fitting in with their community.’ Mike explained that the positioning of sexual diversity as being ‘bad’ meant for him that he initially felt he needed to ‘live in secrecy’. Mike said that he has decided to ‘not live in secrecy’ but the implications of this decision mean for him that he must withdraw from participating in the Lebanese community:

‘...It (*being a member of the Lebanese community*) means not being in the community as an open GLBT, but living in secrecy, I decided not to live in secrecy and I am slowly seeing myself attending less Lebanese functions.’

Withdrawal from participation in the Lebanese community has lead to a change in Mike’s personal identity. According to Mike, ‘...it (*being GLBT*) has not allowed me to participate which has led me to not identify with the Lebanese community’. However, Mike’s words suggest that he is still able to find positive aspects to the Lebanese community. These words imply that whilst Mike does not identify with the Lebanese community he recognises that the Lebanese community is indeed a part of who he is. For example, when asked, is there anything else that’s important about who you are in terms of your cultural background? Mike replied, ‘...the way I view eating, it is a social experience, it is a way of inviting someone into your life, it is spiritual, this I got from my Lebanese background.’

Although Mike has decided to not live in secrecy at this time he feels that he must live in secrecy and keep his sexual identity and cultural identity separate until he has attained independence from his family. He explained, ‘...I am keeping them secret now because I don’t have enough money to live by myself, I have to live with my family and even though they don’t actively interact with the Lebanese community, they identify themselves as doing so; when I’m in their home I will respect their wishes.’

The importance of family appears to be salient for Mike. He expresses his frustration that, in his experience, many people from Anglo Saxon backgrounds don’t understand

⁸ Michael/Mike is a pseudonym

⁹ The capitalisation has been made by Mike who preferred to address the interview questions in written form via email rather than within a face-to-face interview.

the complexity of what it means to be GLBT and from an Arabic speaking background. Mike explains that many people from Anglo Saxon backgrounds don't understand:

'...why our parents hate it so much, many anglos are pretty much okay about it and they don't understand that it is like the end of the world for our parents and it is not so easy to say to them to f__k off, we have been taught to have more respect for our parents compared to anglos. (note I am generalising here).'

Mike's comments suggest that he is conflicted between feeling that he has to leave his family so that he will no-longer have to live in secret and his strong attachment to his family. According to Mike, 'I am comfortable with being gay and don't need help being gay and happy. What I need is help on getting my parents to be happy with me being gay.' Mike reports that The Maronite Counselling service has helped a lot here.

Whilst Mike seems to feel isolated from the Lebanese community due to his sexuality, his comments suggest that he also feels isolated from the GLBT community. When asked what it means for him to be from a CALD background in the GLBT community, Mike explained that he was '...Still isolated as you don't see many visible Arabic GLBT, but I do know that they exist.'

As expressed by Karim, Mike too expresses dissatisfaction with some sections of the GLBT community, which appear to be dominant representations for him. This seems to have intensified Mike's feelings of isolation and suggests feelings of cultural homelessness in which he feels that there is no community in which he belongs. Mike writes:

'I hate the pill popping, stonewall f__k every guy you know gay community, I dislike the lets just do our bloody job and get to the pub for a beer aussie community, I dislike the religion is everything community and dedicating yourself to associating with only people in your own religion, I don't know if there is a community for me.'

Mike was then asked how he felt that workers could best support young GLBT people from Arabic backgrounds. He explained that he had many positive experiences from support people at places such as GLYSSN and The Maronite Counselling Service. However, he explained that this is 'not what I need, I am comfortable with being gay and don't need help being gay and happy. What I need is help on getting my parents to be happy with me being gay. The Maronite counselling service has helped a lot here'.

Mike explained, regarding the best way for workers to support young GLBT people from the Arabic community, 'I can only speak for my needs, For me face to face discussions on understanding why our parents find it so hard to comprehend and how we can change their ways of understanding. (impossible I know)'. He said that it would be useful for a brochure, support group or website to address the following questions:

'FOR ME: Why Lebanese parents find it hard to accept gay children?

FOR OTHERS: Being gay doesn't mean you need to go to stonewall?

Being gay does not mean you have to shout it out?'

Chinese and GLBT

Questionnaire for CALD SSAYP

Of the survey participants two young (mean age = 20.8) people identified as having a Chinese speaking background, being sexually diverse and living in Southern Sydney. One of these young people was a young woman who identified as being Tongzhi and Hong Kong born Chinese/Australian. The other was a young man in his late teens who identified as being Gay or no label and Australian, with one parent's birth place being Hong Kong and the other China.

The female participant indicated that whilst she knew other young GLBT people, she would like to meet more GLBT people. She indicated that it was very important for her to know other GLBT young people who were from a Chinese speaking background. In the additional comments regarding this she wrote: 'I think it's important so that I don't feel like I'm the only queer from a CALD background. We go through similar coming out experiences with our families and cultural communities, and its good to be able to share experiences'

Rather than tick 'yes' or 'no' regarding queries as to whether he would like to know more GLBT young people from a Chinese speaking background, the male participant wrote 'not bothered' next to all boxes regarding this issue. In the additional comments section he explained: 'not fused if I do meet them or not – It isn't important to my identity if I know people who identify with my cultural background and are same sex attracted/gender diverse'.

Both the male participant and female participant indicated that they felt positive about their sexuality ('great' and 'okay' consecutively). Whilst the female participant indicated that her 'parent and some...aunts and cousins' knew about her sexuality, the male participant indicated that no one in his family knew that he was gay. Both participants indicated that they had friends who knew about their sexuality, the female participant indicating 'yes all of my friends'.

In response to question 19 regarding perceived community (in this case the Chinese speaking community) attitudes about being GLBT the female participant noted: 'Its not really accepted in my extended family, but my own family is very supportive. There is an assumption out there that my culture is less accepting of same-sex attractedness and this makes my sexuality a taboo. So, for instance, my parents don't want their friends to know that I'm queer.' The male participant noted, 'generally negative – very few exposure to same sex or gender diverse people'.

In regards to where they went to get information about being GLBT both participants indicated that they got information from a counsellor. The female participant indicated that she attained information from a broad body of resources, 'Friends, Counsellor, internet, support group. Queer media e.g. LOTL, TV and newspapers, public libraries'. In regards to the internet, the female participant indicated that she utilized chat sites and websites that were for GLBT people in general as well as sites that were for people who were from a Chinese speaking background and GLBT. The male participant indicated that he utilized web sites that were for GLBT in general and were not culturally or linguistically specific. The female participant indicated that she thought that it was

important to have websites that have information for GLBT young people that is culturally specific, whilst the young male participant indicated that this was not very important.

Interview of SSAYP CALD Project Community Contact: Ann

Ann¹⁰ identifies with the Chinese speaking community. She also holds a number of years of experience working with the Chinese speaking community. Ann currently works with a multicultural health unit in Southern Sydney, targeting isolated communities from a wide range of CALD backgrounds.

When asked how she would describe the Chinese speaking communities approach to issues of sexuality and sexual diversity, Ann explained that there were significant differences in attitudes between Chinese speaking communities, which were related to geographical factors. Ann explained that in her experience, 'Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand are predominately conservative areas as they have been influenced by Confucianism, a philosophy that sees women in the lowest of the social hierarchy.' Ann said that due to this, within these countries sex is perceived as being 'for procreation only' and that 'a woman's duty is to have sex with a man and to have children.'

Ann explained that she perceives that 'Mainland China is less conservative' in regards to gender and sexuality due to 'the impact of Socialism and the Cultural Revolution.' She explained that 'the Cultural Revolution got rid of Confucianism' which lead to women being 'more open and assertive.' Ann said that it was important to note, however, there remains to be significant differences between 'the cities and poor villages where women's role remains to be subservient to men.'

Ann reported that there were also generational differences. For example, Ann explained that the older generation in countries such as Hong Kong and Singapore were still 'quite traditional.' She said that a majority of members of the older generation in these countries believe that 'serving men and the family is women's first priority.' However, according to Ann, 'the younger ones these days are more open in their view towards sexuality.'

Regardless of geographical and generational differences, Ann said it was her experience that the dominant current view towards GLBT sexuality within Chinese speaking communities in Australia was that 'it's a shame.' She explained that a large part of this perceived shame was related to the perception that by being GLBT that 'you're not able to procreate and (*therefore*) let the family down.' Ann said a related common attitude of parents towards GLBT offspring is 'I will not pass my money to him because he is not going to have any children.' Ann reiterated that, 'especially in Confucianism culture, your first priority is to the family; to the ancestor, to the parents, to the wife/husband, and to the children... So you wouldn't do anything to shame the family.' She emphasized however that 'most Chinese even if they have an issue they won't tell you to save face.' When queried about the biological fact that products of fertilization are not related to sexuality, Ann explained that within Chinese speaking communities IVF and adoption are uncommon.

Ann said that it was important to note however, that attitudes towards sexuality within Chinese speaking communities are changing. As an example, she recounted a personal experience from when she was in China with her mother 3 years ago. Ann said she was

¹⁰ 'Ann' is a pseudonym.

staying in a hotel with her mother when she received a call asking if she was lonely and wanted someone to sleep with her. Ann explained to the caller that she wasn't interested and the caller then asked Ann if she would be interested in a woman instead. Ann said whilst she was in China that she also met a Doctor who specialised in sex change surgery.

Ann said it was her experience that attitudes seem to be changing much faster in China than amongst the Chinese community in Australia. For example, Ann said that when her daughter was 21 their house rule was for their daughter to be home by 10 o'clock at night. Ann said that this is a common standing within the Chinese speaking community within Australia. In contrast, Anne narrated her experience of visiting a friend in Hong Kong. She said that whilst she was talking to her friend, her friend's daughter walked past them with her boyfriend into the bathroom where they had a shower together. Ann said that this was so unexpected given her experience of what is acceptable within the Chinese speaking community in Australia that her 'jaw dropped.'

Ann said that 'in the olden days people would keep away from GLBT people as it was perceived as an illness that could be caught and people also liked to associate GLBT with promiscuity.' As an example, Ann recounted the story of a Chinese woman who was living in Perth 29 years ago. Ann explained that this young woman lived with her female partner in a house next to her parents. According to Anne they lived together for a number of years with their families and the wider community thinking that they were just friends.

Ann said that at some stage the two women moved house and hired a Chinese removalist:

'The Chinese removalist noticed that they had only one bed in a three- bedroom house and soon this spread throughout the community. The woman's father threatened to kill them with a chopping knife and they had to leave. He denounced her from the family. The Aunt (*the woman's mother*) then threatened to commit suicide. Due to this pressure the women separated with her partner and she was sent to Hong Kong to marry a man... As everyone in the community in Perth knew about this business she was unable to find a husband in Perth.'

However, Ann said that attitudes towards GLBT people are 'improving' within the Chinese speaking community in Australia. She said that in her experience the current dominant attitude is that it is 'a shame...it is there and it is more and more widespread, but not in my family...if it does happen they won't tell anyone.'

When asked what it means to be GLBT in Chinese speaking communities, Ann reiterated that as discussed above, 'the first priority is to the family therefore you wouldn't do anything to shame the family. Having a diverse sexuality is seen as a shame, for this reason if you were to be GLBT you would need to move away from the family.' Ann that GLBT people from Chinese backgrounds then face 'double discrimination,' 'discrimination from the Chinese community and discrimination from the predominately Anglo Saxon GLBT community in Australia.'

Ann explained that in her experience the 'Australian GLBT community (*puts*) pressure on the young person to come out.' She said that this seems to be a 'middle class and main stream practice... Most people in the GLBT support service do not understand the dilemma, which a CALD GLBT person goes through. Having openly admitted his/her

GLBT sexuality would put a lot of unnecessary pressure on this individual's family and community relationship, and maybe employment opportunity.'

Ann was then asked what she suggested would be the best way to approach this issue with young GLBT people, their families and communities. Ann suggested that the most important way to address this issue is through the provision of education and support to older people in the community. She said that experience has shown her that this would be best done in an indirect manner rather than in specific focus groups. She said 'you have to address concerns about everyday things, such as schooling, diet etc and then sexuality.'

However, Ann highlighted the difficulties she has faced in trying to get workers to raise these issues in parenting groups. She said when she asked a convener to raise the issue of sexuality with a South Pacific Islanders support group she was told by the convener 'over my dead body'. Ann said she was also told by a Chinese convener that they wouldn't raise this issue in their support group because, 'these issues weren't relevant to the parenting group who were good parents with good children'.

Ann said she did raise this issue in a parenting group that she was convening. She explained that she raised this issue towards the end of this program 'after a good relationship had been established with the group.' She said at the end of this session two people approached her, 'one saying a friend had a girl who dressed as a boy, and another who had a friend going through a sex change.'

Ann said that in her view it would be valuable to provide information to Chinese counsellors located in community specific services in Southern Sydney. She also suggested that it would be of value to present the findings of this report to the St George Chinese Network.

Ann suggested that information regarding the following issues needed to be available for young GLBT people from Chinese backgrounds. She emphasized that these issues were the same issues that needed to be addressed with older people, families and community workers.

- 1) AIDS, whether being GLBT is clean, whether the family will be impacted on, whether the family will be safe.
- 2) Not having any grandchildren.
- 3) Issue of shaming the family.
- 4) Australian GLBT community pressure on the young person to come out.

Interview of CALD SSAYP: Michelle

Michelle¹¹ is a young woman in her early twenties who lives in Southern Sydney. Michelle was born in Hong Kong and she identifies with 'the Chinese speaking community, the mainstream Aussie community, to a certain extent with the queer community and the Buddhist community.' She identifies as being 'Australian/Chinese', 'queer, lesbian and Tongzhi.' When asked if there was anything else that she thought was important to note about how she identified, Michelle said: 'I guess just *that* I like my culture so much, the literature, the operas. I don't really ascribe to the traditional values of my culture and I'm lucky not to be under the influences of those values which could be discriminatory.'

¹¹ 'Michelle' is a pseudonym

When Michelle was asked about how, based on her own experience, she would describe the Chinese communities approach to being GLBT, she said 'I just have not to talk about it.' The theme of generational differences as mentioned in Anne's interview is also present in Michelle's experience. Michelle explained 'It's like there are two Chinese communities, the people of my parent's generation and my generation, it's really dichotomised. There are Chinese people in Australia who are more informed about discrimination...around people my parent's age, you wouldn't want to make things awkward for them.'

Michelle said that regardless of the generational differences, within the Chinese speaking community in Australia is generally seen '...as not normal. Some people see it as wrong. Some people see it as a product of Western society. Some people say, "you don't know what you're talking about, you don't know what you're missing, you're just confused". Michelle further explained, '...if you gave me two people to talk to (*regarding GLBT issues*), one Chinese and one mainstream Anglo Saxon Australian, I would assume that the mainstream Anglo Saxon Australian would be more tolerant.'

Michelle said that the impact of this on her '...is more of an internalised thing, you just assume it's not acceptable. I don't think it's a big deal for me, I'm a lucky one.' Michelle refers to herself as 'a lucky one' due to the fact that her parents have been supportive of her regarding her sexuality. This leads Michelle to emphasize that 'workers shouldn't think that because someone is Chinese that they'll face more homophobia from their parents or to accept that's something that they can't change or shouldn't change because it's another culture. Workers shouldn't pussy foot around it.' In terms of any possible implications for participation in the Chinese speaking community, Michelle explained that the impact being Tongzhi had on her ability to participate was '...not talking about queer issues around people of my parent's generation'

Michelle then referred to an issue that was raised in the second GLYSSN discussion group based on culture. At this time it was discussed that some interview participants perceived that opinions regarding sexual and gender diversity were changing at a slower rate within CALD communities in Australia than within the countries they had come to Australia from. Michelle explained that she disagreed with this. She said that 'people from Hong Kong go back and forth, and there are lots of programs from Hong Kong on TV here...People come here from Hong Kong and embrace tolerance here.'

Michelle explained that '...if you embrace public discourse in the Chinese community here however, it can be a different story. For example, a few years ago during the elections a Chinese community representative was standing on an anti-racism platform. However, they said not to vote for the Green's because of their accepting stance about sexuality. It just annoys me that a party can be anti-racist and also homophobic.'

In response to the question, what does it mean for you to be from a CALD background in the GLBT community? Michelle replied '...the only difficult thing about being Chinese and queer is not being able to find a partner'. She explained, 'I think that this is because in Chinese culture people are less verbose and in the queer community people are more verbose.' Michelle explicated, '...verbose, noisy, wanting to have fun rather than sit in a corner and talk and get to know each other'.

Michelle explained that 'I'm one of the more conservative members of the queer community... I'm not into dancing. I feel at times that the queer community is sort of

based on having the time and the money and the mobility. I don't enjoy it, the drinking and drugs side...it's a stereotype I suppose.'

Michelle was asked, based on her experience, what she suggested would be the best way for workers to support young GLBT people from the Chinese community. She replied, 'to be aware that although people may have issues with family that homophobia doesn't come from Chinese culture alone. Culture is not an excuse for homophobia.'

Michelle said what she thought workers could provide that would be most important for young GLBT people with a Chinese background. She explained that she thought 'it would be really good if there were a group for young GLBT people from multicultural backgrounds...It would be good if the convener of this group were also from a CALD background.'

When a copy of the interview transcript was forwarded to Michelle so that she could make any additions or amendments, Michelle wrote:

'I guess the only thing I've got to add is that I find the 'dress code' aspect of the queer community frustrating as well. I tend to look more conservative and I sometimes wear pink and scarves and all that, so I feel as if no one could 'pick' me as lesbian. I feel that the only thing I have in common with the lesbian community is that I like women, and I'm a feminist. I don't tend to share similar tastes in fashion, music, TV etc.'

Macedonian and GLBT

Interview of SSAYP CALD Project Community Contact - Elizabeth

Elizabeth¹² identifies with the Macedonian community. She has worked in the community sector in Southern Sydney with the Macedonian community for over 14 years. She has also been involved in numerous projects and research related to the Macedonian community.

When asked how she would describe the Macedonian communities approach to issues of sexuality and sexual diversity Elizabeth responded that 'sex in general is a taboo subject.' Whilst discussions regarding sexuality are taboo, she explained that when sexuality is rarely discussed '...the word commonly used for gay in Macedonian is the same word as for paedophile.' Elizabeth said that there was '...a real disability or illness factor associated with being GLBT' and this was seen as '...the work of the devil'.

To exemplify attitudes towards GLBT people, Elizabeth offered the story of a choreographer who started teaching traditional Macedonian dancing in a hall in Rockdale. Elizabeth recounted, '... the community embraced him for being such a good choreographer when somehow it was discovered that he was gay.' She explained that '...the word spread quickly (it is her experience that gossip is 'a big issue' in the Macedonian community)... and parents started taking their children out of his class, but some people left their children there. Later in the year there was a dance presentation where it became apparent just how good his choreography was and then the parents started to bring their children back to his classes.'

¹² Elizabeth is a pseudonym

Similar to Ann's experience with the Chinese speaking community in Australia, Elizabeth explained that attitudes seem to be changing in Macedonia regarding taboo subjects at a faster rate than within the Macedonian community in Australia. Elizabeth referred to the city of Skopje in particular. Developments for GLBTQ rights in Skopje were discussed, including the recent conference 'Rainbow Over Macedonia: The First Macedonian National Conference on the Rights of Homosexuals' and the large scale survey *Borders of Freedom and Choice: Homosexuality in the Republic of Macedonia*¹³.

Elizabeth said that it was her experience that '...in Australia the Macedonian community has held on quite strongly to many of the attitudes that they brought to Australia. However, in Macedonia opinions about issues that are still considered taboo in Australia are starting to be discussed.' Elizabeth referred to Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli's (1992) article *What about Me? A study of Italian-Australian Lesbians*. Elizabeth talked about the relevance of terms within this article such as 'cultural conflict' and 'cultural synthesis'.

Elizabeth also suggested that a further reason that many attitudes may be held onto might be related to the fact that Macedonia has only acknowledged as an independent country since 1991. Elizabeth explained that '...this heightens the drive to maintain and protect a national identity.' According to Elizabeth, one of the common themes in maintaining and protecting national identity is adhering to the misconception that '...homosexuality does not exist in the Macedonian community and is un-Macedonian' or seen as 'a threat from the outside'.

Elizabeth was then asked about the possible impacts of these attitudes on young GLBT people's ability to participate in the Macedonian community. She explained that there's 'a sense that you have to be one or the other' and that for many Macedonians that 'you are either are a part of the Macedonian culture or a part of the GLBT community.' Elizabeth used the metaphor of 'swapping hats'. She likened this to her experience of dressing alternatively when she was younger. Elizabeth explained that she used to change clothes where it was safe so that no one from the Macedonian community would be likely to see her. As a result, according to Elizabeth, no one in the Macedonian community had any idea that she dressed alternatively.

Whilst, in Elizabeth's experience young GLBT people may feel that they have to choose between being GLBT and participating in the Macedonian community, Elizabeth perceives that some aspects of the GLBT community are Anglo centric and 'not very culturally friendly'. Elizabeth explained that, in her experience, it is hard for GLBT people from Macedonian communities to feel as if they belong in either community.

Elizabeth explained that she had been working in a number of roles with the Macedonian community for over 14 years. She said that during this time that discussions around sexuality are as taboo as ever. Elizabeth explained that the only person that has been open in discussing these issues is a woman who has become HIV+ through her husband, who slept with a number of men and women during their marriage.

Elizabeth talked about 'hidden suicides' amongst young people in the Macedonian community. She explained that on many occasions she has heard gossip suggesting

¹³ : The conference proceedings for 'Rainbow Over Macedonia' and the report 'Borders of Freedom and Choice' can be attained by emailing Nino at info@cgcp.org.mk. Nino is the website moderator for The Macedonia Gay Right's wesbite, www.cgcp.org.mk.

that the young person has committed suicide due to being GLBT. Due to concerns about this Elizabeth has ensured that the word sexuality is included where possible in service advertising material. However, Elizabeth emphasized that this hasn't meant that young GLBT people have felt safe to approach her about this issue. Elizabeth stressed that in her experience, the reason that young GLBT people from Macedonian communities are not approaching services to discuss GLBT issues is because of how taboo the subject is, rather than sexual and gender diversity not being an important issues for the community.

Elizabeth was then asked, based on her experience, how she suggest was the best way to approach sexuality or gender diversity with young GLBT people from Macedonian communities. Elizabeth suggested that given how taboo discussions around sexuality or sex are, that the Internet is one of the best places for young GLBT people to find information and get support.

As discussed within the next section, a message was placed by the consultant on the Macedonian web-based online community forum (www.maso.org). The consultant then related to Elizabeth, the progress of responses to this message. Elizabeth suggested that it would be useful to also place a message on the web-based community forum 'Woglife' at www.wog.com.au. However, Elizabeth noted that content to be added on this website is monitored and one community based organisation had been unable to get information about a survey about drug use onto this site.

Elizabeth suggested that these forums were 'a great way to get this issue out there into the community.' However, difficulties in maintaining this by replying to comments were raised as a difficulty. The limitations of representing an organization within these forums rather than an individual were also discussed. It was agreed that it would be a good idea to establish a non-work related identity to use as well as an organization identity. Limitations of funding were also discussed in this context. She highlighted that the MAWA is the only funded Macedonian community organization in Sydney whereas many other community groups have a number of community organizations.

Elizabeth was then asked what she thought were important issues that needed to be addressed for young GLBT people from Macedonian communities, their friends and families. She noted the following topics:

- 1) Illness: Is being GLBT an illness? Information dispelling this myth.
- 2) Religion: Countering religious beliefs.
- 3) Taboos: A discussion about taboos. What does it mean if something is taboo? Is something wrong just because it is taboo?
- 4) Gossip: A discussion about gossip. How the fear of gossip can feel. How to cope with gossip.
- 5) Confidentiality: That there are confidential support services.
- 6) Integration Conflict: A discussion or visual animation about all the different conflicts there may be about cultural identity and the GLBT community. Ways to deal with these conflicts.
- 7) Imagery: Elizabeth talked about the importance of having images that were diverse. For example, not only images of people from diverse backgrounds but also having cultural images. For example, she suggested having a border that is a traditional Macedonian design.

Macedonian Web Based Community Forum

In line with Elizabeth's experience, the current project failed to find one young GLBT person from a Macedonian background to interview. Further, not one SSAYP CALD Project Questionnaire respondent identified as having a Macedonian background. MAWA's Youth Worker was contacted for her suggestions. However, this worker agreed with Elizabeth, that due to the strength of the taboo about discussing this issue that she was unaware of any young people who identified as being GLBT.

During this period, contact was made with a worker with a Macedonian background who was taken aback by the topic of this project. She said '...never in my life have I heard of this topic being discussed in the Macedonian community.' The worker explained that 'young people may be more open to discussing these things than adults.' However, she said 'if there is a hint of an adult they will not discuss these issues. This is because of concerns about bringing shame to the family.'

According to this worker, GLBT issues are predominantly perceived as 'shameful' within the Macedonian community. She said:

'...people would do nothing to shame the family...Family is perceived as being more important than your own needs, family is so much more important. There's you, but who you are in the family overrides who you are as an individual. Your actions reflect on your family.'

For this reason, she explained, GLBT issues are not discussed for fear that doing so would bring shame upon your family or the Macedonian community in general: '...in Australia young people are more patriotic than in Macedonia, so it becomes more important not to shame the community.'

This worker suggested that the website www.maso.com.au may be a good place to find out whether a posting regarding this project on their forum would be suitable. An email was sent to the website moderator for this site. However, no reply was sent. Due to this, it was decided to go ahead and place a message on their forum. The forum topic was 'Young Macedonian and Same Sex Attracted or Gender Diverse'¹⁴. This topic was added to the forum on the 19th of March 2006 by the 3rd of April 2006 there had been one hundred and fifty six replies. By the 14th of May 2006 there had been two thousand and five viewings of this topic.

The responses to this forum were mixed as expected. Overtly aggressive responses were the exception, with a wide majority of participants specifying that whilst they 'do not support a GLBT lifestyle' that they would not 'condemn' a person because they were GLBT. Full analyses of the responses to this forum topic are beyond the scope of this report. However, given that it was not possible to attain an interview with a young GLBT person from the Macedonian community the following excerpts serve to at least give voice to some of the opinions held by several young Macedonian people regarding GLBT issues.

Adelmaso: 'Give me a f__king break, take your questions and curiosity to the GREEK FORUMS. It's Adam and Eve NOT ADAM and STEVE (ohh I still laugh at that line). Seriously though, I understand what you are trying to do but please just f__k off and go corrupt some other nationality.'

¹⁴ Link to forum:

<http://p205.ezboard.com/fmasofrm1.showMessageRange?topicID=2353.topic&start=1&stop=20>

GokiGorance: 'Adelmaso; With all due respect to you, i think that was a little uncalled for... The issue of gays in the macedonian community is real and thriving, lets not be so narrow minded as our parents are and be supportive of people and cause where possible. It was only recently where a fellow macedonian committed suicide cuz of sexuality and the inability to address his emotions. He took the easy road. I think if support groups are there for people then it can only be a good thing if it allows people an avenue to discuss and open about there feelings with other like people. We share this place with all sorts of people, we are all human, and no one is any better than anyone else.'

Adelmaso: 'Goki, seriously, By all means if you want to be Gay or anyone else, go for it, just don't disgrace our community in the process...Gay Macedonians embarass me, embarass our community and I have no time for them or consultants such as the person that started this post. Why are we encouraging this behaviour??

Happygirl: 'Adelmaso... As for your stance on gay people, that's fine, it's your opinion – but I don't think it disgraces our community. Maybe in your opinion they disgrace themselves, but not our community. By supporting them as a community we show strength, acceptance, unity, understanding and love. This says alot more for the macedonian community than turning our backs on them just because of their life choices. It's alot harder to stand by somone and support them than walk away and turn a blind eye...anyone can pretend that something is not there/not happening... I prefer not to be just anyone but someone with strength of character.'

Adelmaso: '...Being Macedonian Orthodox, I am very against same-sex relationships or marriages, whether two guys, or two girls. As Christianity states, the marrying of two same-sex couples is wrong and sinful to God's mind, and what he meant for us to be. Even the Bible itself states that the relationship of two same-sex couples is wrong. Therefore, I am not in favor of same-sex relationships.'

Deefecto: 'I will just say that probably 80% of my closest friends came out in the last 2 or 3 years. In some instances i kind of knew in others it was a lot harder to deal with as i was closer to that particular person.

I won't lie, i was affected by thier coming out...and it strained the friendships in some cases. If you ask any gay person if they could 'choose' to be gay or straight...they will almost always say straight. I highlight the word 'choose' because many ignorant people...who probably have never even met or spoken to a person who is gay let alone have been freinds with one, seem to think it is a choice rather than something they are born with.

It took my best friend years before they could tell me, because they were afraid of losing my friendship. I'm by nature a very blunt person...i could have reacted quite negatively...and truth be told i did...i was offended...firstly that they did not tell me...but moreso because i could not understand...i was somewhat disgusted too...simply because i am straight and i don't understand what it is to be gay.

Sure, in nature it is supposed to be male and female...they're pretty aware of that too. There's a lot of factors that prevent them from having 'normal' lives as a result of their sexuality. If you stop to think about it...their lives are not any easier.

At the end of the day...I loved my friends for who they were from the beginning..not for what they were...and why should it make any difference now...? They are the most honest and loving people I have ever had the pleasure in meeting and lucky enough to call them my friends. After what they go through...there's no need for bulls__t games in their lives. They don't make apologies for who they are...and that's an important lesson you can learn from them.

I don't give a @#%\$ what anyone says...i am proud of them.'

Krissikay: 'Many people have feelings towards other people of the same sex, and wonder whether this means that they are gay. For many people these feelings can be very intense and alienating. Some people who are attracted to other people of the same sex are gay and go on to have sexual relationships with people of the same sex. But other people who have gay feelings find that these change over time and they become attracted to people of the opposite sex.

Other people are attracted to both men and women, and have relationships with both. Some people are not attracted to anyone and wonder if this is a sign of homosexuality. Often it is only time that will resolve these feelings.

When do people know that they are gay?

There is no simple answer or standard answer to this question, as it varies from person to person. Generally it can be said that being gay is not something a person suddenly begins to consider, and it may not be something they can initially put a name to. Research published in 1996 showed how the young gay men interviewed had described a set of feelings which they gradually realised made them 'different' in some way, and a set of feelings they thought maybe every teenage boy has.

'I thought, well, this is just the phase bit. Sooner or later I'm going to start finding women attractive. I never did. As I became more attracted to men, and I still wasn't getting attracted to women, I thought, @#%\$, you're gay. And it was really quite a shock when it hit me.'

Is homosexuality a phase young people go through?

For some people yes, and for others no. Some people do not have their first homosexual feelings or experience until they are well into adulthood. In a national survey in Britain carried out in the 1990s, nearly the same number of women reported their first homosexual experience had happened in their twenties as did in their thirties, forties or fifties. But, there is evidence that for some people homosexual experiences may well be part of a transitional or experimental phase in their youth. This is hardly surprising given that adolescence is a period of change in which many people find who they are and what they want for themselves in adult life. This kind of behaviour is perfectly normal.

Are you born gay? What causes people to be gay?

'One of the things I can remember thinking a lot about is ... why am I like this? Is it someone's fault?'

There is no simple answer to the question, 'Are some people born lesbian or gay?' There are some theories which stress biological differences between heterosexual and homosexual adults, suggesting that people are born with their sexuality already determined.

You are who you are.... dont ever let anyone tell you who to be, act and what to say... cause your just YOU!'

Oceanic and GLBT

Questionnaire for CALD SSAYP

One respondent identified as being from an Oceanic background. This young person identified as being in his early twenties, male, gay and living in the Sutherland Shire. In terms of cultural identity this young person identified himself as being Australian with parents born in New Zealand and who identify as having a Maori background.

This respondent indicated that he knows other people who are GLBT and from a Maori background, and that although he wouldn't like to know anyone else who are GLBT and from a Maori background, he thinks it is important to know people who are GLBT and from a Maori background.

In the additional comments section he added that it is important for him to know other young GLBT people from a Maori background because 'it's nice 2 see people from my tribe that r like me'. He indicated that he felt great about being gay. However, in the additional comments section he added 'it's hard at times and you miss out on kids but what you lose you also gain'. This respondent indicated that 'everyone' in his family new he was gay as did all of his friends. In the additional comments section he added, 'if people don't like it f__k them'.

In response to the question, overall, based on your own experience, what do people from your cultural background think about being same-sex attracted or gender diverse? The young person answered 'same sex attraction is accepted as a normal thing but gender diversity is seen as a perversion of nature'.

In terms of where he went to get support or information about being gay, this respondent indicated that he went to a support group or family member. In terms of websites that he went to for information, he indicated that he went to chat sites for people who are same-sex attracted or gender diverse. He indicated that it was somewhat important to him to have websites that were for GLBT young people who identified as having the same cultural background as him.

In terms of the websites recommended by this reports web-based literature review, the young person indicated that he had visited the GLAS website and had found this useful. The responded added that his ideal website would have 'different faces and info on other cultures'.

Interview of SSAYP CALD Project Community Contact: Tui

Tui¹⁵ is a community-based worker who identifies with the Oceanic community. She holds many years of experience working with CALD young people.

Tui was initially asked how she would describe the Oceanic communities approach to issues of sexuality and sexual diversity. She responded that in her experience 'oceanic communities have a mixed response to sexuality and gender identity.' Tui explained:

'I have experienced both sides of the spectrum and believe that in general, oceanic communities are often accepting of diversity. In the Australian context, I believe that this is the case as we are displaced citizens in a bicultural (meaning white Australia on one side – everyone else on the other) political environment. Due to colonisation and western doctrines of religion, many oceanic communities struggle with traditional and colonized values.'

Tui was then asked: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender are four terms of sexual identity regularly used in the wider Australian community. Does the population group in which you work have any other terms that it uses to describe same-sex sexual behaviours or same-sex attracted people? Her response is as follows:

'More than two hundred years after the onset of colonisation, I believe that it is becoming clear that traditional Maori society accorded great importance to sexual diversity in all its manifestations. With regard to same sex relationships, there is mounting evidence that these were not only condoned but that they played an important role in the overall structure of Maori society. Evidence today suggests that people in same sex relationships were revered within their communities. Parallel evidence from other countries indicates that a similar situation existed in other indigenous cultures through out the Pacific.

In my work with Maori, particular reference to a form of sexual expression has come to be known as Takatapui. In contemporary usage, the term embraces all non-heterosexual forms of sexuality. In a historical context the term was used to describe 'an intimate companion of the same sex'.

I am also familiar with the term Fafafine, which also embraces all non heterosexual forms of sexuality as well as gender identity. Fafafine are considered traditionally as a third gender.'

Tui was then asked, based on her experience, what she perceived it means to be GLBT in the Oceanic community. She responded:

'As in many communities, discrimination and homophobia still exist in Oceanic communities. It is often difficult to maintain a cultural and a sexual / gender identity. There are traditional roles for men and women in the community and often for SSA and gender questioning YP, these roles are confusing.'

Many families I have worked with, believe that being GLBT is due to western influence, and I have heard stories of YP being taken back to the 'islands' to work themselves out. The dual identity challenge that is faced by GLBT people is often difficult to manage.'

¹⁵ Tui is a pseudonym

In terms of what it meant to be from an Oceanic background in the GLBT community, Tui explained that in her experience that 'In the GLBT community there is a mixed response from Oceanic people regarding acceptance.' According to Tui, 'There is a strong vibrant community in New Zealand, however in the Sydney context many GLBT people have felt isolated and displaced in the community.'

When asked, based on her experience, what she would suggest is the best way to support young GLBT people from Oceanic communities, their families and communities. Tui highlighted that 'there is a lot of research that comes out of New Zealand.' In particular, 'the Auckland based group 'Rainbow Youth' publishes most of its research on line.'

She suggested that it would be useful for 'a social support group for all GLBT people be formed to maintain that sense of unity across generations. It would be fantastic to form a Takatapui Kapa Haka (Performance Group), or simply have Pacifica Fair that embraces the strong Oceanic communities that we have, which includes sexual and gender diverse subjects.'

In terms of information provision to young GLBT people from Oceanic backgrounds, via GLYSSN's website, brochures or support groups, Tui suggested that the following issues would be most relevant for young GLBT people from Oceanic communities:

- 1) Research reports about traditional values vs Colonisation
- 2) Simple language guide so YP can access info in their own language i.e Maori, Tongan etc.
- 3) Web links to NZ based groups.

Interview of CALD SSAYP: Kaipiri

Kaipiri¹⁶ is a young person in his early twenties who lives in the Sutherland Shire. He identifies as being gay, male and Maori. When asked what community/communities he identified with Kaipiri explained:

'I don't really identify with any specific communities. I would probably say the gay community, but not really, I don't like having that label stuck on me. The gay community I think is very, very small and the gay scene is also very small. It's my current view that if we want acceptance we can't put ourselves into a slot like the gay community and that's exactly what we're doing and we should really get out there a bit more.'

When asked whether he felt there was anything else that was important about how he identified in terms of his cultural background, Kaipiri explained; 'There's my Maori side and also my Anglo Saxon side. I'm just very attached to my Maori side...I find that that's the one I have the most empathy for...but I also do like my Anglo Saxon side...where my family is from and everything that they have accomplished is very important to me.'

Kaipiri explained that based on his experience the Oceanic communities approach to being GLBT 'on a general whole it's quite fine'. In his experience being GLBT is 'very rarely rejected...it's like 'okay, sweet as cus, whatever'. According to Kaipiri, 'it does not matter that much.' However, he explains that he has 'run into a few interferences, mostly

¹⁶ Kaipiri is a pseudonym

with males trying to prove that they're men'. Kaupiri explains: '...to me it goes back to the bully and the victim scenario from high school and it's just a matter of subtly letting them know that 'I'm not your victim don't try it'...without the use of violence of course and they usually back down and get to know me but'.

Kaupiri explained that it was his experience that 'probably every time I go to meet a different group of Islanders or Maoris, there are always one or two males who are like that and I just have to...firmly without trying to insult them know that I'm not a victim so don't even try it. However, according to Kaupiri, 'that's it really, but on a general whole it's quite fine, within my tribe and within my family... within I guess my closest network of people from my culture, it's nothing, it's no big deal...there's not that much as most people would think.'

Although Kaupiri indicates that his sexuality is 'no big deal', he also explained that being GLBT in the Oceanic community 'can be a struggle.' When asked to explain what he meant by struggle, he explained:

'Mostly with looks...because the area I live in is very boy girl, you have to be a man you have to be a girl...especially in the older members of my generation in my area can be very much like 'your supposed to be a girl, your supposed to be a boy, you can't do this and you can't do that' and I'm constantly going 'well F you, I'm going to be me and do what I want to do no matter what you think'. That happens a bit, actually it's gotten to the point where it's just a part of every day life...it used to happen a lot but recently over the last couple of years very rarely but before that it was a constant thing. Now it happens very rarely and when it does happen I just shut those people out ...because if they want to be judgmental of me then they don't count.'

Kaupiri was then asked: What impact has being GLBT had on your ability to participate in the Oceanic community? Has it had any impact at all? Do you keep these parts of yourself separate? He responded:

'I've always kept parts of myself separate from the Maori community...or communities in general because that can be a bit private...but as far as being actually gay goes I find very rarely does it eliminate me from certain things. The only things that it eliminates me from is having kids which is in the Maori way is big...everyone has kids when they're young and I'm the first person in my family not to be married and have kids by the age of twenty and that makes you feel a bit like the odd one out ...cos everyone else has done this and you're the first one not to do it...like even the gay members of my family, the older ones they had kids as well and I don't. I find that aspect of it...cut me off a little bit, but other than that, no, the only thing is to fulfil your role in life whatever that is.'

Kaupiri said that even though he felt that his sexuality has not had any major ramifications for his participation in the Oceanic community that he doesn't 'think that it's always safe enough to talk about'. He explained:

'...because in some areas and some Maori families it's very hardcore and it's not necessarily the easiest thing to do and we can be quite rough when we want to be. I'm just fortunate because in my family and my extended tribe there's a few of us already...there's already several of us...so it was already available as for other Maori families I'm not 100% too sure. When they find out about it they're fine about it, like I never mention it but it is known, I don't really discuss it, I don't bring the topic up... but people do know'.

Kaupiri explained that he has chosen not to discuss his sexuality rather than decided not to discuss this due to feeling he is unable to. According to Kaupiri:

'I think for me, get to know the person first before you know the sexuality. For me sexuality is something I do in the bedroom. You need to get to know the person first and by doing that I find, people usually just treat me like a normal person...cos I don't put that up first. That's not the first thing I give them...people don't do that in the real world (*disclose their sexuality*). Most people in the real world don't do that so I try not to, I just go 'hi my name is this how are you?' you don't make that the first thing you do...it's a personal choice not fear of homophobia.'

When asked about what it meant for him to be from a Oceanic background in the GLBT community, Kaupiri explained, 'In general as to fitting into the gay community... I quite often feel as if I don't.' When asked to extrapolate on this he responded:

'Just because the images that are projected are constantly blond hair, blue eyes...good looking, athletic, that stereotypical bull...I don't conform to that and it's always projected and I'm not a part of that, that's not me. I'm going to go somewhere else. Even though the fact that I've participated with Mardi Gras and I've participated with helping gay youth rights...I'm always going, well I constantly feel that I'm still left out...because of this I've always met up with people from different backgrounds...out of my circle of friends you can't really say that one culture really dominates the other because we're all mixed and that's what I prefer to do because you get to see more things in life.'

Kaupiri was then asked, based on his experience, what he suggested would be the best way for workers to support young GLBT people from the Oceanic community. He explained, 'the best way to support us would be to link up with other Polynesian groups.' He explained that he knew of several supportive workers in the Oceanic community who he felt would benefit from training around GLBT issues.

Kaupiri also explained that it might be helpful for young people who contacted support groups to be able to meet up with a youth worker before they attend the meeting. He also suggested that youth workers could let the group know that someone new is coming so that the new people will feel more at ease:

'...cos generally how it works is you've already got someone whose already feeling a bit insecure about their sexuality let alone going to a sexuality youth group...and also what happens I found when I was first coming out of first realizing my sexuality, I was a little homophobic. I was different and I didn't like that and I didn't like myself...even when you're a kid even when your family is accepting it is still put into your head that being gay is different or not quite right or being queer or gender questioning. So even if our parents don't say anything to us there are still other outside influences that may tell us it's not quite right and when we hear it when we're kids or teenagers or when we're feeling a little insecure about our sexuality or gender it kinda sticks. For someone whose feeling in that position to go to a youth group like that, they're already feeling a bit off their toes and could well be feeling a little defensive'.

In terms of an ideal support group, Kaupiri explained that he felt 'it would be really good if there were a group that was constantly mixed backgrounds (*cultural*)'.

Service Provider Training Sessions

In line with the *Beaches, Bushland and Isolation* (Moutou, 2004) recommendation regarding the provision of training opportunities relating to issues pertaining to young GLBT people to local services, Twenty10's training package was offered to services within St George and Sutherland. In particular, CALD specific services and interagencies were targeted. There were 52 participants overall, attending one of two training days in mid to late May 2006. The consultant co-facilitated this training with Twenty10 as per the 1st responsibility set forth by the consultant's agreement with St George Youth Services.

Twenty10's Ready or Not Training Program

Twenty10 was invited by the GLYSSN Project to assist on the SSAYP CALD Project to deliver a service training day, to improve the service practice of professionals working in the St George and Sutherland area with young GLBT people from this projects target communities.

Twenty10's *Ready or Not* training program explores the support needs of GLBT young people. Twenty10' runs *Ready or Not* across the state of NSW at no cost. This training program explores some of the issues that are presented by young people who are GLBT and may present to support services and explores ways to effectively work with these issues. This program also provides an overview of the barriers that GLBT young people and their families face in accessing support services.

With funding from the Reconnect Program from the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS), the Ready or Not Program has developed curriculum and provides comprehensive trainings and technical assistance for agencies interested in implementing GLBT support services. The *Ready or Not* training program is designed to educate staff at all levels of an organization, to improve the quality of services provided to GLBT young people and their families. An overview of Twenty10's *Ready or Not* training guide is included as Appendix C.

The following evaluation has been provided by Twenty10. This evaluation seeks to provide an overview of the delivery of *Ready or Not* to service providers who work in the St George and Sutherland area. This evaluation also focused on understanding the entire social value of delivering training to the communities of St George and the Sutherland Shire.

Twenty10's Ready or Not Evaluation

Participants were asked to comment on what it is like to be GLBT in the Sutherland Shire and St George community. The following is a summary of their comments:

Table 1
What It's like to be GLBT in St George/Sutherland

?	Perceived to be NO GLBT people in this community
?	Other way of thinking about GLBT
?	Negative quick judgemental response among YP to use homophobic language

- ? Homophobia in schools is a norm
- ? No positive images
- ? Getting better (past Tempe bridge) – Women’s night at a local bar
- ? No public displays of GLBT relationships
- ? Some safe services – GLYSSN, Reconnect
- ? 2005 a few Mardi Gras events
- ? Isolated
- ? CALD SSAYP double trouble, more isolated
- ? Have to go to the city to access support services
- ? Most YP leave the community for Newtown or Darlinghurst
- ? Bullied
- ? Not seen as part of the community
- ? Largely not spoken about
- ? Things are slowly getting better

Pre testing survey’s highlighted the importance of offering training as participants comments regarding the presence and needs of GLBT young people, highlighted the incongruity in the community understanding of GLBT young people. The majority of the respondents were educators, counsellors, case managers, youth workers and service providers.

In accordance to the pre-training community consultations; Twenty10 in partnership with the GLYSSN project, SSAYP CALD Steering Committee and the SSAYP CALD Consultant delivered a five (5) hour training program.

The following demographics indicates the communities and professions of those involved in the training:

Table 2
Participant Demographics

Number of Participants: 52	Participant Postcode (work): 2217: 2216: 2232: 2228: 2233: 2229: 2220: 2230: 1499: 2227: 2210: 2508: 2222: 2207: 2021
Participant Cultural Identity: Australian – CALD (4) Australian (10) Uruguayan/ Australian (1) Macedonian (1) CALD South African (1) Greek (2)	Area of work: CALD Services (1) NGO (5) Mental Health (2) Sexual Health Service Housing (2) Youth Work (12) Counselling (7) DoCS (4) Reconnect (2) Education (7)

	Govt Department (not captured elsewhere) (2) Community Centre Police
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Key (n) = No. of Respondents

In responding to questions about their services demographics, policies, environment and their own information, participants have helped to establish both a sense of what has been achieved thus far, and a road map for the work yet to come. The data collected in the training offers a baseline for future training in the St George and Sutherland Shire area.

In order to provide an optimum training session, participants were asked to disclose their Wants / Needs of the training. The following is a summary of their comments:

Table 3
Participant Training Goals

? Appropriate support for SSAYP
? How to work with SSAYP
? Increase knowledge\ understanding regarding SSAYP
? Ideas around supporting children of SSA parents
? SSAYP from CALD communities
? Improving service provision for SSAYP
? Strategies for dealing with Bullying at schools
? Referrals
? Religious controversy with SSAYP
? Increasing resources
? Overall outlook of SSAYP
? More information re: transgender YP
? Networking
? Different approaches to work practice
? Youth specific knowledge
? Strategies to make SSAYP safer
? Making service accessible to SSAYP

The RoN training provided participants with skills, theory and best practice advice for working with GLBT YP. The training covered **Sexual and Gender Identity Formation** [exploring definitions regarding sexual and gender orientation and identity; FBI (feelings, behaviour, Identity) model; A conceptual framework for Transgender Identity Model; and current Research into GLBT issues]; **How Homophobia Works and Hurts** [what are the experiences of SSA YP in your community; homophobia and heterosexism; case studies]; **Working with YP/ Families / Communities** [resource lists; service tools; good practice models; resources]; **Future Planning and Development** [community problem solving and planning; goal setting].

The following data critically reflects the participants view on their learning and development acquired during this training program. Participants were asked to rate the Content [on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is excellent and 1 is very poor] of the training. The following table displays the results:

Table 4
Acquired Learning and Development

1. How do you rate this workshop overall? 1: 0 2: 0 3: 3 4: 18 5: 19
2. How do you rate the trainers' knowledge of the subjects covered? 1: 0 2: 0 3: 0 4: 11 5: 29
3. How do you rate the trainers' presentation skills? 1: 0 2: 0 3: 2 4: 13 5: 24
4. How do you rate the balance of presentations, discussion, group exercises, etc? 1: 0 2: 0 3: 5 4: 24 5: 12
5. How do you rate the balance of practical with the theoretical? 1: 0 2: 0 3: 9 4: 20 5: 12
6. How do you rate the length of the workshop? 1: 0 2: 3 3: 3 4: 20 5: 15
7. How logically was the workshop sequenced? 1: 0 2: 1 3: 4 4: 22

5: 14
8. How useful was the workshop in relation to your current job? 1: 0 2: 2 3: 5 4: 16 5: 16
9. How interesting was the workshop? 1: 0 2: 0 3: 4 4: 14 5: 22
10. How do you rate the usefulness of the kit provided? 1: 0 2: 0 3: 3 4: 13 5: 24

(Key: Right = Scale - Left= No. of Participant Responses)

The overall data reflects positively on achieving the objectives set out by the SSAYPCALD project – Service Provider Training component. Service providers gained a better understanding of SSAYP in their communities and have been given the ‘tools’ to improve service delivery.

In order to reflect on the learning outcomes, participants were asked to list three things that they have learnt from the training program. The following is a summary of their comments:

Table 5
Learning Outcomes

? Current GLBT YP issues (9)
? Resources Available (14)
? How serious the issue is (1)
? Ways of communicating that is inclusive, useful and friendly (11)
? Lots
? Theoretical information (9)
? Coming out resource (4)
? Understanding and working with stereotypes (3)
? To open your eyes more and look at what the media is telling us
? Became more informed to avoid ignorance
? Referral service List (15)
? Excellent strategies (6)
? Transgender issues (2)
? Education happening in schools
? Workplace practice issues (8)
? Networking opportunities (9)
? Statistics (1)

? Personal assumptions challenged (1)
? Coming out is not the most important thing for all GLBT YP (1)
? The term GLBT, SSA – new language (1)
? Differences between biological sex and social gender (2)
? How to make workplace safer (1)
? About Twenty10 and St George services (3)

Key (n) = No. of Respondents

As reflected in the participant’s comments, many of their identified learning and development goals have been achieved.

In order to identify further learning and development programs for the area, participants were asked to list three things that they would like to learn more about in the future. The following is a summary of their comments:

Table 6
Future Learning needs

? Counselling models (1)
? Twenty10 and GLYSSN Service Visit (2)
? Transgender issues (1)
? Resources available in Area (1)
? More time (2)
? More case studies (4)
? Bullying and Homophobia at schools – what to do?
? More resources (1)
? Working with Parents / Families (1)
? More research / studies (1)
? More expert presenters (1)
? Resources (1)
? More strategies on working with YP (1)
? Therapeutic questions (1)
? More Theory (1)
? More referral agencies (1)
? Education Forms (1)
? Multi-agency direction strategies (1)
? More cultural differences and GLBT (1)
? Religion and Sexuality / gender (1)
? Homophobic staff attitude (1)

Key (n) = No. of Respondents

Twenty10 recommends that the GLYSSN project continue to provide St George and Sutherland Shire communities with programs/ resources and education sessions addressing the above-identified targets.

Participants were asked what did they like most about this training program. The following is a summary of their comments:

Table 7

What Participants liked most about the training

?	Networking opportunities and how we can change service provision (7)
?	Forum and space to discuss the issues (1)
?	Critical reflection on organisations work (1)
?	Lunch (3)
?	Is your service GLBT Friendly list (1)
?	Theory information / models (2)
?	Resources (1)
?	Expansion of knowledge base in this area (1)
?	Case Studies (1)
?	Society and Gender assumptions (1)
?	Great balance between information, activities and group work (15)
?	All of it (7)
?	Relaxed training atmosphere, humour, snacks (1)
?	Knowledge and passion of presenters (1)
?	Felt good not to feel so isolated (1)
?	Clear, logical presentation (2)
?	Well organised with info sheets (6)
?	Presenters were extremely engaging (1)
?	Excellent presenters, presentation skills (9)

Key (n) = No. of Respondents

The feedback in this section reflects the previous needs analysis as conducted by the GLYSSN project. It is essential that service providers have an opportunity to discuss their practice concerns, and have access to ongoing sexuality and gender identity training.

Twenty10 would recommend that an interagency be developed by the GLYSSN project to keep sexuality and gender identity on every service provider's agenda.

Participants were asked what did they like least about this training program. The following is a summary of their comments:

Table 8

What Participants Liked Least About the Training Program

?	Didn't like when workers read out the definitions – they lost me – better to speak with normal voice? (1)
?	The noise in the venue – the other group was too loud – but venue great (1)
?	What's available for shire kids – I guess nothing? (1)
?	That there appears that there is not a bipartisan approach to this problem and related problems – not only from government, but the community in general (1)
?	The 'get to know you activity' took too long (1)
?	The beautiful venue was potentially distracting (1)
?	Having to explain the theories (1)
?	Not long enough (4)
?	Nothing – it was all good (11)
?	Need more basic theory (1)

? The bad hard seats (1)
? After lunch session was not as 'tight' (1)
? Evaluation form is too long (1)
? Need a morning and afternoon tea break (1)
? It was cold in the venue (1)

Key (n) = No. of Respondents

As this session of the RoN training program was delivered in five (5) hours, it is impossible to cover all of the support needs of GLBT YP. Twenty10 recommends that service providers purchase the recommended resources, implement the strategies as offered in the training and create a connection to the vast GLBT community.

Participants were asked which workshop or resource kit, will be most useful for them in their work place. The following is a summary of their comments:

Table 9
Usefulness of Provided Resources

? Resource kit (21)
? 'How friendly is your service' sheet (1)
? Reflecting on the exercises and the things that some people take for granted (1)
? Can use it all (1)
? Coming out process (1)
? The FBI theory (1)
? Working with GLBT YP (1)
? Everything (1)
? I think it's a great package (1)
? Support services sheet (1)
? Theoretical Section (3)
? Networking with services (1)
? Presenters were easy to listen to and interesting (1)
? Keeping families together resource (1)
? All of it (5)
? What questions to ask in counselling session (5)

Key (n) = No. of Respondents

Twenty10 cannot highlight enough how important it is for services to have adequate resources. Staff and YP need to have access to up to date resources pertaining to GLBT Issues, theoretical frameworks and evidence based practice, in order to provide a safe service.

Participants were asked what they would like to see added to the training program. The following is a summary of their comments:

Table 10

What Participants Would Like to See Added to the Program

? Short role play on language (1)
? More information regarding Twenty10 and GLYSSN (1)
? Video of real life situation, so we can relate to it (1)
? More opportunity to challenge some of the ideas (1)
? Whiteboard – bad seats – no OHT (1)
? The entire program expanded (1)
? More role plays (1)
? More Time (4)
? More work on therapeutic practice – addressing language (1)
? Ongoing workshops with services (1)
? More about GLBT community, funding, government, Centrelink issues etc. (1)
? Small group work so it makes it easier to ask questions (1)
? More cultural diversity [only 4 cultural examples] (1)
? Issues regarding isolation (1)
? Didn't need to go through resources (1)
? YP to come and tell story – more personal stories (5)
? More on transgender (1)
? Need to challenge people more about their personal feelings, situations (1)

Key (n) = No. of Respondents

We would recommend further training to cover the issues presented.

Participants were asked what they would like to see (if anything) dropped from the training program. The following is a summary of their comments:

Table 11

What Participants Would Like to See Removed From the Program

? Nothing (29)
? Everything was interesting (1)
? Please don't read out definitions (1)

Participants were asked to make further comments or suggestions. The following is a summary of their comments:

Table 12

Additional Comments

? More time is needed to cover / understand what has been discussed (1)
? Thank you (1)
? Well done (1)
? Great (1)
? Overall great idea and effort put in by all involved (1)
? Thank you for a well presented workshop. You are all great role models (1)
? Presentations and delivery of workshops were excellent (2)
? I found that I really got a lot out of today and I hope I can continue to broaden my thoughts in working with GLBT clients (1)

The participants in the training displayed a clear passion and dedication to community capacity building. All participants actively engaged in the training and verbalised their communities desire to improve their serviceability to GLBT young people (YP). The participants have made a clear commitment to the improvement of their practice, and I encourage them to follow through on their self identified goals.

While the training indicated a growing awareness of GLBT YP issues, results also showed critical deficiencies in support for GLBT YP. Some important findings include:

- ? limited enrolment in the training by CALD specific services
- ? the SSAYPCALD target populations (Macedonian, Arabic, Chinese and Oceanic) were not all represented by service providers at the training
- ? many services had little or no gay, lesbian, bisexual resources
- ? many services had little or no transgender resources
- ? most services had no training for staff on how to stop homophobia / heterosexism / GLBT bullying
- ? little training for young people on how to stop homophobia / heterosexism / GLBT bullying
- ? little or no resources for parents about GLBT issues
- ? most services reported that they did not include GLBT young people as part of their service users
- ? many did not include gender identity/expression in their harassment/non-discrimination policies

These findings help explain why so many services still hold on to damaging old fictions and profound misunderstandings about the GLBT community. Misinformation goes unchallenged because accurate information is difficult to access in schools, community centres and non government / government agencies - whether intentionally or unintentionally, this behavior goes largely unchecked. For the sake of **all** YP and our communities, it is time to face this challenge head on with honesty and compassion, and address it through anti-homophobia harassment policies, accurate resources and training for staff and service users.

Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

Whilst the above interviews should not be generalised to the entire communities with which they identify, there are some common themes within each section. For example, both Kaupiri and Tui explain that they feel that the Oceanic community is generally accepting about same-sex attraction. Also, both Salwa and Karim talk about their individual experiences of silence around GLBT issues within Arabic speaking communities.

There are also common themes across cultural backgrounds. For example, Salwa, Michelle and Tui highlighted that some families are accepting of same-sex attraction and gender diversity. Also, Ann and Salwa both highlighted that this projects communities are incredibly diverse.

Most of the young people explained that they did not feel connected with the CALD communities with which they identified or with the GLBT community. The SSAYP CALD Project questionnaire results highlighted that it was important for young people to have a sense of community with GLBT people from the same cultural background as them. These results taken together strongly imply that there is important work to be done, both within the GLBT community and within this projects target communities.

There were also common recommendations made by the participants of this study, some of these are as follows:

- 1) For there to be a CALD specific GLBT service, which would include a drop in centre or/and a support group (Salwa, Kaupiri, Michelle). It was suggested that this service would have CALD workers (Salwa, Michelle) who could provide mediation and support to young people and their families (Mike, Salwa).
- 2) For there to be training and workshops for CALD service providers regarding GLBT issues (Salwa, Ann, Kaupiri).
- 3) For information to be available for communities regarding GLBT issues that are specific to each target group (Salwa, Ann). There were numerous suggestions from most of the participants about what issues, brochures, websites or support groups could address. In regards to support groups it was suggested that it would not be useful for groups to specifically focus on GLBT issues but that these should be included with information about other issues (Tui, Salwa, Ann).
- 4) That information created for these groups should contain images of CALD people (Karim), different languages (Tui and Michelle) and cultural symbols, i.e. Macedonian style borders (Elizabeth).

These suggestions have directed the recommendations made by this project. This project's recommendations have also been influenced by the limitations addressed within the body of this report. This project's recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation 1) That funding is provided for the formation of a GLBT CALD specific service in the Sutherland/St George area.

Recommendation 2) That funding is provided for the formation of a GLBT CALD specific support group in the Sutherland/St George area.

Recommendation 3) Regarding recommendation 1 and 2; that funding is secured for a CALD identified worker to provide support, family mediation and the development of resources.

Recommendation 4) For training to be provided for CALD specific services in the Sutherland/St George area regarding GLBT issues. Although training was conducted as a part of this project, and this training was widely advertised amongst CALD specific services, only 1 CALD specific service was represented in the training. It is suggested that this is related to limited funding for these services.

Recommendation 5) For funding to be provided for brochures to be created regarding GLBT issues that are specific to each target group.

- ? It is important that brochures are not merely translated but also specific to each target group.
- ? Focus groups should be held with each target group to conduct an appropriate needs analysis.
- ? These brochures should include culturally relevant images and symbols.

Recommendation 6) That funding be provided for the GLYSSN website to be updated.

- ? To include CALD images, symbols and languages.
- ? To include the stories of young people.
- ? To address issues specific to each target group.

Recommendation 7) Regarding recommendation 5 and 6; that young people from this project's target groups are actively involved in the development of any information pertaining to them. Including a web page addressing the relationship between sexuality and culture.

- ? That widely advertised focus groups are held with young people from each target group, in order to ascertain their needs directly from them.

Recommendation 8) **It is strongly recommended that additional funding is provided to GLYSSN, so that GLYSSN can meet the recommendations made by this report.**

- ? This funding would include funding for a fulltime worker with the capacity to run the regular GLYSSN meetings and a CALD specific GLYSSN meeting.

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Biographies

Education Consultant

Raina Jardin has worked as a counselor for 11 years. She currently works as a specialist GLBT counselor with Twenty10 GLBT Youth Service. Raina holds a Bachelor of Arts in Women's Studies (La Trobe University), a Graduate Diploma in Psychology (University of Melbourne) and a Post-graduate Diploma in Psychology (University of Canberra). She is currently undertaking a Psychologists Registration Supervision Program with the Australian College of Applied Psychology.

GLYSSN Project Coordinator

David Moutou has been Coordinator of the GLYSSN Project from July 2003 to June 2006. He has a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Sydney, with honours in Performance Studies. He has undertaken studies in Theology at the Catholic Institute of Sydney, but they remain incomplete. Since October 2005, David has worked concurrently as Organisational Development Officer at Twenty10 GLBT Youth Support. David is a performer who performs regularly within the GLBT community and is a Director of the Aurora Group: A Ruby Foundation.

The GLYSSN Project

The GLYSSN Project began as "Out on Wednesdays", a social support group for same-sex attracted young people, in Cronulla in 1995. The GLYSSN social support group was then facilitated by the South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service, being held in various venues in Kogarah and Rockdale. In 2003, the project was expanded to include more community development and training. A steering committee of local health, youth and accommodation services was established, under the auspice of St George Youth Workers' Network, and a Project Coordinator was employed. The GLYSSN social support group continues to meet twice a month, now based in Hurstville.

St George Youth Services Inc

St George Youth Workers Network is a youth interagency which represents over 40 agencies providing services to young people in the St George region (Hurstville, Kogarah and Rockdale LGAs).

The Network has been an incorporated association since 1989, and in 2005 changed its name to St George Youth Services, to better reflect the fact that it now runs various funded projects and is the largest provider of non-government youth support services based in the St George region.

St George Youth Services (SYS) now hosts youth interagency meetings at its headquarters (17 Bay St, Rockdale); it is envisaged that over time the identity of the organisation will emerge more clearly as separate to the Network.

APPENDIX A.

Recommended Content for GLYSSN Website

Who Are You? How would you answer this question? Would you say, for example, my name is Nia, I'm Samoan, I'm 21, I'm a lesbian, I like chocolate and I go to Tafe or would you say my name is Nia, I'm a lesbian, I'm 21, I go to Tafe, I'm Samoan and I like chocolate?

Our sense of who we are or our personal identities is complex and multi-layered. Imagine that your sense of self is like the inside of a tree trunk with all of its rings denoting its age. For our sense of self all of these rings would denote our different ideas of who we are. If I asked you to write a list of all the things that made up who you were, the list could go on for quite some time. What's different between our sense of self and the rings on a tree is that our ideas of who we are can change place over time. If I asked you to prioritise the list you had written in order of what is the most important descriptor of who you are to the least important descriptor and then asked you to write this list again in a month, you would find that some of these labels would have changed place.

Our culture has a huge impact on how we prioritise these labels. For example, in many cultures belonging to a community, such as a family is more important to who you are than who you are as an individual (collectivist versus individualist cultures). Violeta is Macedonian and 18, she explained that it was her experience that in Macedonian communities "there's you, but who you are in the family overrides you as an individual".

When we live in a number of cultures at the same time there can be clashes between different cultural values, which can be difficult. For example, Violeta says that she is caught between the Australian Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual communities' emphasis on coming out and her experience that being Macedonian means family is more important than your own needs, hence you should do nothing to shame the family.

This is not to say that you shouldn't come out if you have a culturally and linguistically different (CALD) background. In fact research shows that coming out is only a good thing if you come out to people who are supportive. It shouldn't matter then what your background is, coming out is an important decision that needs good thought. There are lots of places that can help you with your decision. A good place to start looking for these places is by calling the Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service on 8594 – 9596. Alternatively, you can click on the web links on this page to get support in making your decision.

One of the other important things Violeta said above was about shaming the family. The reality is that being Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender (GLBT) in different communities or cultures means different things. For some communities/ cultures being GLBT continues to be highly shameful (including many Australian communities). The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights Report *Borders of Freedom and Choice: Homosexuality in the Republic Of Macedonia* (2002) explains that homosexuality was only decriminalised in 1996. In their study they found that 'according to the survey result a very large number of citizens of the Republic of Macedonia consider that homosexuality is an illness or a type of psychological disturbance. 64% of surveyed citizen share this view.'

Alternatively, sometimes people who are not from CALD backgrounds assume that all CALD communities are more homophobic than western society. This is not true, all CALD communities have different attitudes towards sexuality and gender, and within these communities are hundreds of variations. For example, Rosie Wu in her article *Becoming an Inclusive Community: Challenges from Hong Kong's Tongzhi Movement* writes: 'In terms of homosexual and transsexual culture, many people think that Chinese society is more repressive than Western society. Some Chinese people even claim that homosexuality was imported from the West. They believe it was never an issue in Chinese culture previously. However, ancient Chinese literature point to a different reality. According to the most representational study, *The History of Homosexuality in China* by Xiaomingxiong, homo-, bi-, and transsexual practices were very common phenomena.'

Rosie's words highlight that sometimes it's not the expectations that our own cultures have for us that can be stressful but also the misconceptions that people from outside of our communities have about us. For these reasons, at times it becomes important to seek out the voices of others who understand where we are coming from. This is when it can become difficult, being GLBT and from a CALD background can sometimes make you feel like a minority in a minority. You might feel like you are, for example, the only Arabic Gay person in the whole of Sydney. The reality is that the laws of probability mean that whilst there are a few support groups around, that as individual as you are, you can never be the only one of any group. It just might be hard at times to find others that can really understand what you are going through because this is also their lived experience. There are services out there that can help link you up to support groups or maybe to talk it out confidentially with a counsellor. Have a look at the web links on this page, otherwise you can call the Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service on 8594 – 9596.

APPENDIX B.

SSAYP CALD Project Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a GLYSSN project, which aims to improve the health, wellbeing and resilience of young same-sex attracted and gender diverse young people (SSAYP) from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, specifically **Chinese, Macedonian, Arabic and Oceanic**, who live in the southern suburbs of Sydney.

With your help we want to upgrade GLYSSN's website so that it has information that might be more relevant for you.

The first step in doing this is to find out from you: **What issues to do with culture and being same-sex attracted and gender diverse are important to you?** What information to do with being from a Chinese, Macedonian, Arabic or Oceanic background and being same-sex attracted and gender diverse would like to see on the website?

It would be great if you could fill in this questionnaire and either email it to me at: **ssayp_cald_project@yahoo.com.au** or by snail mail to: **GLYSSN Project Coordinator, PO Box 659, ROCKDALE NSW 2216**. If you would like to get together and discuss the questionnaire in person please reply to this email and we can make a time to meet and have a chat. Please also feel free to contact me to ask any questions you might have about the project.

This questionnaire is confidential. This means that we will not include any information that will identify you in any reports we write using this information. **If this questionnaire brings up some difficult feelings for you please let me know and we can talk about this. Otherwise you can call the Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service on 8594 – 9596.**

It would also be great if you could ask anyone else you know who are SSAYP from Chinese, Macedonian, Arabic and Oceanic backgrounds to take the time to fill this out! With many thanks, Raina.

And here's the questionnaire...

1. What suburb do you live in?
2. How old are you? _____ years and _____ months.
3. Which gender do you identify with? (Please tick one box only)
Female? ? Male? ? Fa'afafine? ? Transgender m-f? ?
Transgender f-m? ? Gender questioning? ?
Another gender identity ?
4. Which sexuality do you identify with? (Please tick one box only)
Gay? ? Lesbian? ? Bisexual? ? Homosexual? ? Queer? ?
Takataapui? ? Tongzhi? ? ? Not sure? ? I don't label myself? ?
Another identity?

5. What country were you born in?
6. What country was your mother born in?
7. What country was your father born in?
8. What country was your grandmother on your mother's side born in?
9. What country was your grandfather on your mother's side born in?
10. What country was your grandmother on your father's side born in?
11. What country was your grandfather on your father's side born in?
12. What nationality do you identify with? (i.e. Chinese, Australian, Australian & Chinese etc)
13. Do you know anybody else who identifies with your cultural background and is same sex attracted or gender diverse? Yes ? No ?
14. If you answered no to question 13, would you like to meet others who identify with your cultural background and are same sex attracted or gender diverse?
Yes ? No ?
15. If you answered yes to question 13, would you like to meet more people who identify with your cultural background and are same sex attracted or gender diverse?
Yes ? No ?
16. Overall, how important is it to you to know other people who are same sex attracted or gender diverse and from the same cultural background as you?
Very important? ? Important? ? Somewhat important? ?
Not really important? ? Not important at all? ?
17. Why do you or don't you think that it is important to you to meet or know others who identify with your cultural background and are same sex attracted or gender diverse?
(SPACE PROVIDED)
18. Overall, how do you feel about being same sex attracted or gender diverse?
Great? ? Pretty good? ? ok? ? Pretty bad? ? Terrible? ?
Any thing you want to add?
(SPACE PROVIDED)
19. Overall, based on your own experience, what do people from your cultural background think about being same sex attracted or gender diverse?
(SPACE PROVIDED)
20. Does anyone in your family know that you are same sex attracted or gender diverse?
No? ? Yes? ? If so, who?
21. Do any of your friends know that you are same sex attracted or gender diverse?
No? ? Yes? ?
Any thing you want to add?
(SPACE PROVIDED)
22. Where do you go to, to get information or support about being same sex attracted or gender diverse?
Family member? ? Friends? ? Teacher? ?

Counsellor? ? Support group? ? Internet? ? Other? (SPACE PROVIDED)

23. Overall, if you use the Internet to get information or support about being same sex attracted or gender diverse, what types of Internet sites do you use? (Please tick as many boxes as you like)

General chat sites? ?

Chat sites for people who are same sex attracted or gender diverse? ?

Chat sites for people who are same sex attracted or gender diverse and from the same cultural background as you??

General websites for people who are same sex attracted or gender diverse? ?

Sites that are for same sex attracted or gender diverse people from the same cultural backgrounds as you? ?

Safe sex sites that are for same sex attracted or gender diverse people? ?

Safe sex sites that are for straight people? ?

24. Overall, how important is it to you to have websites that have information or support for people who are same sex attracted or gender diverse and from the same cultural background as you?

Very important? ? Important? ? Somewhat important? ? Not really important? ?

Not important at all? ?

25. Please tick the boxes to show which websites you have visited or heard about:

<http://www.glas.org> (The Gay and Lesbian Arabic Society) ?

<http://www.cgcp.org.mk> (Macedonian Gay Rights Organisation) ?

<http://www.acon.org.au> (ACON's Asian gay Men Project) ?

<http://www.geocities.com/Tokyo/Towers/4289/> (Grinding Tofu) ?

<http://www.qaynz.com/> (Gay New Zealand) ?

26. If you have checked out one or some of these websites, how useful do you think they were? (If you haven't checked these websites and have the time it would be great if you could check them out and let us know what you think of them)

<http://www.glas.org> Useful? ? ok? ? Not useful? ?

<http://www.cgcp.org.mk> Useful? ? ok? ? Not useful? ?

<http://www.acon.org.au> Useful? ? ok? ? Not useful? ?

<http://www.geocities.com/Tokyo/Towers/4289/> Useful? ? ok? ? Not useful? ?

<http://www.qaynz.com/> Useful? ? ok? ? Not useful? ?

Any thing you want to add?

(SPACE PROVIDED)

27. Do you know any other websites that you thought were good and were for people who were same sex attracted or gender diverse and from the same cultural background as you? If so, it would be great if you could let us know what the web addresses for these sites are:

(SPACE PROVIDED)

28. What would your ideal website include?

(SPACE PROVIDED)

Thank you so much for your time! If there's anything you think I should have asked about, just let me know. Your contribution is greatly appreciated!

APPENDIX C.

A guide to the 'Ready or Not' (RoN) Training Program Best practice procedures for working with young people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and / or transgendered.

Module One

Why are we here

Presenting an overview of some of the issues that face young people who are same sex attracted or gender questioning

Module Two

Sexual Identity & Formation

Highlighting the theoretical concept of a 'continuum' within sexual identity, and the diversity of human experience that this concept allows.

Module Three

How homophobia works

An overview of the multifaceted ways in which homophobia operates to maintain the marginalisation of GLBT people.

Module Four

How homophobia hurts

An examination of the psycho-social impacts of homophobia and its associated risk factors for young GLBT people.

Module Five

Young people's experiences of services

Module Six

Working with young GLBT people

Supporting young GLBT people coming out, their families, schools etc.

Module Seven

Young GLBT people and the law

A brief overview of the law in NSW as it relates to GLBT youth.

Module Eight

Overcoming homophobia in your work practice

Exploring possible strategies for overcoming homophobia in the workplace and promoting an inclusive working environment.

Module Nine

Policy and Procedures

A guide to writing policy for best practice in your workplace.