



# **MEETING OF THE SENIORS INTERESTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

to be held on

**WEDNESDAY 4 OCTOBER 2006**

in Conference Room 3,  
Joondalup Civic Centre, Boas Avenue, Joondalup  
**commencing at 9.30 am**

**GARRY HUNT**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
29 September 2006

**CITY OF JOONDALUP**

Notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the **SENIORS INTERESTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE** will be held in Conference Room 3, Civic Centre, Boas Avenue, Joondalup on **WEDNESDAY 4 OCTOBER 2006** commencing at **9.30 AM**.

GARRY HUNT  
Chief Executive Officer  
29 September 2006

Joondalup  
Western Australia

**AGENDA****Committee Members:**

Cr R (Richard) Currie	Councillor (South Ward)
Cr B (Brian) Corr	Councillor (South-East Ward)
Ms S (Sharleen) Mann (Chair)	Industry Representative - Silver Chain
Mr A (Allyn) Bryant	Industry Representative - Association of Independent Retirees
Mr K (Kevan) Rogerson	Industry Representative – Centrelink
Ms H (Helen) Attrill	Industry Representative – Aged & Community Services WA (ACSWA) Inc
Ms M (Margaret) March	Community Representative
Ms V (Valerie) Corey	Community Representative
Ms J (Joy) Coleman	Community Representative
Ms P (Patricia) Geary	Community Representative

**Employees:**

Mr G (Graeme) Hall	Manager, Community Development Services
Ms L (Lanie) Pianta	Community Development Officer
Ms G (Gillian) Hampson	Administration Officer

**Invited Guests:**

Ms S (Sue) Chapman	Department for Community Development
Ms J (Jeanette) McDonald	Community Vision Inc
Mr P (Peter) Boam	WA Retirement Complexes Residents Association (WARCRA)

**DECLARATION OF OPENING****APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

MINUTES OF THE SENIORS INTERESTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 AUGUST 2006

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That the minutes of the meeting of the Seniors Interests Advisory Committee held on 2 August 2006 be confirmed as a true and correct record.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDING PERSON WITHOUT DISCUSSION****DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS****IDENTIFICATION OF MATTERS FOR WHICH THE MEETING MAY SIT BEHIND CLOSED DOORS****PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS****REPORTS**

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**MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN****REQUESTS FOR REPORTS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION****CLOSURE**

## **ITEM 1                    STATUS REPORT - SENIORS PLAN 2004-2008   - [55511]**

**WARD:**                    All

**RESPONSIBLE**    Mr Chris Terelinck  
**A/DIRECTOR:**    Director Planning and Community Development

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### **PURPOSE**

To provide the Seniors Interests Advisory Committee (SIAC) with a status report for the Seniors Plan 2004–2008 to date.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Seniors Plan was developed to guide the efforts of the City of Joondalup in relation to its work with seniors. Council endorsed the Seniors Plan 2004–2008 on 11 November 2003.

This report outlines the achievements and challenges of actions and tasks in the plan.

Attachment 1 provides a copy of the Seniors Plan, listing the status of actions and tasks to August 2006. Items implemented in 2004 to 2006 are reflected in the status comments. Of the 23 actions listed in the plan, 20 (87%) have been accomplished. For those tasks that have not been met, the status comments provide an explanation.

*It is recommended that the Committee NOTES the progress of actions and tasks as outlined in the Seniors Plan 2004-2008.*

### **BACKGROUND**

The Seniors Plan evolved from the “Seniors Master Plan – Leisure and Social Activity Needs”, which was commissioned by Council in 2001. The consultant’s brief was to inform Council of the social and recreation needs of seniors within the City of Joondalup.

A report seeking Council’s endorsement of the Seniors Plan was initially considered by the Council in September 2001. At that time Council resolved to defer further consideration of the Seniors Master Plan, in order to seek guidance from the City’s Senior’s Interests Advisory Committee. As a result of feedback from the committee, a follow-up survey was undertaken in June 2002 to test the initial findings of the study. This consultation broadened the process and confirmed the 2001 findings of the original report presented to Council.

The Seniors Master Plan was later refined with the leisure component being redirected into the City’s Leisure Plan, and the Seniors Plan was adopted by the Council in November 2003.

### **DETAILS**

#### **Achievements**

Of the 23 actions listed in the plan, three have not been implemented in full therefore representing an 87% implementation rate from commencement in 2004 to August 2006. Achievements are associated with life-long learning, information provision, policy review, community participation, volunteering and the prevention of Elder Abuse. Positive strategies that have come from the plan are highlighted as follows:

### Seniors Accommodation

Current membership of the SIAC now includes a representative from the WA Retirement Complexes Residents Association (WARCRA), representing senior's accommodation issues relating to retirement complexes. This representation has assisted the City to achieve actions in the Seniors Plan.

### Prevention of Elder Abuse Network

The City facilitates quarterly meetings of the City's Prevention of Elder Abuse Network. The aim of the network is to raise awareness and distribute information about the issue of Elder Abuse. Active membership currently includes representatives from: Advocare; Community Vision Inc; Office of Seniors Interests & Volunteering; Commonwealth Carelink; the University of WA; Carers WA; City of Stirling; Women's Healthworks; Community Policing; Department of Veterans Affairs; Department for Community Development.

Other agencies are included in a growing contact list which includes: Office of the Public Advocate; Department of Health; Silver Chain; ARAFMI Mental Health Carers; Red Cross; Social Work Department Joondalup Health Campus; Social Work Department Osborne Park Hospital; Granny Spiers Community House and Homes West. The City has an operational Prevention of Elder Abuse website and visitors to the website often telephone for additional information.

The City is also represented at quarterly meetings of the Western Australian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (WANPEA), which is facilitated by Advocare. WANPEA provides opportunities to network, share knowledge and information about resources, issues and trends with key stakeholders outside the City of Joondalup.

The City's involvement in the two networks above is reported to the SIAC. The collation and dissemination of information contributes to ensuring that actions in the Seniors Plan are achieved.

### Seminars for Seniors

The Seniors Plan advocates that well designed seminars are an ideal way of communicating with seniors about positive and active ageing. Since 2004, the City has hosted two major seminar events that have been both well attended and received.

From 11-15 September 2006, senior residents of the City of Joondalup will have opportunities to participate in a range of activities at various venues throughout the City under the theme "Seniors: This is Your Life"

### Review of Directory for Seniors and People with Disabilities

A review and evaluation of the directory was completed during 2005. This included looking at other similar resources and obtaining input from the Seniors Interests Advisory Committee and other stakeholders. An updated directory offers an opportunity to provide a holistic and meaningful resource by including additional information as well as appropriate materials related to various life-cycle social issues that may potentially impact upon the directory target group. This includes: prevention of elder abuse; loss & grief; life transitions & changes: positive ageing; volunteering; and emotional health and well-being.

It is anticipated that the directory will be ready for distribution at the end of 2006.

## **Challenges**

Some actions in the Seniors Plan have not been achieved in full within the allocated timeframe. Explanations for actions not being implemented include changes in priorities or capacity to deliver the programs being reduced. Actions listed for continuation or consideration in 2006 and beyond are –

### Storage Standards for Community Buildings

The City has 28 multi-use facilities that are shared by more than one community group. The storage needs of community groups are far greater today than was the case when the facilities were built and this is an area of concern, particularly for seniors groups using the City's buildings. The Seniors Plan identified the storage issue and made provision for action to be taken to develop a policy about storage in community buildings.

The City commenced an audit of all community buildings in July 2006 and expects it to be completed in October. The rationalisation of storage is a key focus of the audit and the process will identify procedures to improve storage in the future. Eight buildings were listed in the 06/07 minor works budget for improvements to storage spaces.

### Community Safety Program

The City priorities with regard to the Community Safety program are being reviewed. Once the City has established a position regarding the responsibility of the program, progress will be made towards implementing the actions and tasks assigned in the Seniors Plan.

### "Absolutely Everybody" Program

The Absolutely Everybody program brings seniors and young people together to break down barriers and perceptions regarding to the victims and perpetrators of crime in the community. The program ran successfully in 2001 and 2002. Whilst attempts to continue the program were made between October 2004 and March 2005, the program did not run due to the inability to engage a group of young people within their academic commitments. At its July meeting, the SIAC resolved not to progress the action to continue the Absolutely Everybody program and to promote other intergenerational programs that exist in the community.

## **Link to Strategic Plan:**

The Seniors Plan is directly linked to the following key focus areas of the City's Strategic Plan –

Community Wellbeing

### Outcome:

The City of Joondalup is recognised globally as a community that values and facilitates Lifelong Learning

### Objective 1.1:

To develop, provide and promote a diverse range of lifelong learning opportunities

Outcome:

The City of Joondalup provides social opportunities that meet community needs

Objective 1.3:

To continue to provide services that meet changing needs of a diverse and growing community

Strategy 1.3.1:

Provide leisure and recreational activities aligned to community expectations, incorporating innovative opportunities for today's environment

Strategy 1.3.2:

Provide quality of life opportunities for all community members

Strategy 1.3.3:

Provide support, information and resources

Outcome:

The City of Joondalup is a safe and healthy environment

Objective 1.4:

To work with the community to enhance safety and security in a healthy environment

Outcome:

The City of Joondalup is an interactive community

Objective 4.3:

To ensure the City responds to and communicates with the community

Strategy 4.3.1:

Provide effective and clear community consultation

Objective 4.3.2:

Provide accessible community information

**Legislation – Statutory Provisions:**

There is no statutory requirement for the City to have a Seniors Plan. It is considered best practice to implement the actions of the plan to enhance the well-being of seniors in the community.

**Risk Management Considerations:**

The City has an ageing population and by implementing the tasks of the Seniors Plan, it is implementing measures that will benefit residents both now and in the future, as well as assisting in preventing common issues from escalating.

**Financial/Budget Implications:**

The actions highlighted in the Seniors Plan are directional only and their identification as part of the plan, does not assume that funds are associated. Any initiatives that are to be undertaken by the City as a result of their inclusion in the Seniors Plan would need to seek funding approval through normal Council budget allocation processes. Funds were allocated in the 06/07 budget to assist with the implementation of the Seniors Plan.

**Policy Implications:**

A key action in the Seniors Plan is that “Council review all policies that affect seniors.” The policies that are deemed to have the most impact on seniors are –

- Access and Inclusion (access to community facilities and public space; overcoming barriers that could prevent participation in community activities)
- Rates (reduced rates for seniors)
- Fees and Charges (reduced fees for seniors for some services)
- Use of community facilities (accommodation provided free of charge to seniors groups under the “subsidised use” policy)

**Regional Significance:**

The Seniors Plan is a locally focused initiative; developed to guide the efforts of the City of Joondalup in relation to its work with seniors. Although there may be some issues that are unique within the City, it is likely there will be issues and concerns that are common for all seniors. Whilst focusing and operating locally, the plan has and does consider universal issues that impact upon seniors.

**Sustainability Implications:**

The existence of the Seniors Plan enables seniors the opportunity to actively participate in decision-making processes that aim to meet their needs.

The majority of tasks listed within the plan utilise existing resources and staff to implement them. Of those tasks that require additional financial resources, normal Council processes will impact upon the allocation of funds in order for them to be implemented; therefore ensuring a level of commitment by the City will be sustainable.

**Consultation:**

Ongoing consultation with City officers, community members and local agencies that work in the areas of seniors occurs to ensure that the tasks listed in the Seniors Plan are completed in a timely manner. Ongoing consultation ensures that the plan continues to reflect local needs and allows for community members and agencies to communicate with the City.

**COMMENT**

The three-yearly review of the Seniors Plan is due to commence in January 2007. The SIAC has reviewed the document as part of their agenda since August 2005 and will continue to identify strengths and limitations as part of their agenda. The review will feed into aligning the Seniors Plan with other components of the Community Development Strategy, which is listed for Council endorsement in September 2006.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 Seniors Plan 2004–2008 including status report.



## **VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Simple Majority

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Committee NOTES the progress of actions and tasks as outlined in the Seniors Plan 2004-2008.**

*Appendix 1 refers*

## **ITEM 2                      TRANSITIONS IN AGEING RESEARCH PROJECT - AN OVERVIEW 2006 [55511]**

**WARD:** All

**RESPONSIBLE  
A/DIRECTOR:** Mr Chris Terelinck  
Planning and Community Development (Acting)

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### **PURPOSE**

To provide the Seniors Interests Advisory Committee (SIAC) with an overview of the Transitions in Ageing Research Project – an initiative of the State Government's Active Ageing Strategy – *Generations Together*.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The State Government's Office of Seniors Interests commissioned research and published a report "Transitions in Ageing Research Project – An Overview 2006 " in August 2006. The research highlighted that the key predictor of successful ageing was the "absence of depression".

This research is considered valuable to the work of the SIAC, as the committee's objective is to "provide advice to Council to ensure that the concerns of seniors are adequately represented in the City's planning processes and the strategic directions being developed for older people across the City". The document will also be useful to inform the review of the Seniors Plan because it outlines predictors for positive and active ageing.

*It is recommended that the Seniors Interests Advisory Committee:*

- 1        *NOTES the findings of the "Transitions in Ageing Project - An Overview 2006" Report;*
- 2        *ENDORSES the document to be a key resource in the review of the Seniors Plan.*

### **BACKGROUND**

The major objectives of the research were to investigate:

- Which life transitions seniors believed had the most important continuing influence, either positive or negative, on their lives
- Whether or not seniors were ageing successfully
- Which life transitions were most closely related, either positively or negatively, to people assessing the satisfaction with their quality of life as they grew older.

The research involved two stages: an initial exploring stage followed by a major state-wide telephone survey of 600 Western Australian seniors aged 65 years and over. The telephone survey sample was structured and then weighted to provide a representative sample of seniors aged 65 years and over throughout Western Australia.

A key finding of the report was that the absence of depression was vital to successful ageing. Depression is defined as a persistently depressed mood for at least two weeks that is associated with loss of pleasure in most activities and results in loss of personal, social and work function. When people suffer from depression there is a cost to the community as they seek support from health professionals, take time off work, withdraw from their usual family and community activities and participate in antisocial behaviours.

## DETAILS

The most common events having a positive influence on seniors' lives related to family (eg regular contact, having grandchildren), leaving paid employment and finding new opportunities after retirement.

The events having a negative influence tended to involve smaller numbers of seniors and related to their own declining health and fitness, the death of important others and the lack of employment opportunities. Three out of five seniors (61%) were ageing successfully, based on self- assessment. Seniors who were more likely to be ageing successfully on this basis were those who were positive about: their emotional state: contact with family and friends: feelings of autonomy: health: and energy levels.

The key predictor of successful ageing was found to underlie other indicators: the absence of depression. One in twelve seniors reported feeling depressed to some extent, while another one in eight appeared to be experiencing a less than satisfactory level of mood. A secondary predictor was gender: female seniors could to some extent be predicted to be ageing more successfully: whereas males could not.

### Issues and options considered:

Not Applicable.

### Link to Strategic Plan:

The research is directly linked to the following key focus areas of the City's Strategic Plan - Community Wellbeing

#### Outcome:

The City of Joondalup is recognised globally as a community that values and facilitates Lifelong Learning

#### Objective 1.1:

To develop, provide and promote a diverse range of lifelong learning opportunities

#### Outcome:

The City of Joondalup provides social opportunities that meet community needs

#### Objective 1.3:

To continue to provide services that meet changing needs of a diverse and growing community

#### Strategy 1.3.1:

Provide leisure and recreational activities aligned to community expectations, incorporating innovative opportunities for today's environment

#### Strategy 1.3.2:

Provide quality of life opportunities for all community members

**Legislation – Statutory Provisions:**

Not Applicable.

**Risk Management considerations:**

The City has an ageing population and by considering the findings of this report, the City is implementing measures that will benefit residents both now and in the future, as well as assisting in preventing common issues of concern escalating.

**Financial/Budget Implications:**

Not Applicable.

**Policy Implications:**

Not Applicable.

**Regional Significance:**

The findings of the research have state-wide implications.

**Sustainability Implications:**

Not Applicable.

**Consultation:**

The State Government surveyed 600 seniors aged 65 years and over to conduct the research for the Transitions into Ageing report.

**COMMENT**

The findings about depression among seniors support the State Government's present initiative for active ageing. In addition, several key questions from the research will be included in future community surveys to enable the State Government to measure trends in the importance of major life events and to monitor the level of successful ageing in the WA seniors community.

This research is brought to the attention of the SIAC for the purpose of developing awareness of trends in the seniors' population. Awareness can then be incorporated into the work of the committee and provide focus for strategies associated with the Seniors Plan and other activities.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1      Transitions in Ageing Research Project - An Overview 2006

**VOTING REQUIREMENTS**

Simple Majority

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Seniors Interests Advisory Committee:**

- 1       NOTES the findings of the “Transitions in Ageing Project - An Overview 2006” Report;**
- 2       ENDORSES the document to be a key resource in the review of the Seniors Plan.**

*Appendix 2 refers*

**ITEM 3                      PRESENTATION - TALES OF TIMES PAST                      -  
[55511]****WARD:** All**RESPONSIBLE  
A/DIRECTOR:** Mr Chris Terelinck  
Planning and Community Development (Acting)

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Vasanti Sunderland will attend the SIAC meeting to conduct a presentation on the Tales of Times Past Intergenerational Intercultural Oral History Program. The program evolved from Vasanti's extensive experience working with a wide range of people from diverse experiences and cultural backgrounds in her role as a Community Development Consultant /Facilitator and Storyteller.

The vision of the program is to make a contribution to enriching communities through promoting participation, encouraging understanding and recognition of the value of all members of our community across all cultures and generations.

The aims of the program are to:

- Enable seniors to meet and celebrate shared and different histories;
- Promote interaction between generations within family structures;
- Establish a community resource of oral historians operating as independent groups available to schools, educational institutions, government and non-government agencies, business and community groups and the general public;
- Contribute to a greater understanding of the issues faced by each generation as well as the skills and experiences each can offer, by dispelling the stereotypical myths and fears held by different cultures and generations;
- Break down and reduce the isolation of seniors and age segregation in community activities.

*Appendix 3 refers*

**ITEM 4                      PRESENTATION      –      SCHOOLS      VOLUNTEER  
PROGRAM [55511]****WARD:** All**RESPONSIBLE  
A/DIRECTOR:** Mr Chris Terelinck  
Planning and Community Development (Acting)

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Christine Gray the CEO of the School Volunteer Program (SVP) Inc in Western Australia, will attend this SIAC meeting after being invited to give a presentation about the SVP.

The mission of the SVP is to:

- Utilise the abilities of seniors and retired people, as well as other community volunteers, to encourage and guide young people who are having difficulty coping at school;
- Encourage young people to achieve their potential by developing improved life skills;
- Promote the value of seniors and retired people in the community; and
- Break down barriers between generations.

The SVP is a national program, which has been in operation for more than ten years in Western Australia. More than 230 schools throughout the state participate in the program, with about 1,800 active seniors going into schools each week to role model and mentor a student on a one-on-one basis. The program includes pre-primary to Year 12 students. Volunteers have access to workshops free of charge on contemporary topics considered relevant to their volunteering role with young people. Topics include: Drugs and Suicide Awareness; Listening and Communication Skills; and Issues Facing Young People Today. The SVP operates in several schools within the City, including North Woodvale and Connolly Primary Schools as well as Greenwood, Ocean Reef and Belridge High Schools.

*Appendix 4 refers*

**APPENDICES FOR AGENDA OF  
SENIORS INTERESTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
4 OCTOBER 2006**

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# Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

### COMMUNITY WELL BEING

**OUTCOME:** The City of Joondalup is recognized globally as a community that values and facilitates Lifelong Learning  
**OBJECTIVE 1.1** To develop, provide and promote a diverse range of lifelong learning opportunities  
**STRATEGY 1.1.3** Support whole-of-life learning and creation of knowledge opportunities

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Engage the City's Economic Development Officer to link with Learning Cities project	Continue to use a Learning Cities model to meet the ongoing learning needs of seniors	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Seniors needs are considered in all Learning City projects	Library and Information Services  Strategic and Sustainable Development	Seniors Circle and other community education programs offered by the Libraries.
	Support research conducted by Tertiary Institutions	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Finalised research documents obtained by the City	Library and Information Services  Strategic and Sustainable Development	Elder Abuse research from ECU Transitions in Ageing Research DCD 2006
Continue to support initiatives that specifically meet the education and training needs of seniors	Continue to support and develop programs that address the needs of seniors i.e. Information Technology workshops	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Seniors needs are considered in the development of all library programs	Library and Information Services	Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) training provided to 30 seniors in 05 and 15 to date in 06. Training provided on request.

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

### COMMUNITY WELL BEING

**OUTCOME:** The City of Joondalup provides social opportunities that meet community needs  
**OBJECTIVE 1.3** To continue to provide services that meet changing needs of a diverse and growing community  
**STRATEGY 1.3.1** Provide leisure and recreational activities aligned to community expectations, incorporating innovative opportunities for today's environment

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Council to review all policies that affect seniors	1. Report to Executive with proposal to review Community Development policies that affect seniors  2. Produce project brief  3. Develop draft policies  4. Submit draft policy to Executive Management  5. Amend draft policy as required	March 2005	Existing Resources	Policies endorsed by Executive	Community Development Services  Property Management Working Group	Policy Review process commenced Feb 2005. Committee to review all policies. Report outlining review of all Fees and Charges affecting Seniors presented to Council 28 June 2005. Decision that seniors be offered 25% discount for memberships, lifestyles courses and pool entry at the City's Leisure Centres.

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Conduct consultation on the draft policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prepare a consultation strategy</li> <li>2. Implement consultation strategy</li> <li>3. Amend the policies as required</li> <li>4. Submit policies to Council for endorsement</li> </ol>	June 2005	\$1,000	Policies endorsed by Council	Community Development Services  Property Management Working Group	See above
Develop information sheet to assist programmers within the City	Based on the consultation and findings of the Seniors Master Plan – Leisure and Social Activity Needs establish a user-friendly guide with checklists for programmers to follow and comply with	Dec 2004	Existing Resources	Checklists completed and distributed	Community Development Services	Completed October 2004. Checklist on the intranet site under Access and Inclusion.
Conduct regular reviews of the seniors plan	Conduct a review of this plan every three years	Jan 2007	\$1,000	Review report finalised with recommendations	Community Development Services	Seniors Interests Advisory Committee discussed plan in Aug and Nov 05 focused on the strengths and limitations. Discussions continued in 06.

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

### COMMUNITY WELL BEING

**OUTCOME:** The City of Joondalup provides social opportunities that meet community needs  
**OBJECTIVE 1.3** To continue to provide services that meet changing needs of diverse and growing community  
**STRATEGY 1.3.1** Provide leisure and recreational activities aligned to community expectations, incorporating innovative opportunities for today's environment  
**STRATEGY 1.3.2** Provide quality of life opportunities for all community members  
**STRATEGY 1.3.3** Provide support, information and resources

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Challenge negative ageing stereotypes through media and publications and the involvement of community groups in promoting positive ageing	Assist key seniors stakeholders in undertaking a regional lifestyle event	Ongoing	Initial \$10,000 then \$2,000 each year	Evaluation report with recommendations completed	Community Development Services  Marketing, Communications and Council Support	"Living Now – a Seminar for Seniors" - 30 June 2005. "Seniors: This is Your Life" events planned for 11 – 15 Sep 2006.
	Establish a user-friendly Guide with checklist to follow and comply with (as detailed in access and inclusion plan)		Existing Resources	Checklist completed and made available to staff	Community Development Services	Guide developed October 2004. Checklist on the intranet site under Access and Inclusion.

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Promote the development of intergenerational activities	Intergenerational activities (ie; storytelling in the libraries)	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Evaluation report completed	Library and Information Services	Quilting Project – seniors and children in 05. Other programs researched July/Aug 2006, these include School Volunteer Program and Tales of Times Past Oral History Intergenerational program. Both programs will be showcased during Seniors; This is Your Life in September 2006.
	Continue to support the Absolutely Everybody program	Ongoing	\$1,000	Evaluation report completed with recommendations	Community Development Services	This item reviewed and deemed no longer actionable.
Implement a strategy to help community groups and seniors organisations increase their capacity to deliver	Develop contacts and networks	Ongoing	Existing Resources	List of contacts established	Community Development Services	Networks established with Community Vision Inc, Office of Seniors Interests, Advocare,

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
services to seniors						Commonwealth Care Link Centre, Silver Chain, Prevention of Elder Abuse Network, Seniors Recreation Council, Council on the Ageing, Carers WA, Community Policing Unit, People Who Care and Senior Citizens Clubs. A list of the contacts has been developed and is now in use.
	Promote volunteering through the Joondalup Volunteer Centre	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Regular promotion of Volunteer Centre to seniors		Volunteer Centre promoted via guest speaker and information display at the Seniors Seminar in June 2005. Centre listed in the Directory for Seniors. Also promoted via community talks with seniors groups

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
						and invited to participate and promote Centre during Seniors: This is Your Life, September 2006.



## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Provide services and resources to meet the information, recreation and lifelong learning needs of seniors	Continue directory for seniors detailing organisations, recreational bodies, resource and advice centres	Aug 2005	\$10, 000	Directory completed and distributed	Community Development Services	Directory review commenced August 2005. New directory to be printed end of 2006.
	Resources in alternative formats (as detailed in the Access and Inclusion Plan)	Ongoing	Existing resources	Resources provided on request	Community Development Services	Guidelines developed, placed on the intranet and advertised to all staff in October 2004.
	Continue books on wheel service to housebound members of the community	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Evaluation report completed	Library and Information Services	Service provided to approximately 283 participants. Service not promoted, as utilisation remains high. Evaluation report Jan 2006.
	Seniors week events	October each year	Existing Resources	Events planned and implemented	Community Development Services Library and Information Services	Various activities in 05 including "Living Now: A Seminar for Seniors". Program for 2006 includes "Seniors: This is Your Life"

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
						week of active ageing activities 11 to 15 September 2006.
	Monthly Seniors Circle	Ongoing	Existing resources	Program is planned and implemented	Library and Information Services	Seniors Circle 396 participants in 05/06. Seniors Games 304 in 05/06.

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
	<p>Continue Growing Old and Living Dangerously (GOLD) and other recreation programs</p> <p><b>Note</b> this program renamed "Platinum 50+" in July 2006.</p>	Ongoing	\$16, 000	200 participants per term	Community Development Services	July to Dec 05 – 2,180 participants. 2039 enrolled in 2006. Program renamed "Platinum 50+".
	<p>Continue the Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse</p> <p><b>Note</b> this network is now known as the Prevention of Elder Abuse Network.</p>	Ongoing	Existing resources	At least 4 meetings held annually	Community Development Services	Meetings held in Feb, May and Aug 2006. Community Development Officer chairs meetings. Network liaises with the WA Prevention of Elder Abuse Network facilitated by Advocare and links with the newly formed state Alliance for the Prevention of Elder Abuse.

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Review and formalize hairdressing services at the City's facilities	<p>Investigate current arrangements</p> <p>Produce a position paper detailing all findings with recommendations</p> <p>Forward to the Seniors Interest Advisory Committee for comment</p> <p>Forward to executive for endorsement</p> <p>Undertake recommendations</p>	Aug 2004	Existing Resources	Hairdressing services are formalised	<p>Community Development Services</p> <p>Property Management Working Group</p>	Review conducted between June and November 2004. Recommended that the results of the review be included in the complete review of Fees and Charges for City facilities, which is pending.
Financial Counsellor to undertake a range of financial workshops to assist Seniors in managing their finances	<p>Implement a course of forums to assist seniors in managing their finances</p> <p>Review external funding options to undertake forums</p>	June 2004	External Funding	Forums undertaken and an evaluation report is completed	Community Development Services	<p>Training package developed in October 2004. Training offered to seniors groups. Offer not been taken up. Will continue to promote. Seminar to be conducted by Centrelink during week of seniors activities in response to a</p>

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

						request by SIAC on the issue of Reverse Mortgages.
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### COMMUNITY WELL BEING

**OUTCOME:** The City of Joondalup is a safe and healthy City  
**OBJECTIVE 1.4** To work with the community to enhance safety and security in a healthy environment  
**STRATEGY 1.4.1** Continue to implement the Safer Community Program

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
In conjunction with City Watch work to reduce the perceived risk of crime	Develop, implement and evaluate forums to educate seniors on personal safety	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Forums documented and evaluations completed	Community Development Services	Yet to be implemented
	Increase awareness of existing services such as City Watch	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Customer Satisfaction Monitor	Community Development Services	Yet to be implemented

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

### CITY DEVELOPMENT

**OUTCOME:** The City of Joondalup has well-maintained assets and built environment  
**OBJECTIVE 3.1** To develop and maintain the City of Joondalup's assets and built environment  
**STRATEGY 3.1.1** Plan the timely design, development, upgrade and maintenance of the City's infrastructure

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Development of a Storage Standards Paper and strategy	1. Identify aspects to be covered  2. Determine desired level of community responsibility  3. Determine Council responsibility  4. Draft standards paper  5. Submit to Executive Management team  6. Submit for Council approval  7. List funding required (if any) for consideration on Draft budget	June 2005	Existing Resources	Standards approved by Council	Community Development Services  Property Management Working Group	Audit of community facilities April to Oct 2006. Minor Works listed for 06/07 budget.

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

### CITY DEVELOPMENT

**OUTCOME:** The City of Joondalup has well-maintained assets and built environment  
**OBJECTIVE 3.1** To develop and maintain the City of Joondalup's assets and built environment  
**STRATEGY 3.1.1** Plan the timely design, development, upgrade and maintenance of the City's infrastructure  
**STRATEGY 3.1.3** Create and maintain parklands that incorporate nature and cultural activities accessible to residents and visitors

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Develop passive facilities throughout City	1. Future Directions for passive facilities are incorporated into the Leisure Planning process  2. Formulate a plan to establish or modify passive facilities into existing and new infrastructure.  3. Submit to Executive Management team  4. Submit for Council approval  5. List funding required for consideration on Draft budget	June 2005	Existing Resources	Plan has been adopted, funds have been allocated and works have begun.	Community Development Services  Property Management Working Group	Listed in the Community Development Strategy - Leisure Plan 2006.

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Review the City's Community Transport Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Examine existing program</li> <li>2. Determine desired level of service</li> <li>3. Determine bus type</li> <li>4. Identify gaps in service provision</li> <li>5. Draft management and service requirements agreement</li> </ol>	March 2004	Existing resources	Evaluation completed and Requirements actioned	Community Development Services	<p>Review conducted in March 2004. Review concluded that service was meeting needs and should continue to be provided in its current format.</p> <p>Ongoing review of the service continues in August 2006.</p>
Within the work of the Urban Design, integrate the needs of seniors as integral to the ongoing development and sustainability of communities	In conjunction with the City's Sustainability Officer and Urban Designers review the sustainability needs of the community	Ongoing	Existing resources	<p>List of needs identified</p> <p>Needs are considered in future development</p>	<p>Strategic and Sustainable Development</p> <p>Approvals, Planning and Environmental Services – Urban Design</p>	Sustainability outcomes applied to Woodlake Retreat aged facility and MeathCare aged facility during development and planning phases



## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

### CITY DEVELOPMENT

OUTCOME: The City of Joondalup recognizes the changing demographic needs of the community  
 OBJECTIVE 3.3 To continue to meet changing demographic needs  
 STRATEGY 3.3.1 Provide residential living choices

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Work to bring together various aged care service providers with a view to help inform the City of future residential facilities and services requirements	A representative for seniors accommodation is included in the Seniors Interest Advisory Committee membership	June 2004	\$500	Representative regularly attending committee meetings	Community Development Services	A representative from WA Retirement Complexes Residents Association recruited for the Committee in August 2005. Representative recruited to the Committee from Aged & Community Services WA in July 2006. Anticipated that this person's knowledge and expertise will assist with the establishment of an aged care

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
						service provider's network in the City.
	Review the needs of the community as a strategy to identify and plan future needs	July 2005	Existing Resources	Report completed	Community Development Services	Network to address this task will be established.
Undertake consultation with Commonwealth and State governments to ascertain their future plans for the provision of residential facilities and services	Develop links and networks with relevant State and Commonwealth government department in relation to seniors accommodation, facilities and services	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Network formed	Community Development Services	Participated in review of Legislation of Retirement Villages held by Dept for Consumer and Employment Protection in Aug 2006.
	Review relevant State and Commonwealth government strategic plans for seniors accommodation, facilities and services and provide feedback.	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Strategic plans taken into account in future planning	Community Development Services	Responded to the State Government's Housing Policy. Feedback given in December 2005.
	Develop partnerships and alliances with stakeholders and neighbouring Local Govt. Authorities	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Minutes of meetings	Community Development Services	Alliances developed with Office of Seniors Interests, Commonwealth Care Link Centre.

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

### CITY DEVELOPMENT

OUTCOME: The City of Joondalup recognises the changing demographic needs of the community  
 OBJECTIVE 3.3 To continue to meet changing demographic needs  
 STRATEGY 3.3.2 Integrate plans to support community and business development

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Identify the long term strategic impact of an ageing population on health services	Review and identify community needs	Ongoing	Existing Resources	Report completed and constantly updated	Community Development Services	Agenda item for the Seniors Interests Advisory Committee

### ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OUTCOME: The City of Joondalup is an interactive community  
 OBJECTIVE 4.3 To ensure the City responds to and communicates with the community  
 STRATEGY 4.3.1 Provide effective and clear community consultation  
 OBJECTIVE 4.3.2 Provide accessible community information

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Assist seniors to access information and services through the Internet by expanding existing programs and	Incorporate access and inclusion best practice into the planning of all future online services as appropriate (as detailed in the Access and Inclusion	Ongoing	Existing Resources	As detailed in access and inclusion plan	Information Management  Library and Information Services	Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) training provided to 30 participants in 05 and 15 in 06 to

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
services	Plan)					date. Training provide on request. Seniors provided with information about agencies that can assist with internet & computer training upon request.

## Seniors Plan 2004 - 2008

ACTION	TASKS	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Investigate the needs of seniors born overseas to overcome existing problems in accessing aged care and other services	Develop strategies to address barriers to access	Ongoing	Existing resources	As detailed in access and inclusion plan (Network meetings)	Community Development Services	Community Development Officer joined Multicultural Aged Care Network.
	Train internal staff to implement strategies to address barriers to access	Ongoing	Existing resources	As detailed in access and inclusion plan (Training planned implemented)	Human Resource Services	Yet to be implemented
Increase awareness across the organisation of the specific information needs of seniors	Develop and provide in-house training for staff on the specific information requirements of seniors (As detailed in the Access and Inclusion plan)	June 2004	Existing resources	As detailed in access and inclusion plan (Training planned implemented)	Human Resource Services	Yet to be implemented



Department for Community Development  
Government of Western Australia

Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering



patterson  
MARKET RESEARCH

# Transitions in Ageing Research Project An Overview 2006



Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering  
and Patterson Market Research



# Introduction

The Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering (OSIV)<sup>1</sup> in conjunction with Patterson Market Research<sup>2</sup> conducted a major research project to investigate the links between major life transitions experienced by Western Australian seniors aged 65 years and over, and successful ageing. The research was conducted to meet one of OSIV's commitments under the State Government's active ageing strategy – *Generations Together*.

The overall aim of the research was to provide advice to the government on strategies that will facilitate more Western Australian seniors to deal effectively with important life transitions and to age successfully in their own terms, thereby enhancing their quality of life.

The objectives of the research were to investigate:

- which life transitions seniors believed had the most important continuing influence, either positive or negative, on their lives at the present time
- seniors' beliefs about the importance of various attributes of successful ageing
- whether or not seniors were ageing successfully
- which life transitions were most closely related, either positively or negatively, to successful ageing and
- factors associated with successful ageing.

<sup>1</sup> The Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering (OSIV) is a Western Australian State Government agency whose primary focus is Western Australian seniors (people aged 60 years and over). The mission of OSIV is to enhance seniors' quality of life through 'active ageing'.

<sup>2</sup> Patterson Market Research is an independent Western Australian consultancy (refer to their website [www.marketresearch.com.au](http://www.marketresearch.com.au) )





# Research Approach

The research project involved two stages: an initial exploratory stage<sup>3</sup> followed by a major telephone survey of 600 Western Australian seniors aged 65 years and over. The exploratory stage collected valuable feedback from respondents and assisted in refining the questionnaire.

The telephone survey sample was structured and then weighted<sup>4</sup> to provide a representative sample of seniors aged 65 years and over throughout Western Australia.

The sample for the telephone survey consisted of 600 survey respondents aged 65 years and over with:

- an equal number being male and female (300 of each)
- an equal number (200) being from each of the following three age groups: 65 to 69 years; 70 to 74 years; and 75 years and over
- three in four (450) living in the metropolitan area and one in four (150) living in the country.

The survey questions relating to successful ageing were largely consistent with questions used in three US studies and an Australian study<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> This included 40 face-to-face interviews with a convenience sample of seniors aged 65 and over.

<sup>4</sup> The survey results were weighted based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Estimated Residential Population Estimates June 2004. Overall, the survey sample of 600 respondents provided data that was accurate to within  $\pm 4\%$  of the population figures at the 95% level of confidence.

<sup>5</sup> Rowe, John W; and Kahn, Robert (1998). *Successful Ageing*. New York, Dell Publishing.  
Phelan EA, Anderson LA, LaCroix AZ, and Larson EB (2004). Older adults' views of 'successful ageing' – How do they compare with researchers' definitions? *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, Vol 52, pp211-216.  
Strawbridge WJ, Wallhagen MI, Cohen RD (2002). Successful ageing and wellbeing: self-rated compared with Rowe and Kahn. *The Gerontologist*, Vol 42 (6), pp727-733.  
Jorm AF, Christensen H, Henderson AS, Jacomb PA, Korten AE, and Mackinnon A (1998). Factors associated with successful ageing. *Australasian Journal on Ageing*, Vol 17(1), pp33-37.

## Key Findings

### Transitions in ageing

The research investigated which life transitions seniors believed had had, or were having, an important continuing influence on their lives at the present time, and whether that impact was positive or negative.

The focus was on transitions or life changes that were more likely to have occurred from the age of 45 years onwards.

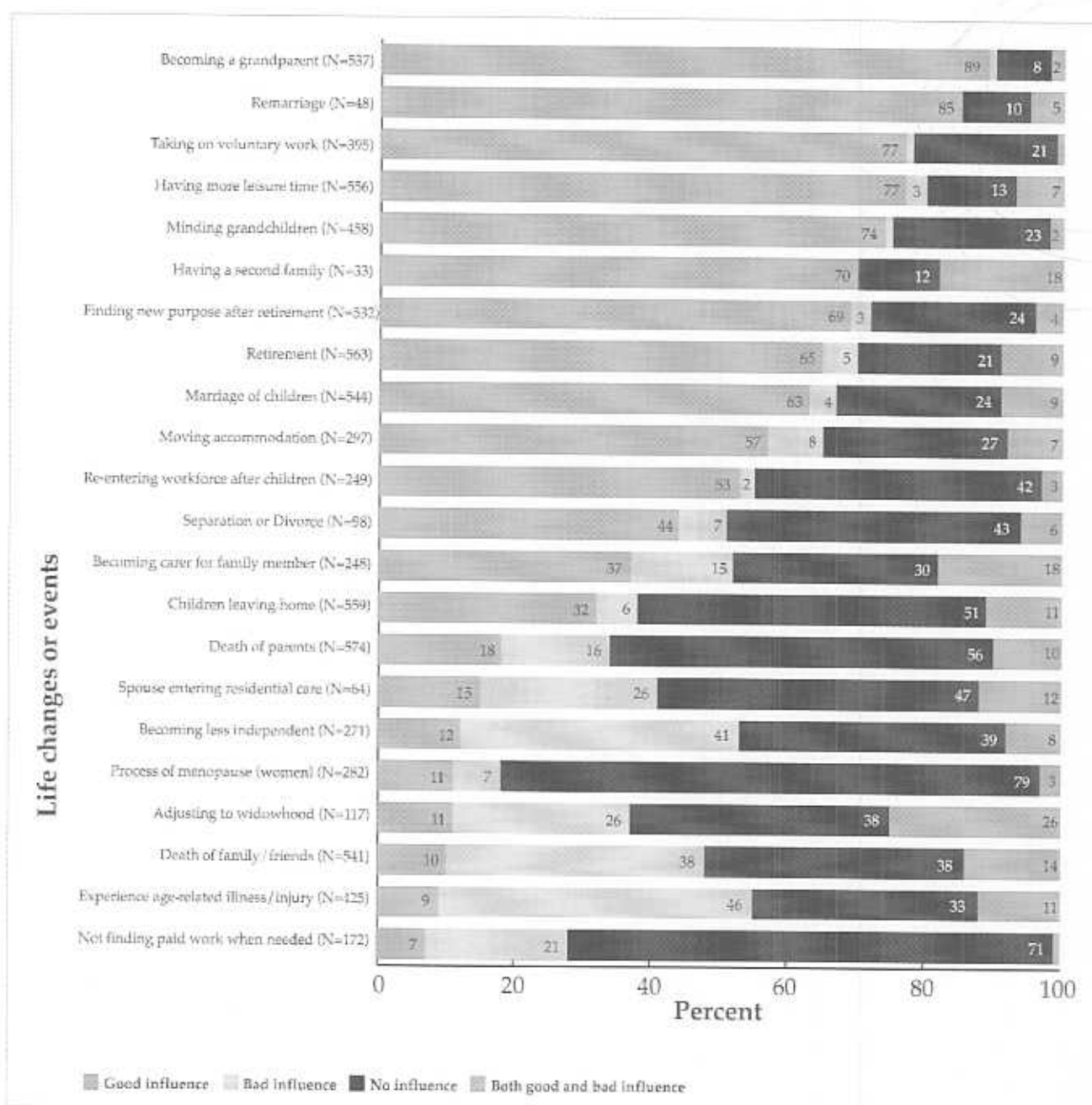
The following life events or changes were the most likely to be continuing to have a *good influence* on the lives of seniors *to whom they were applicable* at the present time:

- becoming a grandparent (89%)
- remarriage (85%)
- taking on voluntary work (77%)
- having more leisure time (77%)
- minding grandchildren (74%)
- having a second family (70%)
- finding a new purpose after retirement (69%)
- retirement (65%)
- marriage of children (63%)
- moving accommodation (57%) and
- re-entering workforce after having children (53%).

The following life events or changes were most commonly identified as continuing to have a *bad influence* on the lives of seniors *to whom they were applicable* at the present time:

- experiencing an age-related illness or injury (46%)
- becoming less independent (41%)
- the death of family and friends (38%)
- adjusting to widowhood (26%)
- spouse going into residential aged care (26%)
- not finding paid work when they needed it (21%)
- death of parents (16%) and
- becoming a carer for a family member (15%).

Figure 1: Events or changes that continued to influence seniors' lives ('not applicable' responses excluded)



\* Notes:

1. Results 1% or less shown above but without a value (ie no number '1' in the chart).
2. The sample size varied according to life categories (eg gender (ie menopause), marital status, children, remarriage) and the number of 'not applicable' responses, which had been excluded.

## Successful ageing

### Thinking about successful ageing

Three out of four seniors surveyed (74%) indicated that they had thought about successful ageing or ageing well. Those aged 70 to 74 years were more likely to have thought about this than those aged 75 years and over.

### Attributes of successful ageing

A list of 21 possible attributes of successful ageing was read out to investigate seniors' perceptions of how important these were to ageing successfully or ageing well. This list was adapted from one of the US studies<sup>7</sup>.

Most items were considered important by at least half the seniors, so the key attributes of successful ageing were taken to be those that at least three-quarters regarded as *very* important. The following seven items fell into this category:

- remaining in good health until close to death (88%)
- being able to take care of oneself (88%)
- remaining free of chronic disease (84%)
- having family who were 'there for you' (79%)
- feeling good about oneself (79%)
- being able to make choices about things that affected one's life (78%) and
- being able to act according to one's own inner standards and values (78%).

All of these were among the *top ten* attributes of successful ageing identified in the US study.

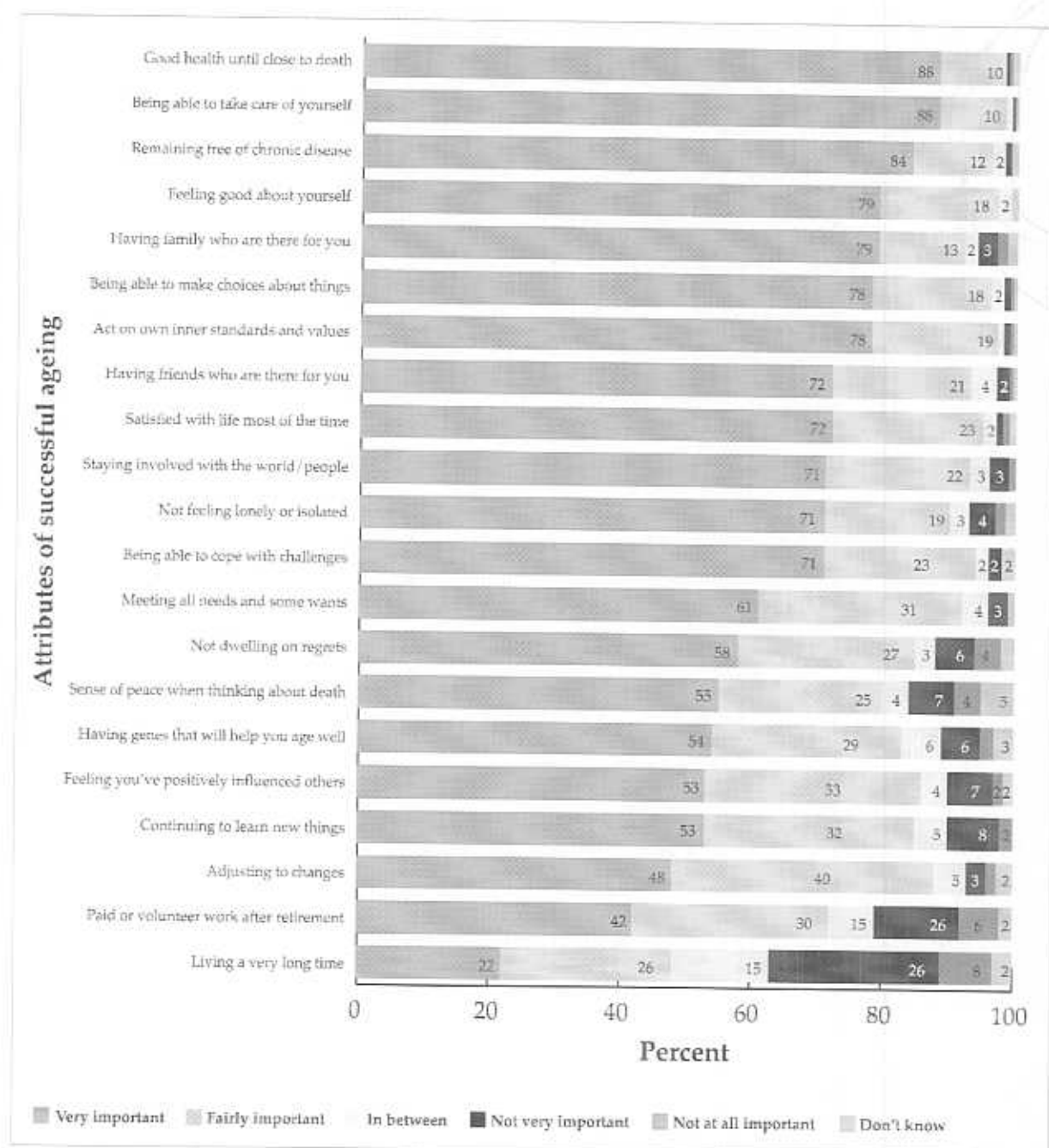
The items viewed by Western Australian seniors as having less importance to ageing successfully included:

- living a very long time (not important 34%)
- being able to do paid or volunteer work after retirement age (not important 19%)
- having a sense of peace when thinking about death (not important 11%)
- not dwelling on regrets (not important 10%) and
- continuing to learn new things (not important 10%).

*Living a very long time* and *being able to do paid or volunteer work after retirement age* were the factors considered to be least important to successful ageing in this study and the US study.

7. Phelan et al (2004). Op Cit.

Figure 2: Importance of attributes of successful ageing



\* Notes:

1. Results 1% or less shown above but without a value (ie no number 1 in the chart).

## Successful ageing – objective measure

Previous research<sup>8</sup> has defined a person as ageing successfully if they met the following three objective criteria:

1. absence of disease, disability and risk factors like high blood pressure, smoking or obesity
2. maintaining physical and mental functioning and
3. active engagement in life.

Using this definition, only one in five Western Australian seniors aged 65 years and over (20%) would be considered to be ageing successfully. This is consistent with research conducted in the US that found 19% of respondents met this objective measure of successful ageing<sup>9</sup>.

In the Western Australian research, younger seniors, ie those aged 65 to 69 years, were more likely than older seniors to be defined as ageing successfully using this objective measure.

## Successful ageing – subjective measure

While both objective and subjective measures were used to measure ageing, OSIV tended towards the view that self-assessment was a preferred means of measuring whether or not one was ageing successfully or well, based on an appreciation of the importance of state of mind to people's feelings of general wellbeing<sup>10</sup>.

Three out of five seniors (61%) *strongly agreed* with the statement 'I am ageing successfully or ageing well'. Another one in three seniors (36%) *moderately agreed* and only 2% (12 seniors) *disagreed* with the statement.

Only seniors who *strongly agreed* with the statement 'I am ageing successfully or ageing well' were taken to be ageing successfully<sup>11</sup>. This is the same definition that was adopted in one of the US studies<sup>12</sup> (A significantly larger proportion of Western Australian seniors (61%) than US seniors (50%) considered themselves to be ageing successfully or well using this criterion.)

<sup>8</sup> Rowe, John W; and Kahn, Robert (1998) Op.cit.

<sup>9</sup> Strawbridge et al (2002). Op cit.

<sup>10</sup> This definition was used by Phelan et al (2004) and Strawbridge et al (2002) Op.cit.

<sup>11</sup> In most analysis variables, the main point of difference in the response scale was between *strongly agree* and *moderately agree* – ie the responses to other indicators of those who only *moderately agreed* more closely resembled those of respondents who *disagreed* that they were ageing successfully.

<sup>12</sup> Strawbridge et al (2002). Op cit.



The same proportion of male and female seniors (61%) indicated that they *strongly agreed* that they were ageing successfully. Also, the same proportion of seniors (61%) across each of the three age groups – 65 to 69 years; 70 to 74 years; and 75 years and over – *strongly agreed* that they were ageing successfully.

The 369 seniors who *strongly agreed* that they were ageing successfully mentioned the following reasons for this opinion most frequently:

- ▢ being in good physical health (48%)
- ▢ being active and busy (47%)
- ▢ having good relationships (happy marriage or involvement with family or friends) (38%)
- ▢ having a positive attitude (30%).

The 214 seniors who *moderately agreed* that they were ageing successfully also mentioned most frequently the same reasons for this opinion, but to a lesser extent, except for *active and busy*:

- ▢ being active and busy (47%)
- ▢ being in good physical health (29%)
- ▢ having good relationships (happy marriage or involvement with family or friends) (28%)
- ▢ having a positive attitude (15%).

The 12 seniors who disagreed that they were ageing successfully gave the following reasons to explain their response:

- ▢ being in poor physical health (9 seniors)
- ▢ having memory problems (2 seniors)
- ▢ having a pessimistic or negative attitude (1 senior)
- ▢ spouse being dead or ill or incapacitated (1 senior)
- ▢ being unable to do what they wanted or used to do (1 senior)
- ▢ financial discomfort (1 senior).

Seniors who were not at all depressed, and female seniors, could to some extent be predicted to define themselves as ageing successfully<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> A logistic regression (enter method) was carried out to determine the predictive variables.



## Relationship between ageing successfully and influence of transitions in life

The survey data was examined to identify links between whether seniors thought they were ageing successfully or not and their perceptions of the continuing influence of life events or changes on their lives at the present time.

Only one life event or change appeared to affect a reasonable number of seniors in relation to its effect on ageing successfully. This was *experiencing an age-related illness or injury*, which was applicable to nearly three out of four seniors (72%). While only one in four seniors (25%) who were ageing successfully saw this as a bad influence on their lives now, nearly half (47%) who were *not* ageing as successfully saw it as a bad influence.



## Emotional and relational factors

### Quality of life expected in old age

Approximately half of the seniors surveyed (49%) expected to have the *best* old age possible based on their current quality of life. In addition, one in three seniors (36%) expected to have a *good* old age.

Seniors who felt their physical health was very good or excellent, those who felt loved and cared about to a great extent, and those who felt valued by the community as a senior, were more likely to expect the best old age possible, based on their current quality of life.

### Contact with relatives and friends

One in four seniors (23%) had contact with two or more *relatives* every day, while 60% had contact at least once a week.

One in four seniors (24%) also had contact with two or more *close friends* every day, while 60% had contact at least once a week.

### Current happiness

Half of the seniors (50%) indicated that they were *very happy* in their current stage of life. Another 44% indicated that they were *fairly happy*.

Seniors more likely to be *very happy* in their current stage of life were those who: were not at all depressed; thought ageing was a positive stage of life; felt greatly loved and cared about; considered they were in very good or excellent physical health; felt valued by the community; and felt in control of their life.

The 296 seniors who indicated that they were *very happy* in their current stage of life most frequently mentioned the following reasons for this opinion:

- having family around them (40%)
- being in good physical health (32%)
- having friends around them, or a social life (26%)
- having a loving spouse or partner (25%)
- keeping busy or active (23%)
- having an optimistic or positive attitude (23%) and
- having no stress or worries (21%).

The 266 seniors who indicated that they were *fairly happy* in their current stage of life most frequently mentioned the following reasons for this opinion:

- being in good physical health (25%)
- having family around them (24%)
- keeping busy or active (23%)
- having friends around them, or a social life (20%) and
- having an optimistic or positive attitude (19%).

The 12 seniors who indicated that they were *fairly* or *very unhappy* in their current stage of life gave the following reasons for this:

- spouse or other family member being dead, or ill and incapacitated (4 seniors)
- needing assistance to do things; losing independence (3 seniors)
- being lonely and not seeing or having family or friends (2 seniors)
- being in poor physical health (2 seniors) and
- having nothing to do and feeling bored (1 senior).

### Energy levels compared with other people of the same age

One in four seniors (26%) thought they had much more energy than most people their age, while one in three (31%) indicated that they had a little more energy than most.

A further one in three (34%) thought their energy level was about the same as most people their age, leaving only 9% who thought they had less energy.

### Extent felt loved and cared about

Half of the seniors (53%) felt they were loved and cared about to a *great* extent (the highest level of response possible), and one in four (24%) felt they were loved and cared about to a *large* extent (the next highest response). Female seniors were more likely to feel loved and cared about to a *great* extent than male seniors.

### Felt depressed for the previous two weeks

About one in 12 seniors (8%) indicated that they had felt depressed almost every day during the two weeks prior to the interview. About three-quarters of the seniors (78%) indicated strongly that they had not felt depressed, and one in eight (13%) occupied the 'middle ground'.

### Perceptions of control over life

Half of the seniors (49%) felt that their life was 'under their control' to a *great* extent, while one-third (34%) thought this was so to a *reasonable* extent. Of the rest, one-tenth (10%) felt their life was about *half* under their control and *half* outside it; and 6% felt that it was 'outside their control' to a reasonable or great extent.

The older seniors, those aged 75 years and over, were more likely than younger seniors to think their life was outside their control to a *great* extent.

### Happiness of current/most recent relationship

Among the seniors who were either currently married (including *de facto* relationships) or had previously been married, a substantial majority (71%) were *very happy* with their current or most recent marriage or relationship. A further one in four (24%) said they were *fairly happy*. A small proportion of seniors were not happy with their relationship (3% *not very happy* and 2% *not at all happy*).

Male seniors were more likely than females to be *very happy* with their relationship, while female seniors were more likely than males to be less than *very happy*.



### Feeling valued as a senior

One in four seniors (25%) felt *very valued* by the community as a senior, while half (52%) felt *fairly valued* as a senior. Therefore, about three-quarters of the seniors felt valued by the community as a senior.

The older seniors, those aged 70 years and over, were more likely to feel valued by the community, in comparison to those aged 65 to 69 years.

### Attitudes towards ageing as a stage of life

Just over half the seniors (55%) thought ageing was a positive stage of life, with 29% saying it was a *very positive* stage of life and 26% saying it was a *fairly positive* stage of life. Only one in eight seniors (12%) thought it was a negative stage of life and 29% said it was in between.



## Physical factors

### Self-assessed physical health

About one in eight seniors (14%) thought their overall health was *excellent*, while one in three (35%) thought it was *very good* and another one in three (34%) thought it was *good*. Therefore, a large majority of seniors (83%) thought their physical health was at least *good*.

However, 15% of the seniors surveyed thought their physical health was *fair* and 3% thought it was *poor*.

Younger seniors, those aged 65 to 69 years, were more likely to indicate their health was excellent or very good than the oldest seniors, those aged 75 years and over.

### Health risk factors

The most common health *risk factors* that seniors suffered from were:

- having high blood pressure or hypertension (38%)
- doing little or no physical activity (17%)
- smoking tobacco (8%)
- being very overweight or obese (7%)
- drinking more alcohol than they should (4%).

### Health problems

The most common *health problems* that seniors indicated that they had, or had experienced, were:

- arthritis or other joint problems (58%)
- cardiovascular disease (24%)
- cancer and treatment side-effects (19%)
- osteoporosis (18%)
- diabetes (15%)
- asthma (12%)
- bronchitis (11%)
- stroke (6%) and
- emphysema (5%).

Less than one in five seniors (17%) had *none* of the above health problems.

Female seniors were more likely than male seniors to suffer from: arthritis and other joint problems; osteoporosis; asthma; and bronchitis. Male seniors were more likely to suffer from: cardiovascular disease; and diabetes.

### Assistance required

Most seniors (96%) *never* required assistance for *daily activities* such as bathing or showering, dressing, eating, using the toilet or grooming. Younger seniors, those aged 65 to 74 years, were more likely to *never* require assistance for daily activities.

A large majority of seniors (88%) *never* required assistance to carry out *physical activities* such as standing up without feeling dizzy or fainting, moving from bed to chair, climbing one flight of stairs without resting, or walking a quarter of a mile. Younger seniors, those aged 65 to 74 years, were more likely to *never* require assistance with physical activities.

Less than half of the seniors (43%) indicated that they *never* required assistance for *mental activities* such as remembering things without difficulty, remembering where they put something, or finding the right word when talking. Almost half of the seniors (46%) indicated that they required assistance but not very often, while one in ten (11%) often required assistance. Male seniors were a little more likely than female seniors to indicate they required assistance.



## Demographic and social factors

### Activities

A large majority of seniors (83%) indicated that they were doing their own housework. Female seniors and younger seniors, aged 65 to 69 years, were more likely to be doing their own housework.

One in four seniors (23%) regularly  *minded or cared for a child or a grandchild*. Seniors aged 65 to 74 years were more likely to do this than those aged 75 years and over.

Approximately one in three (35%) did *voluntary work*, while one in ten (10%) were doing paid work, either part-time (7%), or full-time (3%). The younger seniors, those aged 65 to 69 years, were more likely to be doing voluntary or paid work.

### Education

The highest education levels that the seniors surveyed had achieved were:

- completed one to three years' secondary school (36%)
- completed trade certificate or other post-school certificate (18%)
- completed four to five years' secondary school (16%)
- received no secondary schooling (12%)
- completed Bachelor's degree (9%)
- completed post-graduate degree or diploma (8%)
- started but did not complete Bachelor's degree (2%).

### Financial position

Three out of four seniors (74%) thought their financial position was at least *fairly well off*. More specifically, 69% indicated that they were *fairly well off* and 5% thought they were *very well off*. One in five seniors (22%) thought they were *not very well off* and 3% thought they were *not at all well off*.





## Discussion

### Most important life transitions

Looking at the life events that continued to influence seniors' lives at the present time, this research found that family matters or events, and changes that occurred more recently, generally had a greater influence.

The most common events still having a positive influence on seniors' lives related to family, leaving paid employment, and finding new opportunities after retirement. In descending order, they were: becoming a grandparent; taking on voluntary work; having more leisure time; minding grandchildren; finding a new purpose in life after retirement; retiring from paid employment; and marriage of children.

The events having a negative influence tended to involve smaller numbers of seniors, and related to their own declining health and fitness, the death of important others, and the lack of employment opportunities. The most common were, in descending order: experiencing an age-related illness or injury; becoming less independent; death of friends and family members; adjusting to widowhood; and not being able to find paid work when it was needed.

When each life event or change was compared to seniors' self-assessment of whether they were ageing successfully or not, only a minority of life changes appeared to be relevant. However, several of the life changes referred to above emerged again as the significant factors.

Those who saw themselves as ageing very successfully were more likely to say that finding a new purpose in life after retirement, marriage of children, and minding grandchildren, were having a positive influence on their lives. Conversely, those who did not see themselves as ageing very successfully were more likely to say that experiencing an age-related illness or injury, becoming less independent, and adjusting to widowhood, were having a negative impact on their lives.

In addition, although having a spouse enter residential care affected only a small proportion of seniors, those who saw themselves as ageing very successfully were less likely to have a spouse enter residential care. Conversely, those with a spouse in residential care who did not see themselves as ageing very successfully were more likely to say it was having a negative influence, or no influence, on their lives.

## Conclusions

*With the drop in family size and the growing number of people remaining childless, an important source of satisfaction in later life – grandchildren – will be available to fewer future seniors. Intergenerational programs may therefore become more important. Voluntary work, already a positive influence to some, may also become more important. In addition, seniors may need to expand their social networks to compensate for reduced family support in the future.*

*The priority seniors place on age-related health problems and growing dependence as negative influences points to the need for a stronger focus by all tiers of government on preventive health.*

*The findings also indicate a need for programs that assist older people to cope with the death of important others.*

*In relation to the availability of paid work for mature age people, economic necessity has recently impelled commonwealth and state governments to take action on this issue.*



## Attributes of successful ageing

The key attributes of successful ageing identified by seniors from a list were found to be:

- remaining in good health until close to death
- being able to take care of oneself until close to death
- remaining free of chronic disease
- having family who were 'there for you'
- feeling good about oneself
- being able to make choices about things that affect one's life and
- being able to act according to one's own inner standards and values.

## Conclusions

*Again, the priority for seniors of maintaining their health and independence is apparent, reinforcing the need for a greater priority to be placed on preventive health by all tiers of government.*

*Seniors also recognised the need for support from family members. With population ageing, increasing burdens are likely to be imposed on family carers, highlighting the crucial need for adequate support.*

*This research also highlights the importance of 'internal' factors for ageing successfully, such as feeling good about oneself and feeling reasonably autonomous. Government programs should therefore continue to: combat negative stereotypes of ageing; remove barriers that prevent or deter seniors from continuing to live life to the full; and promote active ageing.*

## Ageing successfully – subjective measure

Three out of five seniors (61%) were ageing successfully, based on self-assessment. The seniors who were more likely to be ageing successfully on this basis were those who were positive about their: emotional state; contact with family and friends; feelings of autonomy; health; and energy levels.

The key predictor of successful ageing was found to underlie the other indicators: the absence of depression. A secondary predictor was gender: female seniors could to some extent be predicted to be ageing successfully, whereas males could not.

## Conclusions

*The key predictor of ageing successfully was found to be the **absence of depression**. A key outcome of this research is therefore the need to **target depression among older people**.*

*The survey question on depression found that 8% of seniors agreed that they had felt depressed almost every day over the previous two weeks, while another 13% only moderately disagreed (and whose responses to many other questions more closely resembled the responses of those who acknowledged feeling depressed).*

*This finding suggests that approximately one in five Western Australians aged 65 years and over may be experiencing some degree of mood depression.*

*Whether this proportion is similar to that in the whole adult population, or whether people aged 65 years and over were more vulnerable to depression, is an issue that needs to be investigated, by including the same question in the 2006 OSIV community survey, which samples Western Australians aged 16 years and over.*

*A secondary predictor of successful ageing was being female. It is well known that the suicide rate among older men approaches that of younger men, although this is masked by the relatively small number of older men. Therefore, it is important that programs that target men specifically are included in programs to combat depression.*



## Ageing successfully - objective measure

Only one in five seniors (20%) could be defined as ageing successfully based on the objective measure used in this study. Not surprisingly, the youngest seniors, those aged 65 to 69 years, were more likely to fit this definition, as were those who rated their physical health as excellent or very good, and those who said they had much more energy than other people their age.

### Conclusions

*It is quite unreasonable to expect the total absence of disease, disability and risk factors among people aged 65 years and older. Furthermore, this requirement would 'disqualify' the vast majority of people of this age from being identified as ageing successfully no matter how actively they were 'engaged with life'.*

*There is little or no room in the objective measure for positive emotional states, frequent contact with family or friends, or feeling reasonably autonomous, as health problems disqualify most older seniors.*

*Therefore, it is recommended that successful ageing should be measured using a subjective question such as the one used in this study, with a more sensitive numerical scale to further differentiate the responses given.*

## Links between important life transitions and successful ageing

Only one life transition or event affected the majority of seniors in relation to ageing successfully - experiencing an age-related illness or injury. Seniors who were ageing successfully were much less likely to see this as a bad influence on their lives now, or to see the issue as applying to them. Becoming less independent was applicable to about half of the seniors, and this was also significantly related to whether seniors thought they were ageing successfully or not.

Other negative life transitions that differentiated to some extent between those ageing successfully and otherwise applied to much smaller numbers. They were: *adjusting to widowhood*; and *having a spouse enter residential care*.

### Conclusions

*Few life transitions or events appeared to make the difference between ageing successfully and unsuccessfully. Generally positive changes were seen as such by the majority of seniors, whether they could be regarded as ageing successfully or not.*

*Some negative changes, however, such as experiencing an age-related illness or injury, becoming less independent, adjusting to widowhood, and having a spouse enter residential care may make the difference between ageing successfully or not in some people. This is not a clear-cut finding, however, as there were many indications in this research that having a number of 'positive indicators' in one's life may to some extent protect older people from feeling that they were not ageing successfully.*



## Successful ageing factors

Three of five factors identified in the literature as factors associated with successful ageing were supported by this research. That is, seniors who considered themselves financially well-off, who got more exercise and who had better mental health (ie did not feel depressed) were more likely to perceive themselves as ageing successfully. Having higher education and not smoking, however, were not associated with successful ageing in this research.

## Conclusions

*Absence of depression has already been identified as a key predictor of ageing successfully, and conclusions have been drawn on the need to target depression among older people. As physical activity is helpful in alleviating mild depression as well as improving physical health, encouraging sedentary seniors to get more physical activity is recommended. Not smoking was not associated directly with successful ageing in this research, but good health (which does appear to influence successful ageing fairly directly) is very important to seniors. Seniors should therefore be encouraged to quit smoking.*



## A brief snapshot of Western Australian seniors from the research

The majority of seniors indicated emphatically that they were ageing successfully.

Feeling they had support from their families, and having and minding grandchildren, were very important to seniors aged 65 years and over. They also enjoyed the increased leisure time they had, though some were still in paid work and many did voluntary work. They also valued their ability to find a new purpose in life after retirement.

Maintaining good health and staying independent were also very important to seniors. About half had very good or excellent health, but age-related illnesses and disabilities were quite common and became more so with increasing age. About one in six said they got little or no physical activity, and a smaller proportion said they were very overweight or obese, smoked tobacco or drank too much. Very few needed help with day-to-day household activities and other physical activities, but quite a few needed occasional help with remembering things or finding the right word.

Feeling good about themselves, making choices about their lives, and acting according to their own inner standards and values, were also very important to seniors. About half expected to have the best old age possible; felt very happy at their current stage of life; felt loved and cared about to a great extent; had more energy than most people their age; or felt that they controlled their own lives to a great extent.

A large majority of seniors had contact with relatives and close friends at least once a week; and a fairly large majority said their present or most recent relationship was or had been 'very happy'.

Finally, a large majority of seniors indicated emphatically that they were not suffering from depression. However, about one in five seniors may have been experiencing some depression of mood.

Copies of the full report can be downloaded from the Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering website

[www.osi.wa.gov.au](http://www.osi.wa.gov.au)

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# TALES OF TIMES PAST

Intergenerational Intercultural Oral  
History Program



## Vision

'To make a significant contribution to enriching communities through promoting participation, encouraging understanding and recognition of the value of all members of our community across all cultures and generations.

Project Designer and Facilitator

**Vasanti Sunderland**

Community Development Consultant

Ph / Fax: 93833790

[vtsun@globaldial.com](mailto:vtsun@globaldial.com)

## Introduction

In all cultures it is the senior members of the community who are the custodians of the stories, which tell the history of communities. They are the storytellers of events, both local and world wide, which have shaped societies. In the last one hundred years so much has changed and so rapidly and our elders have had a ringside seat. They have been witness to the changing face of the land, changes to social customs and traditions, influenced by the intermingling of many cultural beliefs and a rapidly evolving technology where Hi-Tech was once a hand driven wringer.

In a vast country such as Australia with a large immigrant and shifting population the wisdom of the elders of families is often a missing resource. It is not so easy these days for children to 'sit at the feet' of their grandparents to listen to stories ranging from the ordinary to the extraordinary, about a time very different from their own.

It is not only the younger generation that benefits by listening to these stories. All generations have an opportunity to enrich their own understanding of our heritage and ancestry thereby breaking down the barriers and dispelling the stereotypical myths that separate cultures and generations.

There are many stories untold or rarely told from the lives of people who have much to tell. By valuing the life long experience of our older people this program aims to be a pebble in a pond sending out ripples into the community, which say, "Listen, I have a story to tell"



## Project Description

Duration: 46 weeks - Perth and Metropolitan regions

The program brings together seniors from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds including those seniors who are house bound or have limited English and are often unable to participate in social or educational programs. Either a participating family member or fellow participant will assist seniors, with limited English.

The program comprises of;

- 18 weekly sessions which include, 10 x 2.5hr workshops and 7 school (primary - senior) / community performances.
- 6 x 2hr monthly sessions

During the workshops the experiences of the participants will be explored and developed into stories that are representative of their generation and culture through a series of themes.

Themes such as:

- growing up in the earlier part of the last century (childhood, school days),
- experiencing the many changes in the environment, technology (domestic - commercial)
- adapting to the many changes in society, cultural beliefs and values.
- living through historical events, both local and world wide.

Preparation for the performances will include:

- developing skills to enhance confidence through voice and presentation techniques.
- encouraging the inclusion of other arts and crafts that are representative of the seniors cultural history and talents, ie; music, songs, poetry, myths and folklore.
- gathering of memorabilia.

Depending on the number of students per school, the initial program has the potential to involve over 3,500 seniors, students, teachers, parents and general public. This number increases as the established group continues to present their stories.

A number of the workshops are designed to assist in establishing the group as an independent resource of senior storytellers that will be accessible to schools and the wider community.

The focus of these workshops, are to help set up strategies to enable the group to manage on a long term basis.

Strategies will include;

- planning, marketing and co-ordination skills,
- establishing roles and functions
- assistance in application for any funding that may be required
- the production of a flyer.

The ongoing viability of the group will be maintained by seeking new members and Vasanti will continue to be available as a mentor.

Senior participants will be engaged from:

- Local cultural communities
- Senior citizen centres/ groups, retirement communities/ homes
- Editorials describing the project in local newspapers
- Invitations to local identities

## Program Time line

Week 1 - 6	Commencement and preparation of project. Setting up logistics; venue, transport. Distribution of publicity, marketing and promotion of project
Week 7 - 11	Workshop sessions gathering and developing stories in preparation for performances
Week 12	1st school performance
Week 13-14	Review performance - further preparation
Week 15 - 24	Performances in schools and library. Workshops developing and establishing group as an independent ongoing resource.
Week 25	Combined morning tea with other Tales groups
Week 24	Celebration and conclusion weekly sessions
Week 28	Commencement of 6 monthly sessions. Establishing group as an independent oral history resource with further school and community performances with production training.
Week 50	Conclusion of initial program and continuation of regular monthly meetings - with Vasanti remaining available as mentor.



## Objectives

- To enable seniors to meet and celebrate shared and different histories.
- To facilitate positive contact between generations from different cultures in voluntary



community activities by:

- promoting activities involving seniors, young people and the wider community.
  - dispelling the stereotypical myths and fears held by different cultures and generations toward each other contributing to greater understanding of the issues each generation faces and the skills and experiences that each can offer.
  - reducing the isolation of seniors and age segregation in community activities.
- To provide the opportunity to reflect on social, technological, cultural and environmental changes by:
    - developing and promoting an innovative oral history resource that maintains the seniors in an active and ongoing role.
    - developing skills to enable the group to continue as an independent storytelling group.
  - To promote interaction between generations within the family structure.
  - To establish a community resource of oral historians operating as an independent group available to schools, educational institutions, government, community and business organizations / groups and the general public through special events.

## Long Term Objectives

- To establish a resource network of 'Tales of Times Past' storytelling groups of culturally diverse senior oral historians that are interconnected and supportive of each other and accessible to the wider community.
- Development of the stories for publication.
- Ongoing arts and cultural activities through the availability of the stories as a resource for other school and community projects.

## Outcomes

- Seniors experience a growth in self confidence evident in their storytelling and interaction with their audiences.
- Through the feedback received, both written and verbally, seniors are affirmed in their value and contribution to the community.
- Students gain valuable living knowledge through interaction with the seniors, which is encouraged to be extended to their own family.
- The place of oral history is vindicated in the school and community requests for ongoing access to senior knowledge.

## Project Background

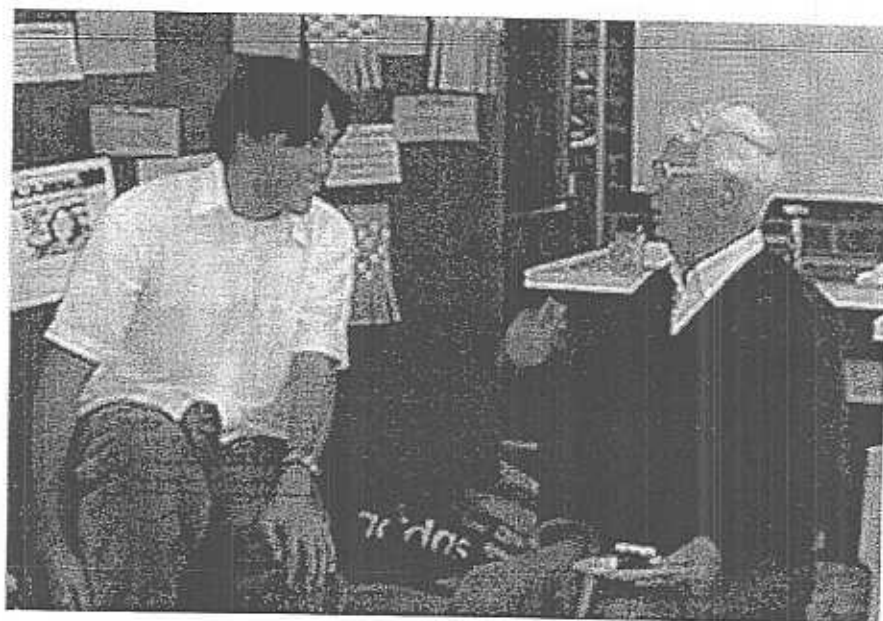
The program "Tales of Times Past", evolved out of the extensive experience Vasanli Sunderland had as a Community Development Consultant/ Facilitator and Storyteller, working with a wide range of people from diverse cultural backgrounds and generations. It was evident very early in the establishment phase that the creative process of using story as a key medium to bring diverse sectors of the community together had very positive community development outcomes.

The program was piloted successfully and a video produced in the City of Melville in 1995. Following this success an adapted version of the program ran in the City of Wanneroo, 1997; City of Joondalup, 1998. The full program ran in the Town of Vincent, 1999; City of South Perth, 2000 and City of Gosnells, 2001 where a further video was produced. In 2003 the program ran in three areas - Cities of Nedlands, and Armadale and a combined councils program in the Towns of Cottesloe and Mosman Park and the Shire of Peppermint Grove. In 2004 the program began in the Town of Bassendean and the first country program in the Shire of Bridgetown / Greenbushes.

Since the inception of the program to 2004, over 90 schools have been involved with over 37,000 students, teachers and the general public. The school performances are a great success for the children, teachers and the seniors, as proven in the repeated requests to return, and the public performances at local Libraries and Community Centres have been equally successful with the audience becoming involved by sharing their own stories.

The development of independent resource groups of senior storytellers ensures that the project's aims continue to unfold and the richness of our seniors' experiences, as part of our heritage, is an easily accessible oral history. 'Tales of Times Past' groups are well established in the Cities of South Perth, Gosnells, Armadale and Nedlands and the Towns of Bassendean, Mosman Park and Cottesloe and the Shires of Peppermint Grove Bridgetown / Greenbushes WA, where they continue to meet regularly and present their stories in a wide range of events and venues. There is a supportive network between the groups and the seniors frequently link up and assist each other when needed. New people continue to join the groups.

Further development of the program is through recording the stories for publication. The Towns of Cottesloe, Mosman Park and the Shire of Peppermint Grove are currently undertaking this.



## Project Management and Co-ordination

The project is coordinated and facilitated by Vasanti Sunderland in collaboration with the organization or local government taking up the program.

Vasanti Sunderland has extensive experience as a successful Community Development Consultant and Facilitator since 1987 and is highly skilled as an artist, storyteller, coordinator and administrator. She has designed and facilitated programs for schools, government departments and a wide range of community and cultural organizations.

Vasanti has been a lecturer with Midland, Carlisle, Central and Fremantle TAFE since 1995 on the NOW program (New Opportunities for Women, Applied Women's Studies and WOW ( Wider Opportunity for Work).

She has over 35 years experience working in theatre and is currently an actor, conductor and teacher with Perth Playback Theatre Company, which includes 6 years experience as the administrator, and coordinated the '6th International Playback Theatre Conference' in Fremantle 6th -12th January 1997.

Vasanti is a trained facilitator;

Certificate in Groupwork Leadership - Wasley Institute

Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training - Midland TAFE

Certificate IV in Fine Art - Central TAFE.

Responsibilities of Vasanti Sunderland are as follows:

- Liaison with appropriate officer in setting up and co-ordination of the program.
- Provide information for publicity; media release, Art work for flyers.
- Marketing of the project. Visiting community groups and centres.
- Coordination, preparation and facilitation of workshop sessions with seniors in preparation for school and community presentations.
- Production and coordination of school and community presentations.
- Facilitate sessions to established ongoing resource group.
- Assist in setting up marketing / provide flyer design for ongoing group.
- Program documentation and report.
- Remain available as mentor to the ongoing group.



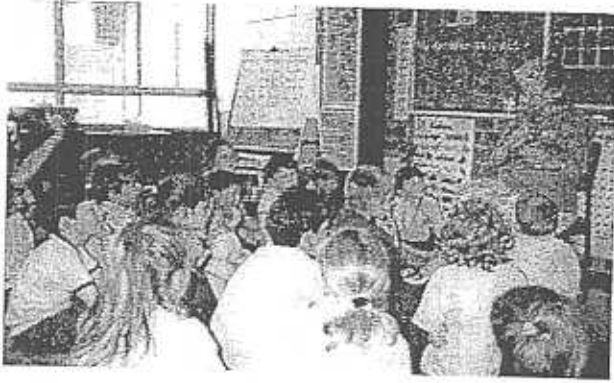
## Budget Outline

### Consultants fee

Coordination / management of program including marketing and publicity and Artwork - 72 hours	2880.00
Preparation / facilitation of workshops and production of 7 school / community performances - 120hours	4800.00
Report (production and printing) 3 copies	400.00
Administration costs -Phone / Stationery / petrol etc.	420.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8500.00</b>



Other costs to the program would be met by in kind support from the appropriate council or organization. These would include venue, transport (if required), tea/ coffee for workshops, production costs of publicity (4 flyers), postage costs; 3 mailouts - senior participants for workshops (community groups, senior citizen centres and nominated individuals), schools presentation and ongoing group marketing mailout.



*National:*

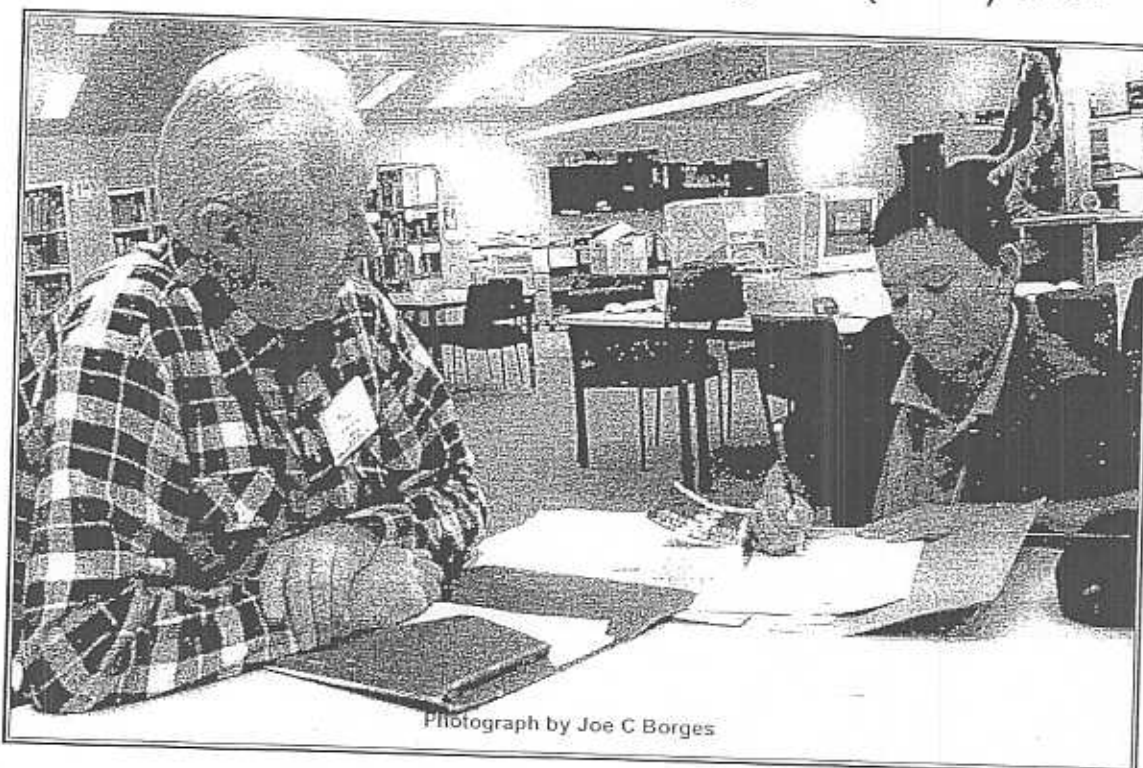
His Excellency Major General  
Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Retd)  
Governor-General of the  
Commonwealth of Australia

*Western Australian:*

Mrs Ruth Reid AM  
The Hon. Desmond Heenan

## OVERVIEW

### The School Volunteer Program (SVP) Inc.



Photograph by Joe C Borges

SVP is a charitable volunteer organisation that as its core mission seeks:

- to utilise the abilities of mainly seniors and retired people, as well as other community volunteers, to encourage and guide children who are having difficulty coping at school;
- to encourage children to achieve their full potential by developing improved life skills, thereby enhancing their quality of life; and
- to promote the value of seniors and retired people in our community and break down the barriers between the generations.

*The School Volunteer Program Inc. is a registered benevolent association that was incorporated on 6th November 1996 under Incorporation Number 1005765.*

Overview Update November 2005

*"Mentors Caring for Young People"*

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Phone: 9444 8646

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## HISTORY of the School Volunteer Program

In 1991 the Council on the Ageing (WA) Inc. held a seniors' public forum, to which they invited a teacher from Mt Lawley Senior High School (SHS) and four Year 12 students to attend. Everyone at the forum was delighted with the refreshing and encouraging exchange of views that took place between the students and seniors. This exchange seeded the idea by a fellow teacher from Mt Lawley SHS to use seniors as mentors, in schools, for children with learning difficulties. Because of these learning difficulties, many children had very low self-esteem, which caused them to build barriers to learning.

Four seniors agreed to visit Mt Lawley SHS and to start helping some of the students in Year 8. Very quickly the students built up trust in their mentors and the barriers soon came tumbling down when the seniors and students began to relate to each other.

From these small beginnings, the program was then developed through Volunteering WA, where a gentleman was working on the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP). He introduced a further group of mentors, including some fellow Rotarians, to Mt Lawley SHS and they too helped at this school.

To establish and further expand **the School Volunteer Program**, the Council on the Ageing (WA) applied for some funding through the Gordon Reid Foundation for Youth. This grant was successful and enabled the program to operate for the first two years. In 1994 there were 14 schools and 85 mentors involved in the program and by the end of 1995 this number had grown to 29 schools and 176 mentors. The Education Department of WA was then approached and agreed to provide \$30,000 per year for the following three years. In 1996 the coordinating group was expanded to include representatives from Rotary International. On the 6th November 1996, this committee was disbanded when the School Volunteer Program became incorporated. A new Board of Management was formed and this board currently controls the operations of the School Volunteer Program Incorporated.

Mrs Ruth Reid AM, wife of the late Governor Gordon Reid, agreed to become a patron of the organisation and was joined in this role in 1997 by the Rt Hon. Justice Desmond Heenan. In their roles as Western Australian Patrons, both remain staunch supporters of the School Volunteer Program. In 2004, His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Retd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia became the National Patron as the School Volunteer Program has now been initiated in many other Australian states and territories.

In Western Australia, the program currently has over 1800 active mentors assisting approximately 3000 young people across all school years, from Kindergarten to Year 12, in more than 230 schools statewide. The mentors range in age from 16 to 93 years, with the vast majority of volunteer mentors being over 50 years of age. Our mentor target group is all-inclusive; we utilise and appreciate the capabilities of seniors and retired people, parents, older school students, people with disabilities, career/retired business mentors and corporate volunteer mentors.

The target group to be mentored includes all young people who have been selected by their school as having the potential to benefit most from having a caring, non-threatening, volunteer role model in their lives.

## IDENTIFIED NEEDS

The School Volunteer Program (SVP) began in response to identified community needs. It focused on the possibility of people from the community assisting young people experiencing difficulties in upper primary and lower secondary school. To initially identify these needs, consultation was undertaken with a number of WA schools as well as with many community organisations for seniors. Since its inception, SVP has always worked in partnership across all sectors of the community.

Many aspects of schooling and social life have changed over the last few decades and where it was once the role of parents to prepare their child for school and life, this is now becoming more the role of teachers and others in the education system. There is an urgent need for young people in difficult circumstances to have access to guidance and assistance with basic academic, social and life skills. It is the shortfall in parent or family support that the School Volunteer Program helps to fill, with the volunteer mentors addressing some of the needs of these young people.

Many schools in Western Australia and throughout Australia are now finding that at least 20% of their students are being classified as *'Students at Educational Risk'*. This may be due to many reasons, including low literacy and numeracy skills, low self-esteem, the lack of home support, behavioural problems, non-English speaking or inadequate social skills. Virtually any child can be identified as 'at risk' at some stage in their education and they may not necessarily fit the stereotype of the truant or disruptive student. 'Students at Educational Risk' may be having family problems, be ill or have a learning disability - they may even be gifted children. Whatever the cause, research shows that a student's classification of being 'at risk' can change, dependent on the support, or lack of support, they receive at school and at home. It is impossible for teachers to regularly assist these students on a one-on-one basis. This is where the wonderful resource of trained volunteers from the community, as mentors in the schools, can make such a difference.

With the senior and retiree population increasing across Australia, there is a vast, largely under-utilised resource of experienced, loving, caring, community members with the expertise and means available to contribute to society and in particular to those of our young people who are in need of attention. Based on current population statistics and trends, it is anticipated that by the year 2025 in Australia, seniors over the age of 65 will outnumber children under the age of 17 years.

It is the belief of the School Volunteer Program Incorporated that every child has the right to a good education and each member of the community potentially has a role to play in schools, ensuring that young people can experience something that our overburdened education system cannot always deliver – *positive one-on-one interaction with an interested adult.*





## FUNDING RESOURCES

The School Volunteer Program Inc. has operated under challenging circumstances, with minimal funding assistance, since its inception in 1994. Despite these financial challenges the program continues to run successfully. SVP provides a valuable service to young people in need of special assistance with academic, emotional and social skills. The program currently delivers this service by bringing together people from across the generations. The program is able to do this in an extremely cost-effective way because of the unique business model under which it operates and through the efforts of a loyal, well-trained and committed force of volunteer mentors, under the direction of a small, salaried team of staff. Continued growth in demand for SVP's services has stretched SVP's financial resources and, as a consequence, it has become necessary for the School Volunteer Program Inc. to seek stable, long-term funding in order to support its growth and secure its future.

The School Volunteer Program Incorporated currently receives annual funding from the following sources:

- WA Dept of Education and Training
- Federal Dept of Family and Community Services
- SVP registered schools annual fees
- Donations and other grants

In 2005, SVP's total annual expenditure was approximately \$500,000. This included all administration and support costs for all registered volunteers and Western Australian schools (over 3000 volunteers and 300 schools registered since SVP's incorporation in 1996, with more than 1800 volunteers and 230 schools currently active). During 2005, expenses were also incurred associated with the expansion of the program nationally. It is anticipated that ongoing funding will continue to be provided from across all sectors including federal, state and local governments, service clubs, corporate sponsorships, charitable foundations and through bequests. SVP is a registered charitable organisation, with deductible gift recipient (DGR) status and there are plans to establish a Friends of SVP Foundation in the near future, to help raise funds and promote awareness of the School Volunteer Program.



## SKILLS REQUIRED TO BE A MENTOR

There are three main skills required to be a successful volunteer mentor with the School Volunteer Program:

### Patience

It is important to be prepared to progress slowly and steadily and to be able to cope with possible lapses by the student. A sense of humour helps develop relationships.

### Empathy

Having an unbiased friendly outlook towards young people is vital. Mentors need to accept that children are sometimes embarrassed, tentative or over assertive, just as some adults are. Empathy means having the ability to understand and to imaginatively enter into the young person's feelings.

### Life Experience

Volunteers need to have accumulated some life experiences. The evident wisdom and tolerance of our volunteers have been found to be essential ingredients in the success of the School Volunteer Program.

No formal academic qualifications are required as this is not a teaching program and volunteers are not performing the functions of teachers' aides. The School Volunteer Program provides an excellent example of the positive impact caring members of the community can make. When volunteer mentors provide encouragement and raise the self-esteem of vulnerable young people, the whole community gains.



## CURRENT SVP PROGRAMS

**The Core Mentoring Program** - Our core program involves a trained volunteer mentor going into a school for one hour per week. It is usually the same time and day each week, working one-on-one with the same student for at least a minimum commitment of one school term (10 weeks).

**Career Mentoring** - This program operates similarly to the core program but over a specified 10 week period and assists Year 10 students with setting and investigating career goals and opportunities. A volunteer assists by purely being a role model and mentor to help their chosen student to make informed choices regarding his/her further education, training and employment.

**Corporate Volunteering** - Volunteer partnerships allow companies to direct their employees to mutually beneficial projects in the community. Volunteer community involvement, in particular interaction with young people in our local schools, is a valuable training ground, with employees gaining skills and communication development. This has a corresponding gain in positive company image.

**Mentoring Across Generations In Communities (M.A.G.I.C.) Program** - An intergenerational program that involves adults voluntarily assisting in one-off or short-term projects in schools throughout Western Australia. The aim is to initiate projects that mix the generations in a range of innovative ideas to help disadvantaged young people.

**Sportsfun Across Generations (SAG)** - is an innovative program that has seniors volunteering their time to help kids be physically active at school. For one hour a week senior volunteers become role models and give one-on-one, or small group guidance and care to primary school students during physical education lessons. The volunteers help teachers by providing additional support to students who have difficulty developing skills and confidence in sport and physical activity.

**Computer Links** - Computer Links is a six-week course run by the School Volunteer Program Inc. and local schools, where high school students (under the guidance of their teacher) work with 15-20 participants (mostly senior, unemployed or low income community members), on a one-on-one basis to teach the participants how to use a computer. The course is provided free to community participants. It is a wonderful intergenerational opportunity that benefits all concerned, as seniors and students work together in an atmosphere of respect and understanding.



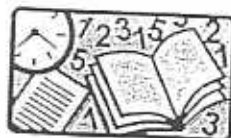
## TRAINING

SVP volunteer mentors work within the guidelines and boundaries of the schools in which they mentor and it is imperative that all mentors abide by the policies and procedures set down by the Department of Education and Training. It is a key function of our program to ensure that each volunteer mentor is screened, reference checked and given the opportunity to have access to adequate training before they enter into a mentoring relationship with a young person.

All volunteer mentors are required to attend a three hour Orientation Training Workshop which covers issues such as Confidentiality, Duty of Care, Commitment, Self Care and Boundaries, as well as how the program operates, and their role within the school system. All mentors must also sign a Confidentiality Agreement before entering a school and in Western Australia they are required to sign a Confidential Declaration Form (Screen Form 2) issued by the Department of Education and Training before commencing as a mentor.

These protective measures ensure that both mentors and young people can work together in a safe and happy environment. SVP mentors also have access to further training in many issues that are topical for young people today such as Drug Awareness, Listening Skills, Suicide Awareness, Reading Made Easy, Issues Facing Young People Today and others, as the need arises.

This training and ongoing support is vital to be able to maintain the interest and enthusiasm of the volunteers involved in the School Volunteer Program.



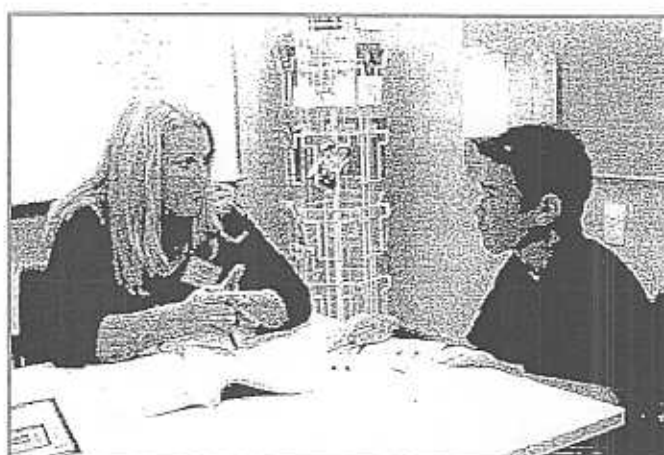
## CONCLUSION

The School Volunteer Program Incorporated is providing a valuable service to many schools in Western Australia, and this service will increase as the mentors become more confident and capable through training programs and information workshops. Adult volunteers are enjoying the challenge of helping young people. This is a natural extension of the traditional role of older and wiser members of the community guiding younger members. Many young adults are also helping struggling students in the program and schools are grateful for the one-on-one assistance provided by enthusiastic volunteers across all generations. Currently, the youngest SVP volunteer mentor is 16 years old and the oldest is a spritely 93 years of age.

The School Volunteer Program Incorporated is harnessing this altruistic endeavour on the part of mentors and by training and subsequent recognition, is not only providing a professional conduit for older Australians to participate in their community, but is enabling volunteers of all ages to be valuable community members. Through the wonderful efforts of these Australians, SVP is making a difference to the lives of thousands of Australian children, who may not otherwise have received such specialised one-on-one guidance and care.

The Board of Management of the School Volunteer Program Inc. is committed to expanding the program into every school that needs the service, across Australia, and subject to funding, is confident that continued expansion is in the best interests of students, mentors and the general community.

The School Volunteer Program Inc. is dedicated and committed to helping the students, schools and all community-minded people of Australia. This is evident by the number of years this program has been running with very little funding. The dedication shown by the voluntary Board of Management, the volunteer coordinators of the program and most importantly, the vast number of volunteer mentors, who unselfishly give up their time each week to attend a school, as well as training sessions, should ensure the successful future of volunteering throughout Australia.



Photograph by Joe C Borges





## Support in Rural WA

The School Volunteer Program operates throughout all regions of Western Australia.

Through the generous 3-year funding from United Way (WA), our team is now able to provide a more personalised and regular service to our country volunteers and schools.

United Way (WA) raises funds to support various human and health care programs and projects addressing local community needs.

This funding grant gave SVP the opportunity to expand our coverage and provide continued support to many more students in need, in rural communities across our vast state.

For further information

on the

**School Volunteer Program**

in your area please contact:

The School Volunteer Program Inc.  
112 Stoneham Street (Cnr Cape St)  
TUART HILL WA 6060  
Tel: (08) 9444 8646  
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Email: [SVPWA@bigpond.com](mailto:SVPWA@bigpond.com)  
Website: [www.svp.org.au](http://www.svp.org.au)

## Financial Support

SVP is very grateful for the financial support received from:

- WA Dept of Education and Training
- WA Dept for Community Development
- Rotary
- United Way (WA)
- Australian Government Dept of Family and Community Services
- Other Sponsors and Personal Donors

# ✓ School Volunteer Program



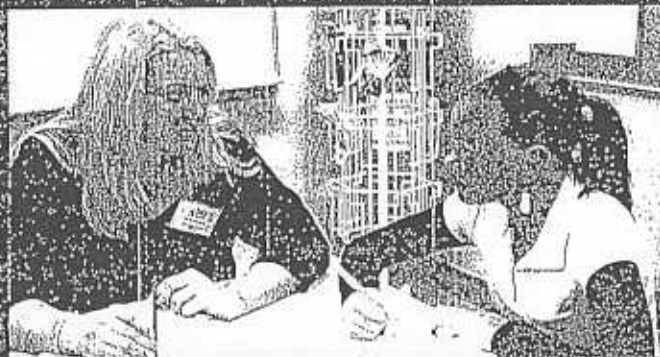
*"Mentors Caring for Young People"*



## The Purpose

The purpose and core mission of the School Volunteer Program Incorporated is:

- to utilise the abilities of mainly seniors and retired people, as well as other community volunteers, to encourage and guide children who are having difficulty coping at school;
- to encourage children to achieve their full potential by developing improved life skills, thereby enhancing their quality of life; and
- to promote the value of seniors and retired people in our community and break down the barriers between the generations.



## Mentor Skills

Mentors do not require any formal qualifications as this is not a teaching program. Patience, life experiences and an empathy towards young people are the most important skills, and of course a sense of humour helps.

The School Volunteer Program is an excellent example of members of the community passing on encouragement and lifting the self-esteem of vulnerable young people. The students and teachers in Western Australian schools all see what a positive impact the volunteer mentors have on these young people, and the community in general.

## How the program Works

A volunteer assists a young student on a one-on-one basis and becomes a mentor and role model to that student.

Mentors come to the school during normal school hours, usually once a week, for one hour. During the mentoring sessions mentors devote full attention to their students, whilst providing encouragement and taking sincere interest in their efforts.

All volunteer mentors are required to attend an Orientation Workshop prior to placement to provide a full understanding of how the program works in a school.

The program also provides Information Workshops, free-of-charge for mentors, on topics such as:

- Drugs and Suicide Awareness
- Listening and Communication Skills
- How to Read Easily
- Issues Facing Young People Today

## Awards won by SVP

In 1995, 1996 and 1997, the School Volunteer Program Inc. received Australian Violence Prevention Awards, being recognised as a major contributor to reducing violence in our community. This is a direct reflection of the calming influence that mentors are having on the young people in the program.



The success of the program in Western Australia can be gauged by the numerous awards it has won, including the following:

- National CommunityLinks Award (2000) – *State winner*
- WA Citizen of the Year Award (2000) – *Gold Swan Award*
- National Volunteer Awards (2003) – *State winner*
- WA Seniors Awards (2004) – *Award of Excellence*
- Community Service Industry Awards (2004) – *Strengthening Volunteering*

These awards were won due to the dedication and efforts of the volunteer mentors and also through the commitment made by all schools and their personnel who are ensuring that their students have access to a valuable community resource which assists them to keep up with their peers.

## Expansion of SVP

Due to the overwhelming success of the volunteer mentoring program in Western Australia, the program has now been initiated in many other Australian states and territories. His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Retd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia is the National Patron of the School Volunteer Program Incorporated.

Mrs Ruth Reid AM and the Hon. Desmond Heenan continue to support our program as our Western Australian Patrons.



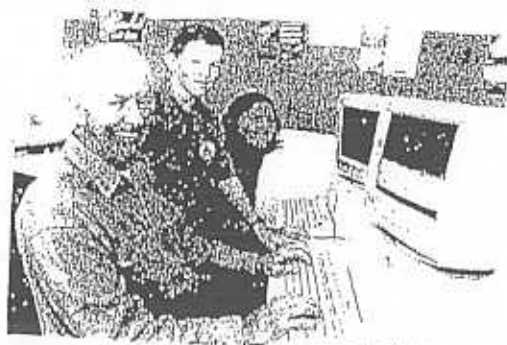
## MONITORING PROGRAM (S.C.A.M.P.)

SCAMP is a program that has been developed collaboratively between Ballajura Community College and the School Volunteer Program in supporting homeroom teachers in the Middle School (Years 7-9) with attendance procedures.

Volunteers work at the college attendance desk telephoning families of students that are absent from school on the day. Through formal, discreet conversation the reason for the student's absence is determined and the information is collated by the attendance officer at the college. Volunteers generally work in pairs over a period of 1-2 hours in the morning.

## COMPUTER LINKS

Computer Links is a free six-week course run by The School Volunteer Program and local schools where the high school students (under the guidance of their teacher), work with 15-20 participants (mostly senior/low income community members), on a one-on-one basis to teach the participants how to use a computer. It is a wonderful intergenerational opportunity that benefits all concerned, as seniors and students work together in an atmosphere of respect and understanding.



## SPORTSFUN ACROSS GENERATIONS (SAG)

SAG is an innovative program that has seniors volunteering their time to help kids be physically active at school. For one hour a week senior volunteers become role models and give one-on-one, or small group guidance and care to primary school students during physical education lessons. The volunteers help teachers by providing additional support to students who have difficulty developing skills and confidence in sport and physical activity.



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Website: [www.svp.org.au](http://www.svp.org.au)

### National Patron:

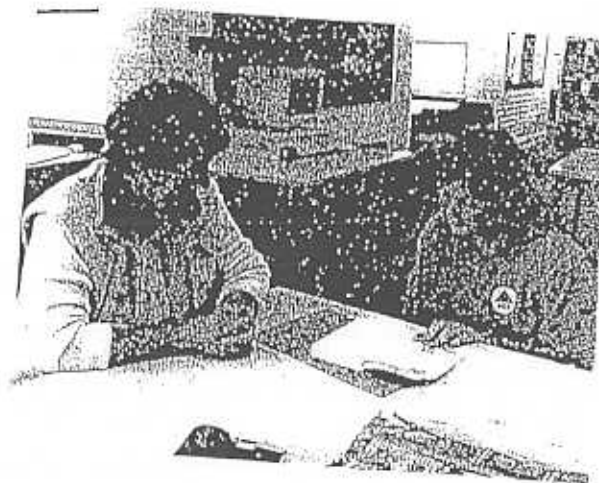
His Excellency, Major General Michael  
Jeffery AC CVO MC (Retd) Governor-  
General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

### Western Australian Patrons:

Ruth Reid AM  
Hon. Des Heenan

# The School Volunteer Program

INCORPORATED



## Additional Programs

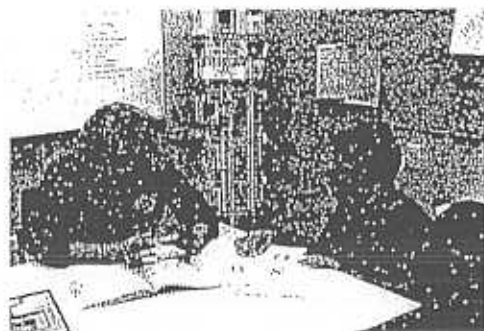


## CAREER MENTORING

The School Volunteer Program coordinates a program for young people who are thinking about leaving school. It is a model for linking community members with young people who may need extra support in the transition from school to work or from school to further education or training.

Research shows that young people, who leave school early, are twice as likely to be unemployed at the age of 24 than those who have completed Year 12.

Career Mentoring offers young people the opportunity to plan for their next step into education, training or employment. A mentor can assist this process by offering their experience, support and guidance on a one-on-one basis.



### Become A Mentor:

All it takes to be an SVP Mentor is a commitment to spend approximately two hours a week with a young person.

To support you as a mentor, SVP offers a free orientation seminar and training workshop. The skills you will gain will be invaluable to you as a mentor and may even prove to be useful in other areas of your life.

## What Can Mentors Do?

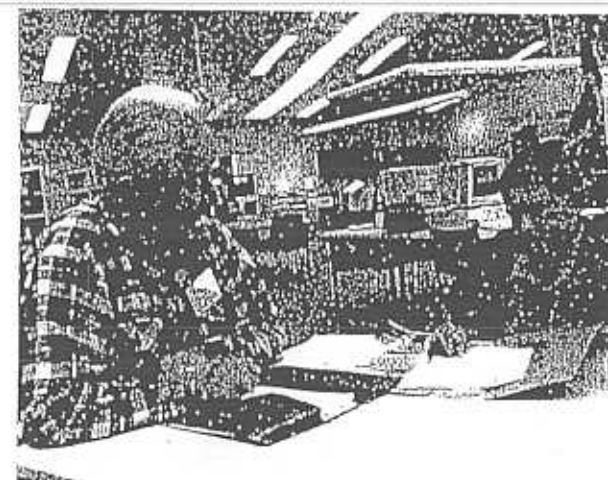
- Listen
- Assist with goal setting
- Help students to recognise their strengths
- Be a sounding board for ideas and problems
- Make contact with employers and local business
- Suggest possible courses of action

## CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

This program gives businesses an opportunity to form a volunteer partnership allowing them to direct their employees to mutually beneficial projects in the community. Volunteer community involvement and in particular interaction with young people in our local schools, is a valuable training ground with employees gaining in skills and communication development. This has a corresponding gain in positive company image.

This program operates similar to the core program where a volunteer mentor goes into a school for one hour per week, but over a specified 10 week period and assists year 10 students with setting and investigating career goals and opportunities. A volunteer assists by purely being a role model and mentor to help their chosen student to make informed choices regarding his/her further education, training and employment.

Mentoring allows the development of interpersonal, instructional, organisational and communication skills through one-on-one relationships.



## MENTORING ACROSS GENERATIONS IN COMMUNITIES (M.A.G.I.C.)

This is an intergenerational program that involves adults voluntarily assisting in one-off or short-term projects in schools throughout Western Australia. The aim is to initiate projects that mix the generations in a range of innovative ideas to help disadvantaged young people.

Many children do not have contact with extended families and intergenerational mentoring/role model programs can be very beneficial to both students and community members by learning about and empathising with each other's needs. Adults can also pass on skills they have gained throughout their lives to the younger generation and the young people can also inform adults from this generation about issues they are confronted with each day.