

Glebe Youth Service

After Dark program evaluation

Draft report

June 2021

Social Impact Team

UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion

‘And our lives matter. And the thing is, everyone's a product... everyone, every child... and you know, a lot of stolen generation is and so those young ones come in might not know... it's horrible, you know, what they're going through... but After Dark, with the light that it shows for our young ones, is really important.’

Indigenous Elder, Community yarn, 2021

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Social Impact Team

UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion

Report authors and contributors:

Dr Clare Netherton
Dr Gautam Pingali
Dianne Moy
Dr Rhonda Itaoui
Roland Mooney



Executive summary

The Glebe Youth Service After Dark program provides safe spaces and positive activities for young people in the Glebe community. Designed to counter disengagement, isolation and youth offending, the program offers young people safe, night-time spaces to socialise. In doing so, the After Dark program seeks to enhance social cohesion, and address safety concerns among Glebe's community. Within the safe environment that the program provides, interventions also seek to address issues impacting young people and their families.

The After Dark program works in alignment with other Glebe Youth Service programs and services towards a vision of a thriving, healthy and socially just Glebe community, where people from all backgrounds, ages and economic status have opportunities to fully participate in and contribute to community life. As part of this vision for the community, the After Dark program aims to contribute to long-term changes in conditions in Glebe by consistently making progress towards health and wellbeing, social and cultural outcomes for Glebe youth, including at-risk and Aboriginal young people, and by strengthening community relationships and enhancing feelings of safety across the community.

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine the After Dark program's contribution to Glebe youth and the wider Glebe community, identifying the extent to which the program has made progress towards its intended outcomes and contributed to positive social change in Glebe. The evaluation focused on After Dark program provision throughout the period from January 2018 to March 2021. The in-scope cohort for the evaluation included current program participants, program staff and volunteers, community members and other program partners or stakeholders. Where possible, the evaluation included past participants in order to provide insights into the longer-term impact of the program. The evaluation approach featured a blended model of theory and outcomes-based impact evaluation in order to assess After Dark's relevance, effectiveness and impact, drawing on quantitative and qualitative data from a range of primary and secondary sources.

The After Dark program meets the needs of a diverse Glebe community through a range of strategies. The program brings Glebe youth together on Friday and Saturday nights to engage in structured activities, enjoy a healthy meal and connect with their peers, supportive staff and volunteers, and community members. During the evaluation period, After Dark recorded over 11,041 program attendances, facilitated 474 structured activities, provided or distributed 17,698 meals, provided 822 occurrences of formal advice and made 220 referrals of young people to services. After Dark participants identified a wide range of activities and aspects of the program that they enjoyed and motivated them to attend (Figure 1).



Figure 1. What youth participants enjoy about After Dark and what motivates them to attend (Participant focus group, 2021)

The evaluation demonstrated considerable progress towards the After Dark program's intended outcomes for young people in Glebe, including:

- improved physical and mental health and wellbeing
- increased confidence and agency to enact personal responsibility
- increased social belonging and sense of connection to community and culture
- increased feelings of safety.

Evaluation findings also demonstrated the contribution of After Dark to outcomes for the community, including increased feelings of safety and strengthened relationships between community members, stakeholders and services.

Perspectives on the program from long-term staff and volunteers, community members and past participants revealed evidence that After Dark is interwoven with the Glebe community's identity in a way that transcended formal program structures and enabled deep connections within and across generations and cultures. Stories of change provided evidence of the program's positive influence at pivotal moments in the life trajectories of individual participants, in some cases leading to the creation and realisation of long-term education and employment aspirations.

Areas of program strength emerged through the evaluation findings, including the capacity of After Dark to improve social belonging and increase feelings of safety for young people. A further identified strength was After Dark's consistent presence and the enjoyable experience provided for local youth. These program strengths were shown to be enabled by deep and historic connections with the Glebe community and local services, and the dedicated and compassionate staff and volunteers with lived experience of the program and the community, including from an Aboriginal perspective.

Availability and lack of sufficient resources emerged as an area of significant challenge for After Dark, as well as the demanding nature of the work involved, particularly with limited staff. The evaluation also surfaced opportunities for the After Dark program to consider and further develop for program improvement, including:

- improvements to and expanded offerings of program activities
- new or upgraded technology and equipment
- improvement of youth transport options
- increased active youth participant involvement and leadership.

Although participants, staff and volunteers, community partners and community members were overwhelmingly supportive of the After Dark program, the evaluation revealed a sense of frustration and sadness that support and services for young people and the Glebe community were seen to be in decline.

The UTS Social Impact Team seeks the reflections and insights of the Glebe Youth Service and After Dark program leadership on this draft report in order to collaboratively inform key learnings and recommendations.

1. Introduction and background

1.1 Introduction to the After Dark program

The Glebe Youth Service After Dark program provides safe spaces and positive activities for young people in the Glebe community. Designed to counter disengagement, isolation and youth offending, the program offers children under 12 years and young people aged 12 to 24 years safe, night time spaces to socialise. In doing so, the After Dark program seeks to enhance social cohesion, and address safety concerns among Glebe's community. Within the safe space that the program provides, interventions also seek to address issues impacting young people and their families – such as food security, social connection and physical and mental health and wellbeing. After Dark is funded by the City of Sydney and has been delivered by the Glebe Youth Service for 13 years.

1.2 After Dark program context

1.2.1 The Glebe community

Glebe is a suburb situated on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation in the place now called Sydney, Australia. The local Gadigal population was decimated with the initial invasion and subsequent colonisation of the Sydney region.¹ The suburb's name Glebe is a reference to its development on stolen Aboriginal land that was granted to the Anglican Church by Governor Arthur Phillip to support the Chaplain of the First Fleet in 1790.² Glebe's recent history contains periods of residential and commercial development, population growth and decline, commitment to public housing, community participation and activism, and gentrification.³ Today, Glebe is part of the Inner West region of the local government area of the City of Sydney, and is located south-west of the Sydney central business district and south of the Blackwattle Bay and Rozelle Bay inlets of Sydney Harbour.

At the most recent census in Australia, the population of Glebe was 11,532 people.⁴ A demographic snapshot of Glebe using that 2016 census data reveals characteristics of the Glebe population that differed to other areas of New South Wales (NSW) and Australia at that time. Residents of Glebe were more likely to have been born overseas compared with NSW overall (45.3% versus 34.5%). In terms of age distribution, Glebe had a significantly higher proportion of young people aged 20 to 24 years (10.8%) compared to NSW overall (6.5%). The proportion of the Glebe population identifying as Aboriginal was 2.3 per cent in 2016, compared with 2.9 per cent in NSW, however children and youth were over-represented in the Indigenous Glebe population relative to their non-Indigenous counterparts. For example, 6 per cent of Indigenous people were aged 5 to 9 years, compared with 3 per cent of the non-Indigenous population, and 11 per cent of Indigenous people in Glebe were between the ages of 10 and 14 years, compared with 3 per cent of non-Indigenous people.

In terms of couples and family demographics, education, and employment, 2016 census data showed a significantly higher proportion of couples with no children living in Glebe (51.3%) compared to NSW overall (36.6%). Parents and partners over 15 years old were also significantly more likely to both be in full time employment (31.1% vs 22.6%). As would be expected given the relatively young population and proximity to schools, colleges and universities, Glebe residents

¹ City of Sydney (2013). *Aboriginal People and Place, Barani: Sydney's Aboriginal History*, <https://www.sydneymarani.com.au/sites/aboriginal-people-and-place/>, accessed 22 June 2021.

² Solling, M. (2011). Glebe, *Dictionary of Sydney*, <https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/glebe>, accessed 22 June 2021.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016). 2016 Census QuickStats: Glebe (NSW), https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC11641?opendocument, accessed 22 June 2021.

were significantly more likely to be currently studying (34.6% versus 16.2%), and those over the age of 15 were significantly more likely to have completed a Bachelor's degree or higher than NSW overall (43.7% versus 23.4%). Those employed were also more likely to be working as professionals, in higher education, and working over 40 hours a week.

Glebe has an unusually high concentration of residents on both the upper and lower ends of the socio-economic spectrum. In 2016, Glebe was home to a significantly higher proportion of households earning both above \$3000 and below \$650 in gross weekly household income, while Aboriginal residents had a significantly lower median weekly household income than Glebe residents overall (\$807 versus \$1579 per week), and Aboriginal people living in other parts of NSW (\$1214 per week). Compared to NSW, there was a significantly higher proportion of the Glebe population living in semi-detached houses, terraces, and townhouses (51.0% versus 12.2%) as well as apartments (41.8% versus 19.9%). There was also a significantly higher proportion of renters living in these homes in Glebe compared with NSW overall (59.4% versus 31.8%), as well as single person households (38.6% versus 23.8%), suggesting isolation as a potential issue, especially for elderly residents and in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rental stress is also a potential issue in Glebe, with 2016 census data showing 25 per cent of households paying rent equal to or greater than 30 per cent of their total household income, compared to only 13 per cent for NSW as a whole. At 30 per cent, Glebe also has a higher proportion of households classified in the Australian Bureau of Statistics Experimental Index of Household Advantage and Disadvantage (IHAD) quartile one (lowest advantage) compared to 26 percent for NSW overall.

The latest 2018 iteration of the City of Sydney survey aligned with the City of Sydney's Community Wellbeing Indicator Framework gives a relative view of the wellbeing of the community⁵. Although geographic boundaries are inconsistent with the census demographic data described above, wellbeing data available for the Glebe and Forest Lodge area provide a relatively good approximation of measures of health, feelings of safety, social isolation, and voice in the community for the area serviced by the Glebe Youth Service.

In terms of perceived personal physical and mental health, there is little difference between Glebe and Forest Lodge (GFL) and the City of Sydney as a whole, with roughly 8 out of 10 respondents reporting that their physical and mental health is either good, very good or excellent. Also similar to the wider City of Sydney area, perceptions of fair or poor mental health (23%) were higher compared to physical health (18%) among GFL residents. While a majority of GFL residents (60%) felt safe or very safe socialising at night, one in five GFL residents (20%) felt unsafe or very unsafe. These results indicate similar feelings of safety at night in GFL relative to the City of Sydney as whole with 58 per cent reporting feeling safe or very safe socialising at night and 19 per cent feeling unsafe or very unsafe.

There were differences between the Glebe and Forest Lodge area and the City of Sydney as a whole in relation to social isolation and having a voice in the community. Residents of GFL were slightly less likely to be experiencing social isolation compared with the City of Sydney residents overall, with 11 per cent sometimes or never having direct face-to-face contact with people outside their household compared to 14 per cent for City of Sydney overall. When asked if there were enough opportunities to have a say on issues of personal importance, GFL residents were less likely to disagree than City of Sydney residents (20% vs. 25%), and more likely to provide a neutral response (41% vs. 35%).

1.2.2 The Glebe Youth Service

The Glebe Youth Service (GYS) is an independent not-for-profit charity that has been operational in the heart of Glebe social housing estate for the past 30 years. Funded by the Department of

⁵ City of Sydney Community Wellbeing Indicators Report (2019). City of Sydney Strategy and Urban Analytics Unit; available at cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/learn/research-and-statistics/community-indicators.

Communities & Justice NSW (DCJ), and the City of Sydney Council, GYS offers a range of programs and services to young people between the age of 12 to 24 years in Glebe Area. These programs and services range from large group events to individual case management support designed to provide a safe and responsive environment for young people to⁶:

1. Be healthy, safe, skilled, and confident by taking positive action to support their wellbeing
2. Be connected to community to foster a sense of safety, and aspire to reach their potential
3. Take up livelihood opportunities by getting educated, and gaining employment

The programs provided by GYS include After Dark, Teentime, Girlzone, Boyzone, Homework Club, Hoops, and Food Circle⁷. After Dark – the focus of this evaluation – offers safe, night time space to young people to socialise on Friday and Saturday nights. After Dark provides healthy, nourishing meals, and organises activities including sports, art, movies, special event nights for NAIDOC Week, White Ribbon Day and Halloween. Teentime is a drop-in program for young people of 12-18 years age to connect with friends and youth workers in a positive, judgement free, and supportive environment. Girlzone is a program run in partnership with City of Sydney exclusively for young women (aged 12-18 years) during school terms every Tuesday between 3pm and 5pm to share stories, discuss what matters, and support each other. Boyzone is the same for young men to increase their capacity to articulate and develop their personal goals. Homework Club is designed to help students with their homework and assignments; and is run at Sydney Secondary College Balmain Campus. Hoops, run in partnership with City of Sydney and Charity Bounce, is a basketball program for teenagers between 14 and 18 years of age to play, get coached, develop skills in basketball. Finally, Food Circle, which is a food relief program funded by the Star's Good Neighbour Plan. Food Circle provides weekly food bags to local families with young people who are experiencing food insecurity.

A key component of all these programs is connection, not just with their friends but also the GYS program staff. These programs all build a pathway to GYS' core service, which is support from youth workers to provide case management, referrals, and mentoring⁸. The programs are designed to create a safe space to build trust and engagement with the program staff, so young people can be provided with the support they require to succeed in life.

1.3 After Dark program theory

1.3.1 After Dark program intended impact and outcomes

The After Dark program works in alignment with other Glebe Youth Service programs and services towards a vision of a thriving, healthy and socially just Glebe community, where people from all backgrounds, ages and economic status have opportunities to fully participate in and contribute to community life. As part of this vision for the community, the After Dark program aims to contribute to long-term changes in conditions in Glebe, resulting in:

- healthy, safe, skilled and confident young people
- young people feeling connected to their culture and community
- a safer, more secure, and more connected community overall.

In order to realise this vision, the After Dark program is designed to make progress towards the following outcomes for Glebe youth, including at-risk and Aboriginal young people:

- increased physical and mental health and wellbeing

⁶ Glebe Youth Service (2020a). 2037 Glebe Youth Service. Annual Report 2019-2020.

⁷ Glebe Youth Service (2020b). GYS Programs and Services, <https://glebeyouth.org.au/home/what-we-do/gys-programs/>, accessed 25 June 2021.

⁸ Glebe Youth Service Inc. (2010). Glebe Youth Service Inc. Annual Report 2009-2010; Glebe Youth Service Inc. (2012). Glebe Youth Service Inc. Annual Report 2011-2012.

- increased confidence and agency
- increased feelings of safety
- increased sense of pride and belonging in their community
- increased sense of pride in and connection to culture.

Changes in awareness, knowledge and skills resulting from program engagement underpin progress towards outcomes for Glebe youth. For example, increased awareness and understanding of:

- healthy choices, including nutrition, physical activity and lifestyle choices
- skills in specific physical, cultural and artistic activities
- support and services available for young people in the Glebe community.

In addition to positive changes for Glebe youth, the After Dark program is designed to contribute to outcomes for the wider Glebe community, including:

- strengthened relationships between community members and elders, stakeholders and services
- increased food security for local families
- increased feelings of safety in the community.

The After Dark program intends for increased awareness and strengthened connections between young people with each other and with other members of the community to provide a foundation for these wider community outcomes.

The intended outcomes and impact of the After Dark program are articulated in the program logic shown in Figure 2.

1.3.2 After Dark program strategy and activities

The After Dark program logic outlines the overall strategy and activities that need to be successfully implemented in order for the program to achieve its intended outcomes and impact. The program's overarching strategy is to provide a safe and engaging space for local at-risk youth from the Glebe community to socialise with their peers, connect with youth and social workers, learn and develop skill, participate in structured activities, and access a healthy meal.

Activities offered through the program are diverse, and include:

- physical activities such as basketball, touch footy and dance
- skills workshops such as art, Indigenous culture, cooking and music
- education and information sessions on nutrition, physical and mental wellbeing, and justice
- hosting community events celebrating significant occasions.

The program also offers formal advice and support to young people and provides case management and referrals of at-risk young people to services.

The overall strategy and summary of activities provided by the After Dark program are shown in the program logic in Figure 2.

Glebe Youth Service After Dark: Program logic

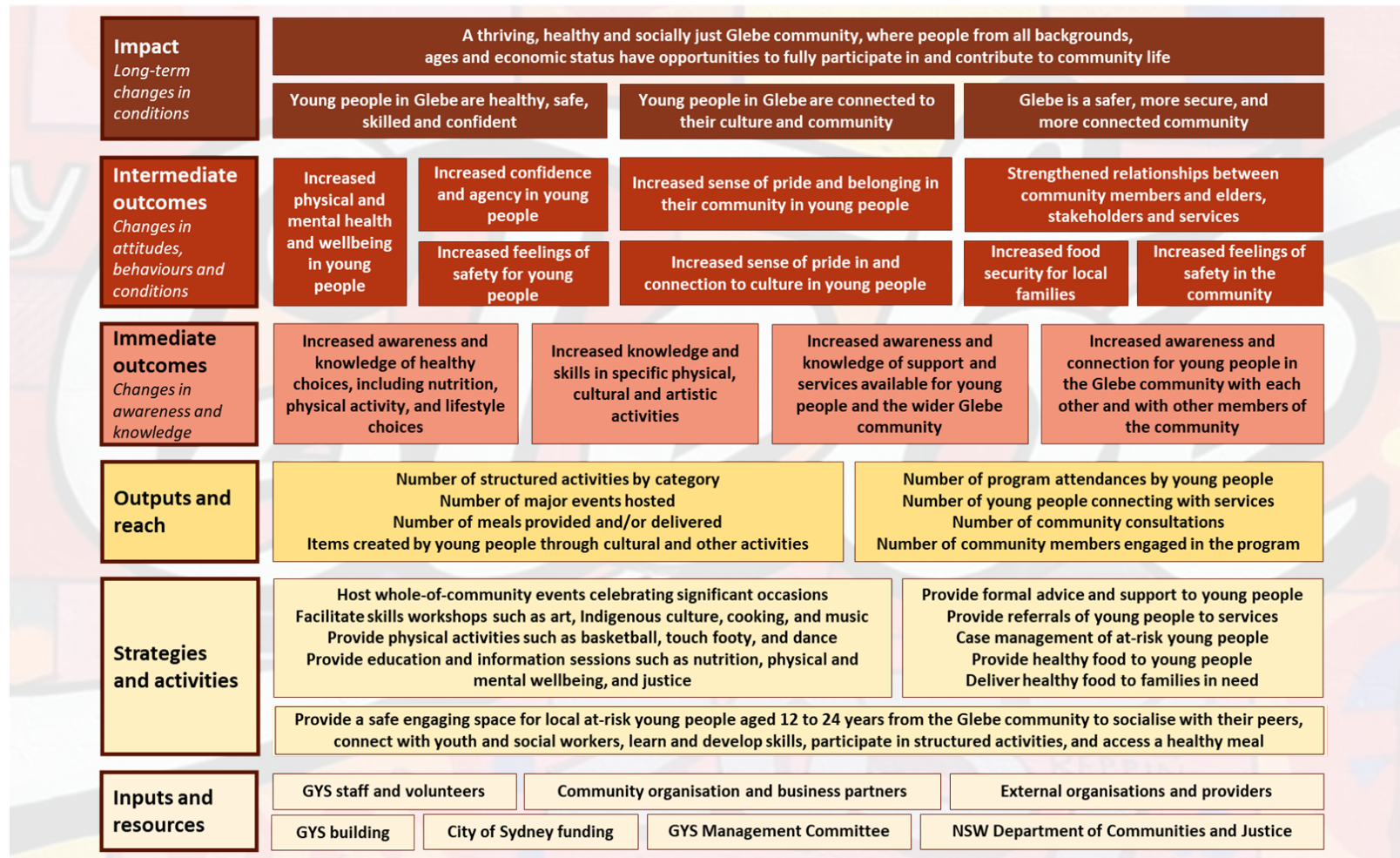


Figure 2. After Dark program logic

2. Evaluation methodology

2.1 Evaluation purpose and scope

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine the After Dark program's contribution to the Glebe community, identifying the extent to which the program achieves its stated outcomes, the unintended outcomes of the program and the program's contribution to social impact within the context of Glebe.

The evaluation was primarily intended for use by Glebe Youth Service in reporting to the City of Sydney. Evaluation findings may also be shared with program participants and their families, program staff, and a range of community stakeholders and partners.

This evaluation was intended to contribute to:

- learning for current and future program development, implementation, and improvement
- informed dialogue with program funders around planning and decision-making for future programs
- informed conversations with community around needs identification and support through programs and services
- the evidence base around effective practice in programs and services for youth in the Glebe community and beyond.

This evaluation focused on After Dark program provision by the Glebe Youth Service throughout the period of just over the past three years, from January 2018 through to March 2021. The in-scope cohort for this evaluation included past and current program participants who have engaged in the program at some point during this time. Program staff and volunteers, community and other stakeholders with involvement or awareness of the program between 2018 and early 2021 were also considered. Where possible, the evaluation also included a small number of individuals who had participated in the program prior to the 2018 to early 2021 period, in order to provide insights into the longer-term impact of the program.

2.2 Evaluation criteria and questions

Evaluation criteria are frequently used to guide evaluation design by forming the basis for decision-making about which aspects of programs or interventions to interrogate, particularly in instances involving the evaluation of complex programs or systems. The criteria for the After Dark program evaluation included relevance, effectiveness, and impact.

The relevance criterion informed the development of evaluation questions enabling assessment of the extent to which the After Dark program meets and responds to the needs of its target groups and key stakeholders, including at-risk and Aboriginal young people in the Glebe community.

The area of focus for the effectiveness criterion was the extent to which the After Dark program achieved progress towards its intended outcomes. These included outcomes for young people such as increased physical and mental health and wellbeing, increased confidence and agency, increased sense of pride and connection to culture and community. Program outcomes also included increased food security and feelings of safety for young people and their families, and the wider Glebe community. The effectiveness criterion also guided the evaluation of critical enabling factors and challenges to the program achieving these outcomes.

Finally, the impact criterion supported the unearthing and exploration of significant changes that were observed in connection with the After Dark program's strategies and activities. These changes could be positive or negative, and intended or unintended. The evaluation criteria and questions are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. After Dark program evaluation criteria and questions

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
Relevance	1. To what extent does the After Dark program meet the needs of young people in the Glebe community, particularly local at-risk young people and the Aboriginal community?
Effectiveness	2. To what extent is After Dark achieving its intended program outcomes? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased physical and mental health and wellbeing in young people, through promotion of healthy living, choices, and support services • Identification and connection with at-risk participants and linking them to services • Increased confidence and agency in young people, for example through opportunities to have a voice in program design • Increased social and cultural cohesion for young people, characterised by increased pride and connection to culture and community • Strengthened connections and feelings of safety in the community • Improved food security and nutrition for young people and their families
	3. What are the features of the After Dark program that enable it to achieve its intended outcomes? What are the program's strengths?
	4. What are the challenges that the After Dark program has in achieving its intended outcomes?
	5. How could the After Dark program be improved to further enhance its effectiveness in achieving program outcomes?
Impact	6. What are the significant changes, positive and negative, intended or unintended, for participants, their families and the Glebe community that can be attributed to the After Dark program, particularly in the longer-term?

2.3 Evaluation approach and methods

2.3.1 Evaluation approach

This evaluation embraced a range of approaches and methods in order to assess the GYS After Dark program's relevance, effectiveness and impact. Drawing on theory and outcomes-based evaluation⁹, the approach featured construction of a novel program logic to identify areas of focus for the evaluation, including outputs and intended outcomes for young people participating in the program, as well as other community stakeholders. An impact evaluation approach¹⁰ was also relevant to guide exploration of significant changes that occurred in response to the After Dark program, including both intended and unintended changes. This approach also supported investigation of the role of particular activities and initiatives in contributing to these changes.¹¹

⁹ Informed by Weiss, C.H. (1997). Theory-based evaluation: Past, present, and future. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 1997: 41-55. doi:[10.1002/ev.1086](https://doi.org/10.1002/ev.1086); Plantz, M.C., Greenway, M.T. and Hendricks, M. (1997), Outcome measurement: Showing results in the non-profit sector. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 1997: 15-30. doi:[10.1002/ev.1077](https://doi.org/10.1002/ev.1077); Botcheva, L., Roller White, C., Huffman, L.C. (2002), Learning Culture and Outcomes Measurement Practices in Community Agencies, *American Journal of Evaluation*, 23(4):421-434.

¹⁰Rogers, P. (2014). Overview of Impact Evaluation, Methodological Briefs: Impact Evaluation 1, UNICEF Office of Research, Florence.

¹¹ Rogers, P. (2014). Overview: Strategies for Causal attribution, Methodological Briefs: Impact Evaluation 6, UNICEF Office of Research, Florence.

2.3.2 Evaluation methods and data sources

The theory and outcomes-based impact evaluation blended approach supported the use of mixed research and evaluation methods, drawing on and collecting quantitative and qualitative data from a range of primary and secondary sources.

i. Primary sources of data

Primary sources of data were customised for the evaluation and included:

- a paper-based postcard-style survey of After Dark program participants
- a focus group discussion involving program participants and a program mentor
- an online survey of program staff and volunteers
- key stakeholder interviews adapted for small group 'yarns' with community stakeholders, including past program participants and local Elders
- key stakeholder interviews with representatives of program partner organisations or services and other program stakeholders.

Participant postcards

Paper-based participant postcard surveys were made available for young people to complete while they were in attendance at the program. The postcard survey included a single matrix of eight statements related to program outcomes (health and wellbeing, confidence and agency, sense of social and cultural belonging, feelings of safety), with a five-point scale to assess level of agreement (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree)¹². Individual open-ended questions about the experience of After Dark and hypothesised location and activity of participants if they were not in attendance at the program were also included on the postcard, along with demographic prompts related to gender, Aboriginal status and language spoken at home.

Postcards were completed anonymously by 20 young people over a two-week collection period. The After Dark participant postcard respondent sample ranged in age from 6 to 28 years, with a mean age of 13.3±4.8 years. The respondent sample was 60 per cent (n=12) female and 40 per cent (n=8) male, 70 per cent identified as Aboriginal (n=14), and 10 per cent (n=2) spoke a language other than English at home.

Participant focus group

The program participant focus group discussion explored participant motivation and reasons for attending the program, participant opinion on the most enjoyable program aspects, as well as aspects of the program that they would like to see changed or improved. The structure of the discussion was interactive and activity-based, with young people completing templates and drawings, and engaging in a project pitch presentation on what they would do if they were in charge of After Dark. The focus group took place in the GYS classroom and was attended by six young people who were current program participants, a program mentor and staff member, as well as two facilitators from the UTS evaluation team.

Staff and volunteer survey

The GYS After Dark staff and volunteer survey was an online survey designed to assess staff and volunteer perspectives on the purpose, outcomes and impact of the program on young people and the local community. The survey included matrices of survey items focused on the extent to which the program was making progress towards its intended outcomes, as well as individual questions about the program purpose, achievements, strengths, and opportunities for improvement. Survey matrix questions included five-point scales to assess level of agreement (strongly agree, agree, neither agree

¹² Vagias, W. M. (2006). Likert-type scale response anchors. Clemson International Institute for Tourism & Research Development, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management. Clemson University.

nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree). All program staff and volunteers (n=17) were invited to complete the online survey via SurveyMonkey.

The survey was completed by 12 individual staff members and volunteers, achieving a response rate of 71 per cent. Three-quarters of the survey respondents were staff members (75%, n=9), and the remaining 25 per cent were volunteers (n=3). The duration of the involvement of survey respondents in the program ranged from a few months to 15 years, with 25 per cent (n=3) relatively new to the program, 42 per cent (n=5) involved from 18 months to four years, and 33 per cent (n=4) involved for five years or more. Two of the staff and volunteer survey respondents were also past participants of the After Dark program.

Key stakeholder interviews and community 'yarns'

GYS staff were asked to nominate individuals for key stakeholder interviews and discussion groups, according to the criteria that they were people who had either participated in the After Dark program in the past, were members of the local community engaged in the program or closely connected to current participants, or representatives of partner organisations or services. A total of 16 individuals were interviewed or participated in discussion groups or 'yarns'. Three interviews were conducted via video conference (Zoom) and two discussions took place face-to-face in a small group 'yarn' format.

Interviews were semi-structured, and followed a script containing questions about the nature of stakeholder connection to the program, and stakeholder opinion and experience of the extent to which the program meets the needs of at-risk young people and the local Glebe community, achieves specified program outcomes for young people (health and wellbeing, sense of social and cultural belonging, and feelings of safety), and areas of program strength and opportunities for improvement. Key stakeholders included representatives of community partner organisations and the police.

Community 'yarns' were less structured and more conversational in approach, with the facilitator guiding conversation with prompts related to community perspectives on program outcomes such as social and cultural connection and feelings of safety. Two 'yarns' took place as part of the evaluation: one focused on community members and leaders, and the other focused on past program participants. In total, 13 individuals participated in these discussion groups, including 8 females (62%), and 5 males (38%). Over 60 per cent of the 'yarn' participants were Indigenous (n=8), and three of these individuals were highly respected and community-engaged Indigenous Elders.

Stories of change

Concise stories of change were sourced from past After Dark program participants, staff and volunteers, and community members through the staff and volunteer survey and stakeholder interview data collection methods described above. Individuals were asked for a story or example of the 'most significant change'¹³ that they experienced or observed in connection with the After Dark program. Six stories of change were selected from those provided by past program participants, staff and volunteers, and community members through online survey and discussion groups. All primary data collection methods and ensuing analysis placed the participant experience at the centre of evidence of program impact, supported by staff and volunteer, and community stakeholder perspectives on changes attributed to the After Dark program. This relationship between primary data sources is depicted in Figure 3.

¹³ Method of collecting stories of change informed by Davies, R., Dart, J. (2015), The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique: A Guide to Its Use". 10.13140/RG.2.1.4305.3606.

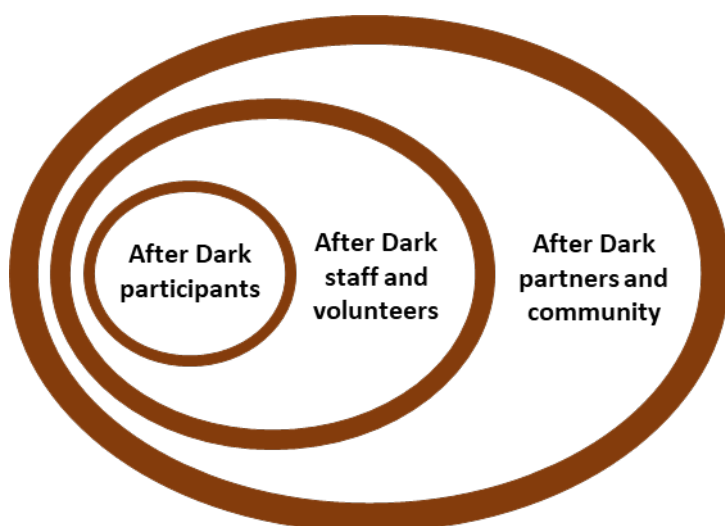


Figure 3. Relationship between After Dark evaluation primary data sources

Evaluation tools designed and used to collect primary data are included in Appendix 1.

ii. Secondary sources of data

Secondary data was critical to the evaluation, particularly due to the length of time considered in scope (2018 to 2021).

Secondary sources of data included:

- standard program reporting from January 2018 to March 2021, including reporting on program outputs such as attendances, activities provided, meals provided or delivered, occurrences of case management and referrals
- previous program evaluation reports
- Glebe Youth Service annual reports
- publicly available demographic and social data sets, including Glebe-specific demographic data from ABS census and wellbeing and social indicators from the City of Sydney.

Secondary data provided historical program output data, an estimation of the community context in which the program operates, and a high-level picture of the City of Sydney's social equality measures that intersect with the After Dark program's intended outcomes. Internal and external program evaluation reports described above included data sourced using a range of evaluation methods – for example, online and paper-based surveys, interviews, case studies, regular performance reporting, informal feedback, and direct observation.

2.3.4 Data analysis

Analysis of quantitative data included descriptive statistics to determine measures of central tendency (mean and median) and spread (standard deviation and range), as well as the frequency and proportion of survey respondents selecting particular response options. The use of inferential statistics was minimal due to the small sample size and was limited to nonparametric approaches. For example, differences in levels of agreement on survey items were explored using assessment of differences in mean ranks and tested using the nonparametric Friedman one-way repeated measures analysis of variance. Quantitative data was initially extracted and collated in Excel. All significance tests were two-tailed, and analysis was performed using SPSS 27.

Qualitative data included interview recordings and open-ended survey responses. Interview recordings were transcribed using manual editing of automated voice notes generated in Otter, and qualitative

survey data was entered or exported into Excel. Thematic analysis of qualitative data¹⁴ was undertaken manually and using NVivo and was characterised by initial coding and collation followed by a deductive approach to theme identification in alignment with the key evaluation questions.¹⁵

2.3.5 Limitations of the evaluation

There were significant limitations to this evaluation of the GYS After Dark program that should be taken into account when considering the findings. The most prominent limitation occurred due to the inclusion of a significant period of program implementation impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many program activities shifted in response to the unprecedented challenges that emerged for the community throughout 2020, resulting in some program elements being placed on hold, and others transitioning to socially distanced services such as food delivery. While this represents a limitation of the capacity of the evaluation process to assess trends over the entire in-scope time period, it also provided an opportunity to explore outputs and outcomes related to novel initiatives to support immediate individual and community needs during a crisis. The uncertainty and shifting strategic and programmatic landscape that emerged as a result of COVID-19 continued well into 2021 and needs to be taken into account when interpreting evidence of progress towards intended outcomes and program impact.

As highlighted above, quantitative analysis was limited due to small sample sizes for survey data. For staff and volunteers, this is a reflection of group size rather than lack of engagement in the evaluation process as demonstrated by a good response rate (71 per cent) to the online survey. Low participant engagement must be considered as an issue however, and methods to increase the representation of youth participants in primary data should be considered in future evaluations. Increased support for the adoption of evaluation processes that are embedded in program strategies and activities would significantly increase the program's capacity to capture and articulate participant voice and experience in future.

¹⁴ Braun, V., Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77–101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

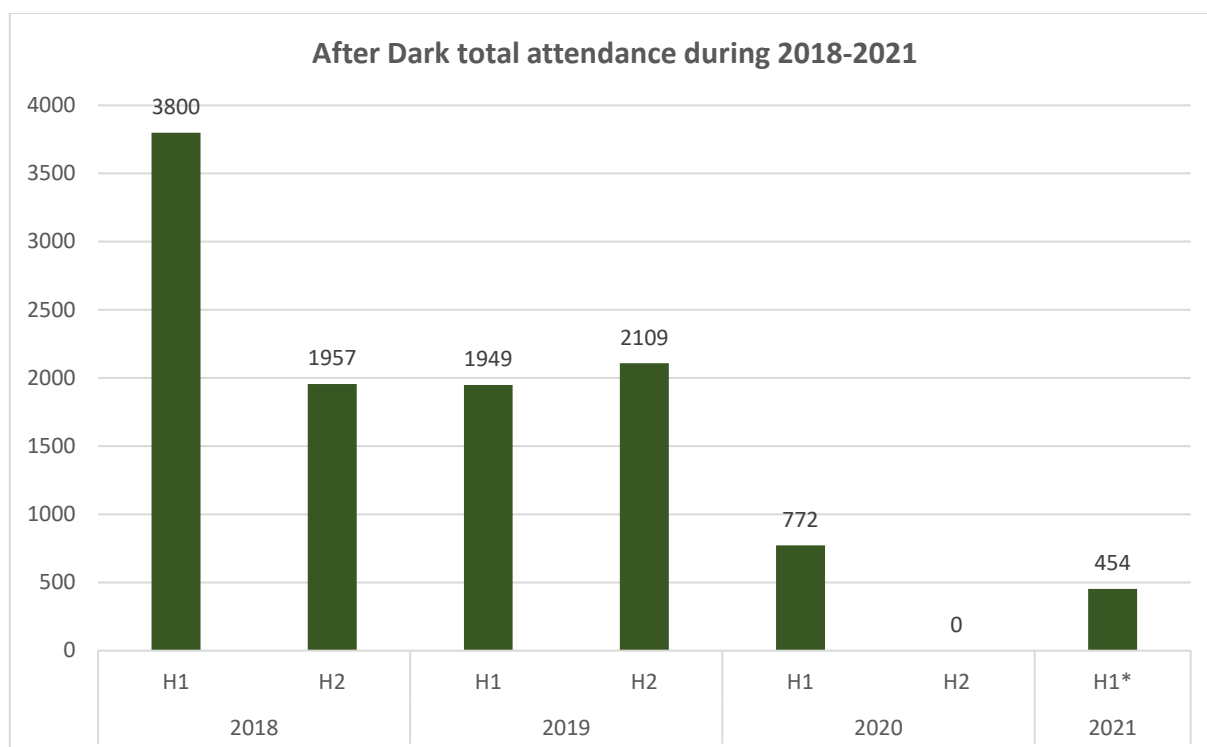
¹⁵ Informed by Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>

3. After Dark program reach and relevance

3.1 Reaching young people in the Glebe community

3.1.1 Program attendances

Key secondary data sources, such as After Dark quarterly reports, which included data on attendances, activities, advice, referrals, case management, and meals provided were reviewed to assess the overall reach and outputs of the program. Overall, After Dark reported 11,041 attendances of young people to the program during the in-scope evaluation period from the beginning of January 2018 through to the end of March 2021. The After Dark program data broken down half-yearly shows that the After Dark program experienced a downward trend in attendance during the 2018-2021 period (see Figure 4). There were multiple reasons for this downward trend in program attendance, including anti-social behaviour in the Glebe community, change in program location to increase safety measures, and the COVID-19 pandemic.



*Time period inclusive of one-quarter year only

Figure 4. Total After Dark program attendance during the period of 2018-2021 broken down into half-yearly figures (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

In 2018, the Glebe community, including the After Dark program, experienced an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour. The program saw individuals arriving from outside the Glebe community, some with ill intentions. Despite the program staff implementing measures to engage and monitor young people new to the program, three incidents at the Peter Forsyth Auditorium (PFA) – where After Dark programs were held on Friday nights – resulted in the program being relocated to a more contained environment at Glebe Youth Service, 84 Glebe Point Road. The program was also limited to young people between 12 to 18 years to make the program more manageable and safer for everyone. Although successful in curbing anti-social behaviour, these changes resulted in a significant decrease in program attendances.

After nearly three successive incident-free quarters, the program returned to Peter Forsyth Auditorium (PFA) in March 2019, although in a limited fashion to ensure the anti-social behaviour did not reoccur. Program attendance remained consistent until the last quarter of 2019, when the community began to re-engage with the program. The return to PFA and the renewed engagement with the community by the end of 2019 was however halted in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw the program pivot from a community gathering and activity focus to a meal distribution and wellbeing support program. Staying in line with the NSW Health guidelines, the centre-based operations of the program were halted during 2020 to reduce the spread of the virus. The program returned in the first quarter of 2021; however, the attendance numbers did not increase to previous levels.

The total attendance numbers of 2018 to 2021, when broken down by age and gender, show that young people between the ages of 12 to 18 years (59%, Figure 5), and young men (54%, Figure 6) represented the majority of attendances. The program effectively targeted this age cohort with the limitation of older groups from the program in 2018 as an intentional strategy to manage anti-social behaviour. The program also introduced targeted activities for young people between the ages of 12 to 18 years, including monthly teen nights, in order to give this age group a renewed sense of ownership over the program.

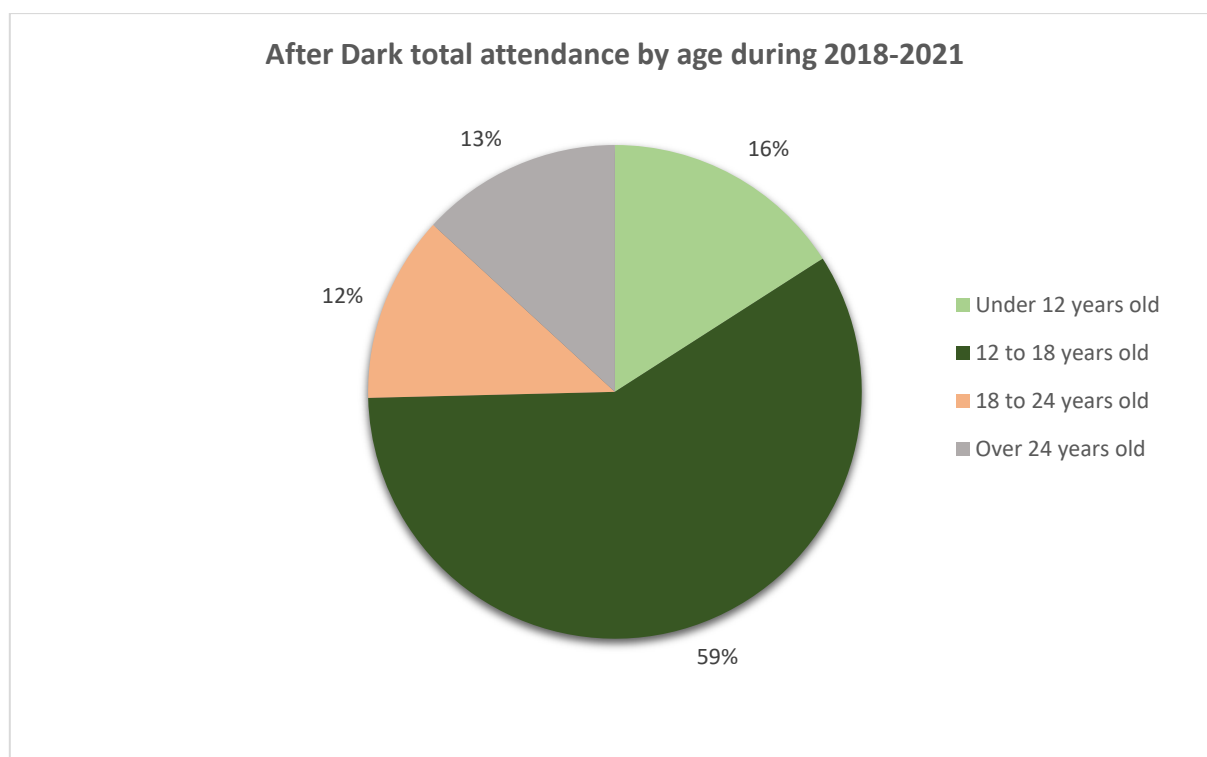


Figure 5. Breakdown of total After Dark program attendance by age during the period of 2018-2021 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

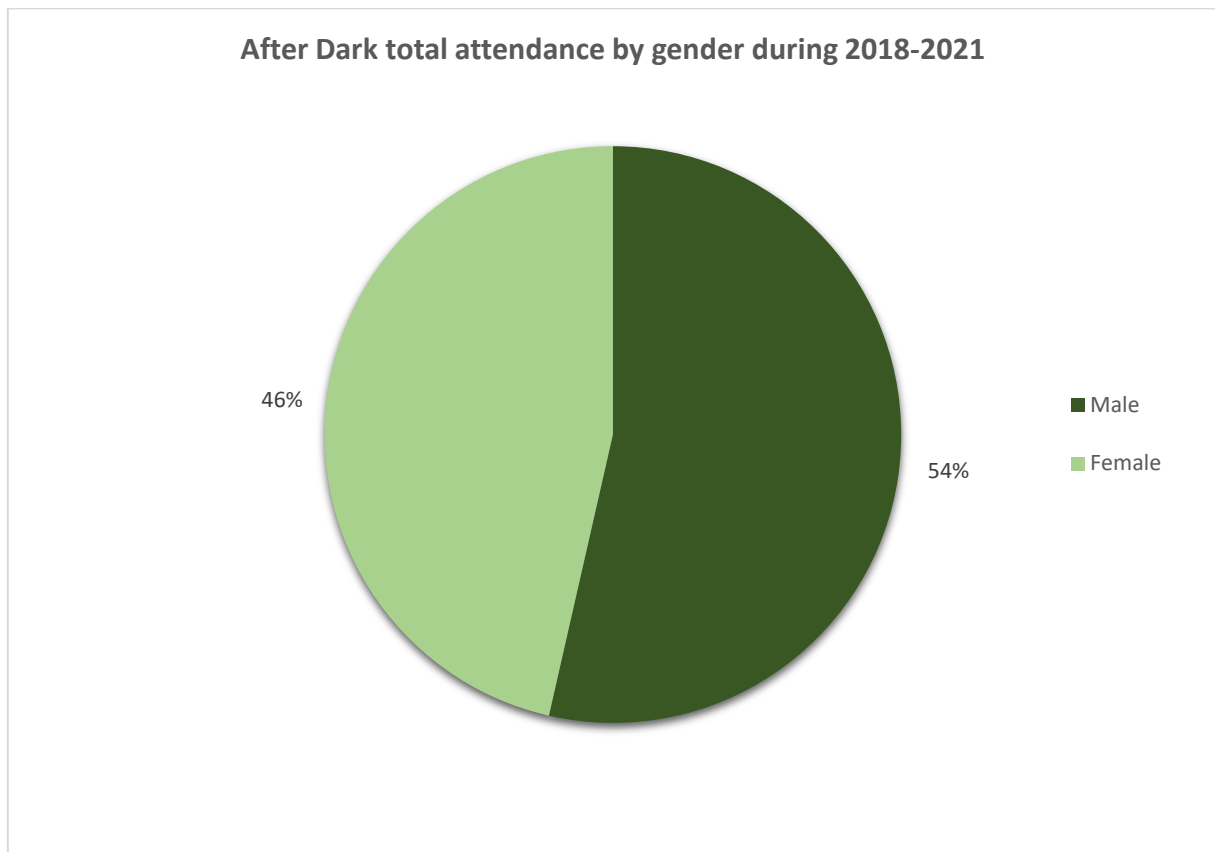


Figure 6. Breakdown of total After Dark program attendance by gender during the period of 2018-2021 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

3.2 Meeting the needs of young people and the Glebe community

Analysis of secondary data sources demonstrated After Dark program strategies for meeting the needs of young people and the Glebe community, including providing a range of activities for young people to participate in, offering advice, referrals, and support for at-risk youth to connect with and attend appropriate services, and the provision of nutritious meals to local young people and families.

3.2.1 Program activities

The After Dark program provided a diverse range of structured activities during the January 2018 to March 2021 period, with the exception of the COVID-19 affected second half of 2020. The program held regular consultations with the community to identify activities of interest and worked to include them in the program. Table 2 below summarises the variety of structured activities provided in the After Dark program during the in-scope period for the evaluation. These activities were designed to create a safe space for young people to connect, engage, learn, grow, and have fun. A total of 474 structured activities were provided during this period, with sport and art being the most popular activity types (Figure 7).

Table 2. Variety of structured activities provided in the After Dark program during the period of 2018 to 2021 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

Year	2018		2019		2020		2021
Structured activity	H1	H2	H1	H2	H1	H2	H1*
Sport	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Art	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Computer	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Music		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Cultural		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Education				✓			
Cooking			✓	✓	✓		
Nutrition				✓			

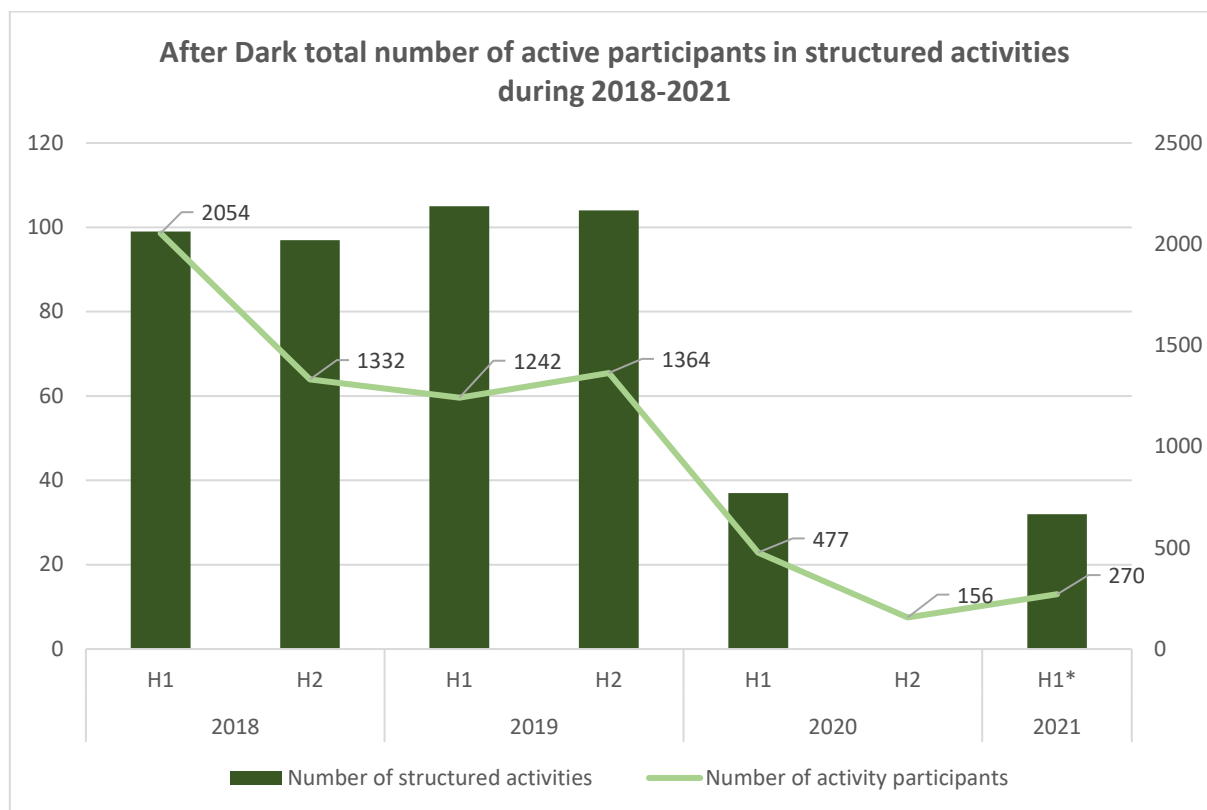
*Time period inclusive of one-quarter year only



Figure 7. Structured activities provided in the After Dark program during 2018 to 2021 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

In 2018 and 2019, the program provided approximately 200 structured activities each year. While the attendance numbers decreased in 2018 and 2019, due to venue relocation to curb anti-social behaviour as described above, After Dark continued to offer an extensive structured activity schedule to engage with regularly attending participants (as seen in Figure 8). Maintaining a high number of activities despite lower attendances allowed the After Dark program staff to connect and built trust with more young people, resulting in an increase in support services provided, including advice and

referrals (see section 3.2.2 below). Analysis of secondary data suggested that a greater proportion of male program participants engaged in structured activities than females during the January 2018 to March 2021 period (61% versus 39%, Figure 9).



*Time period inclusive of one-quarter year only

Figure 8. Total number of active participants in After Dark's structured activities during 2018-2021 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

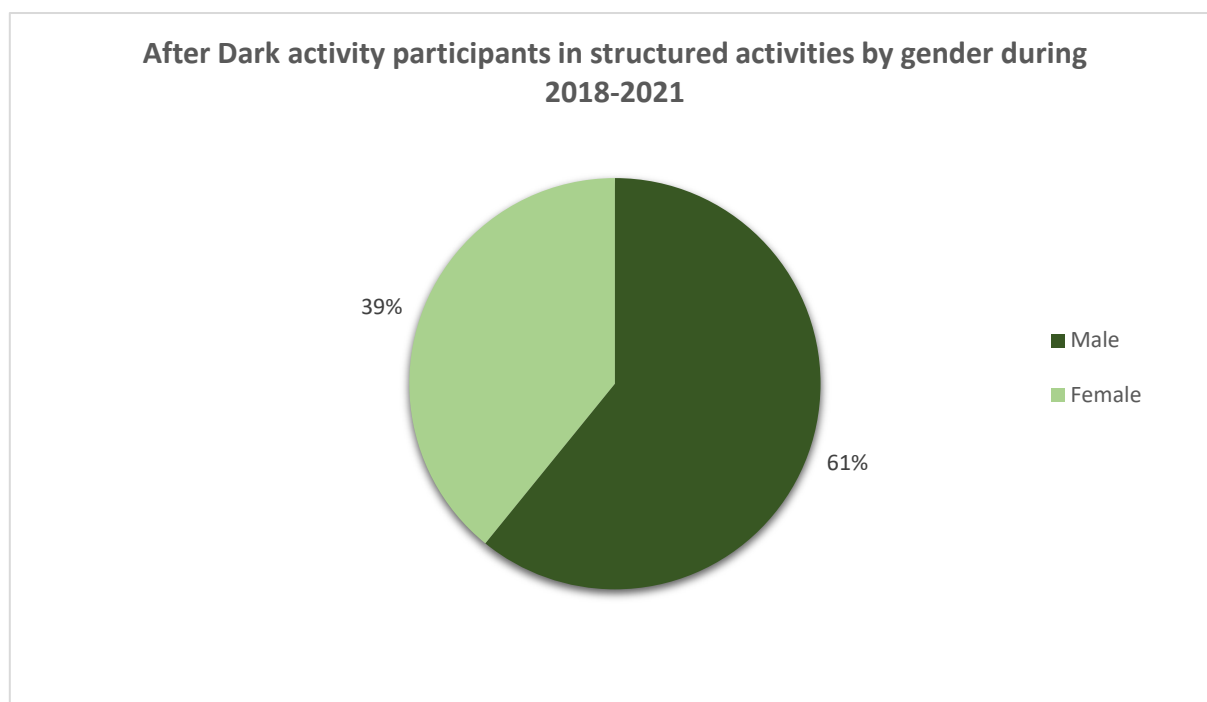
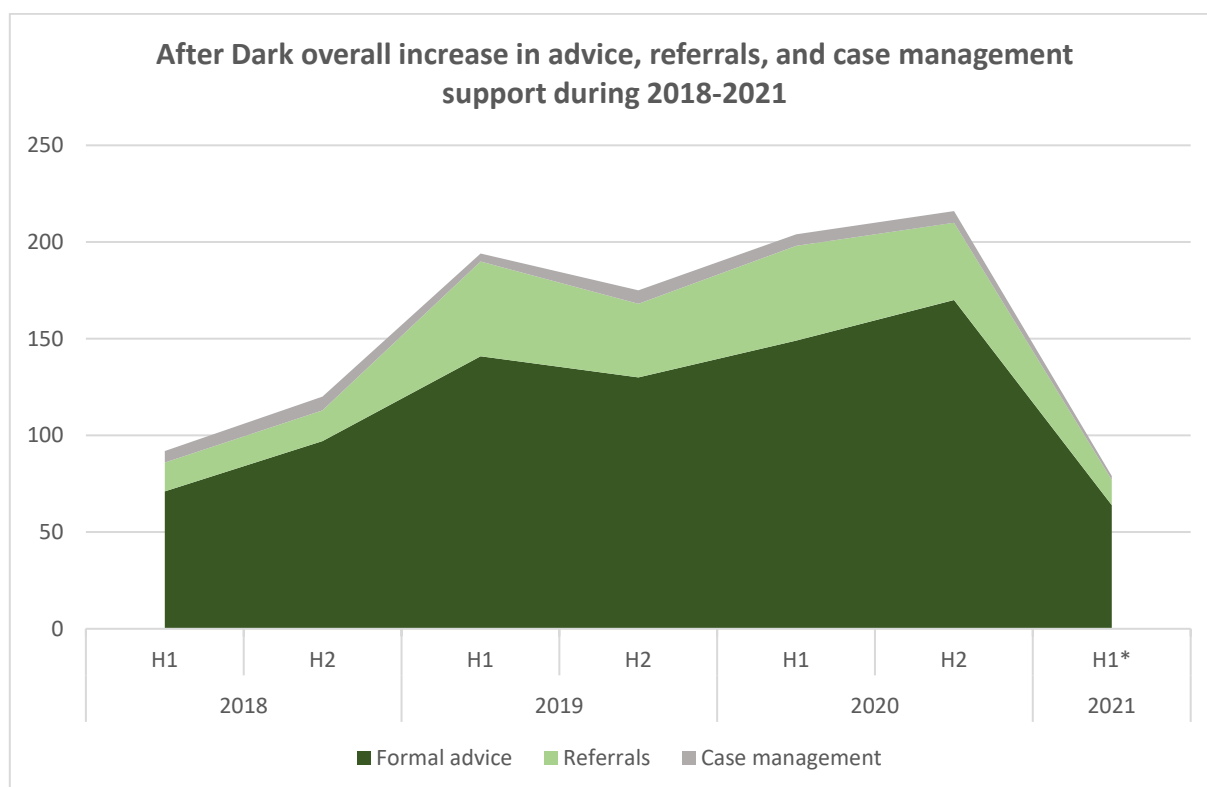


Figure 9. Breakdown of activity participants in After Dark's structured activities by gender during the period of 2018-2021 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

3.2.2 Supporting and connecting at-risk young people to services

All programs and activities run by the Glebe Youth Service, including the After Dark program, aim to establish pathways to case work in order to effectively connect young people in need with relevant and appropriate services and support. These programs develop trust and build rapport through engagement, which are invaluable to a successful caseworker-client relationship. Case management services can range from short-term crisis intervention and/or referral, to medium- or long-term casework engagement and assistance.

Advice, referral, and advocacy are provided to young people for free. GYS maintain a comprehensive database of services and organisations that young people may benefit from¹⁶. Depending on the need, clients may be referred to other specialist service providers, including health, education, supported housing, independent living, life skills training, counselling, vocational training and legal expertise¹⁷. GYS staff aim to address immediate need in the short-term, while recommending the benefits and suitability of case management based on individual circumstances to facilitate longer-term support. Case management offers a more intensive approach to addressing a young person's social issues and achieving their personal goals. Intensive and long-term case management may involve multiple agencies and weekly consultations. Success of case works depend on multiple factors, including level of trust, strength of relationship between the GYS staff and young person, and finally the ability of the young person to engage in the development and joint ownership of any remediation plan¹⁸.



*Time period inclusive of one-quarter year only

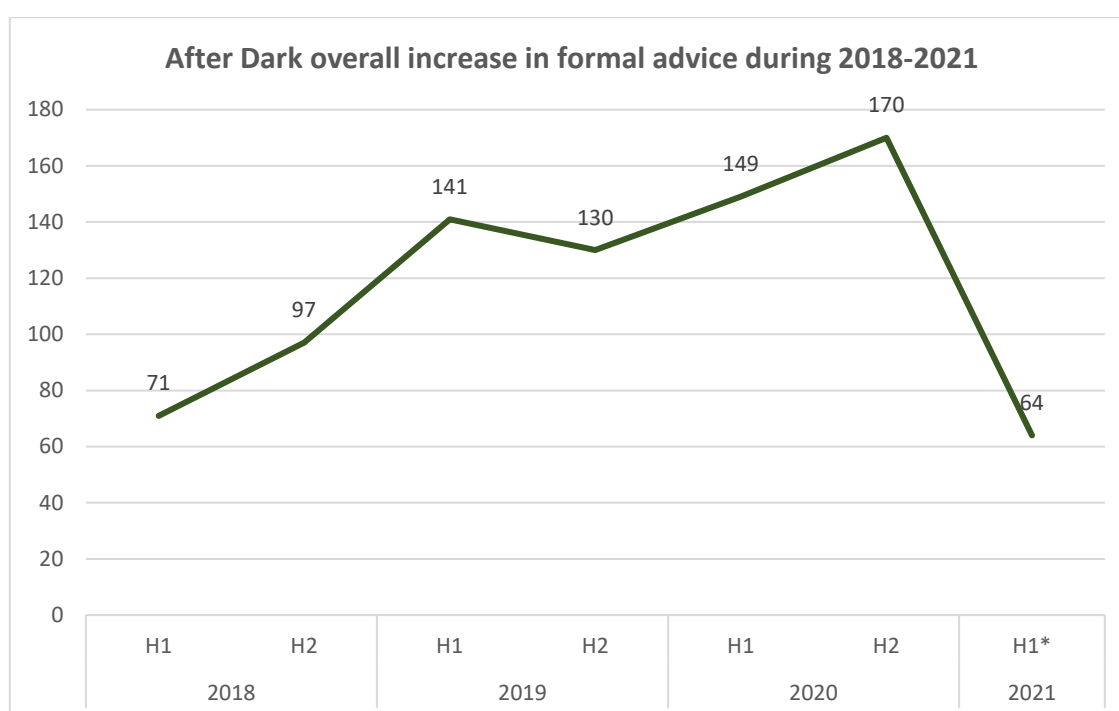
Figure 10. Overall increase in advice, referrals, and case management support during 2018-2021 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

¹⁶ Glebe Youth Service Inc. (2011). Glebe Youth Service Inc. Annual Report 2010-2011.

¹⁷ Glebe Youth Service Inc. (2010). Glebe Youth Service Inc. Annual Report 2009-2010.

¹⁸ Glebe Youth Service Inc. (2012). Glebe Youth Service Inc. Annual Report 2011-2012.

The period of January 2018 to March 2021 saw a considerable increase in advice, support, and referrals provided through the After Dark program (see Figure 10). In the second half of 2018, when After Dark introduced targeted activities and monthly teen only nights for young people aged 12 to 18 years, program staff developed and implemented a strategy to increase engagement and trust developed with this age group to provide more individual support, advice and referrals. As a result, advice, support, and referrals increased by 255 per cent from quarter 1 to quarter 2 of 2018¹⁹. This engagement and trust continued to develop when the program moved from Peter Forsyth Auditorium to 84 Glebe Point Road, and the program was limited to young people between the age of 12 to 18 years. When the program returned to PFA in 2019 and the attendance numbers remained low, the program continued its ‘focus more on the wellbeing of attendees’²⁰, again resulting in an increase in advice, support, and referrals in the first half of 2019 (see Figures 11 and 12). Analysis of secondary data suggests that while greater attendance was important for greater program reach, lower attendances provided opportunities for greater depth of engagement with a specific cohort of young people, facilitated by GYS staff building trust and engagement to create pathways for targeted support.

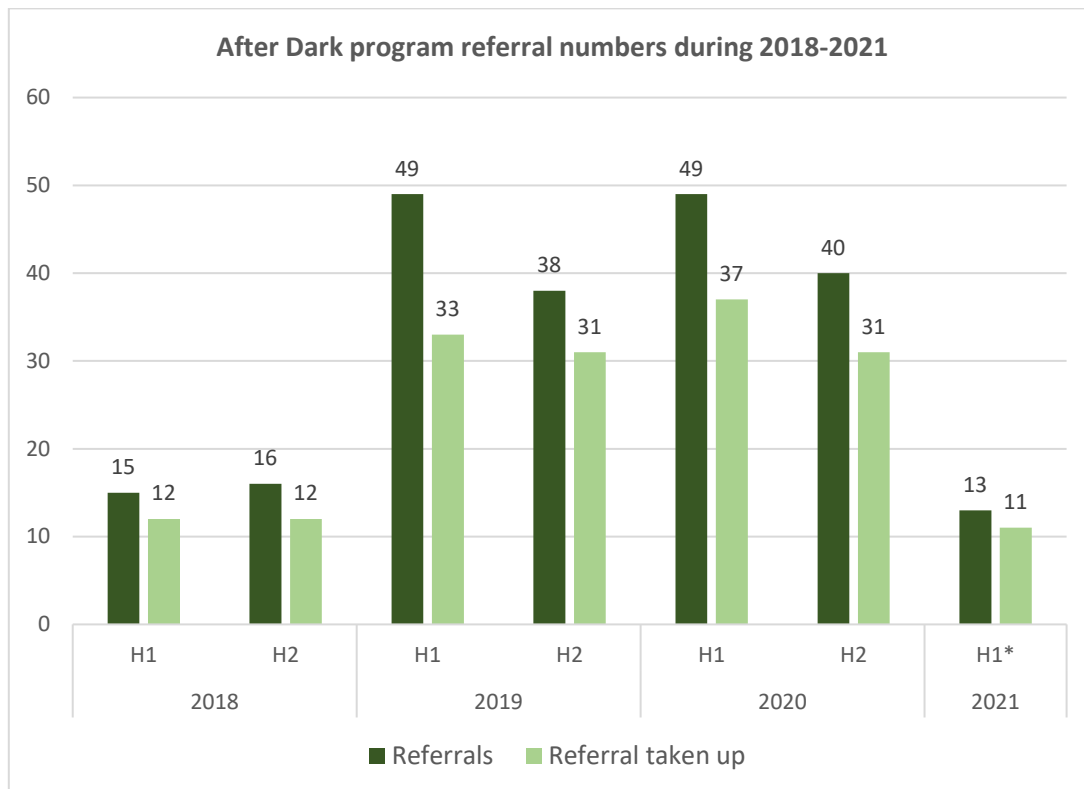


*Time period inclusive of one-quarter year only

Figure 11. After Dark program formal advice given during 2018-2021 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

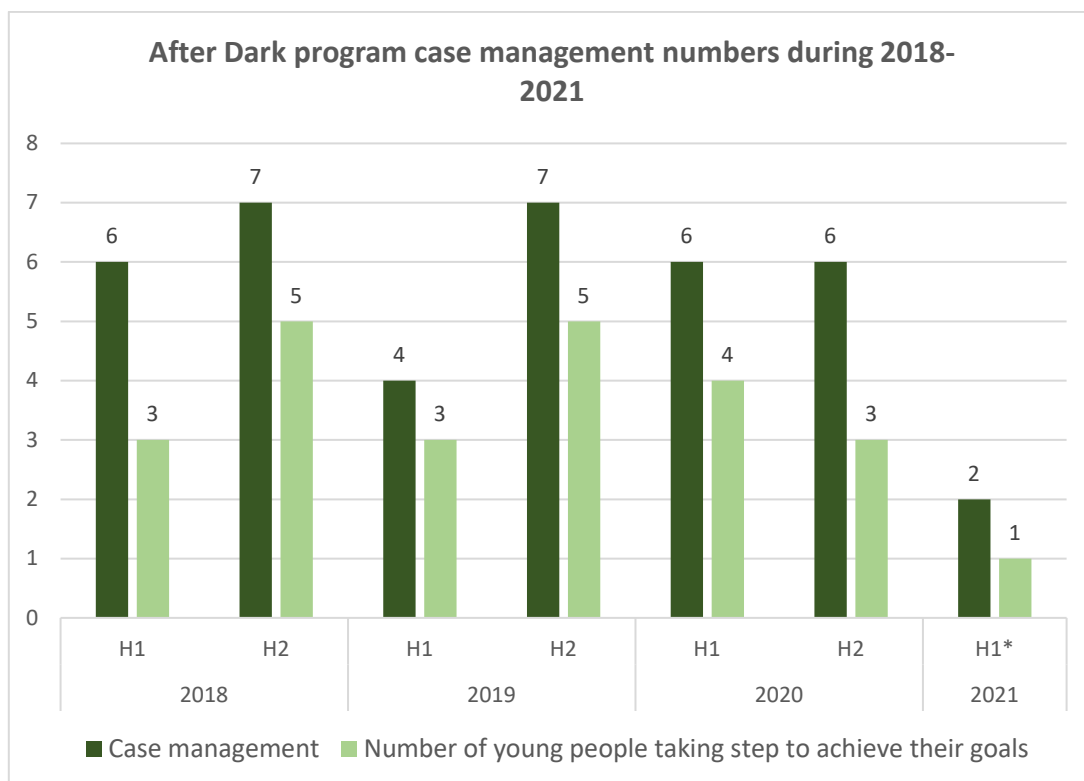
¹⁹ Glebe Youth Service Inc. (2018). After Dark Program: Quarterly Report April to June 2018.

²⁰ Glebe Youth Service Inc. (2019). After Dark Program: Half Yearly Report January to June 2019, 1.



*Time period inclusive of one-quarter year only

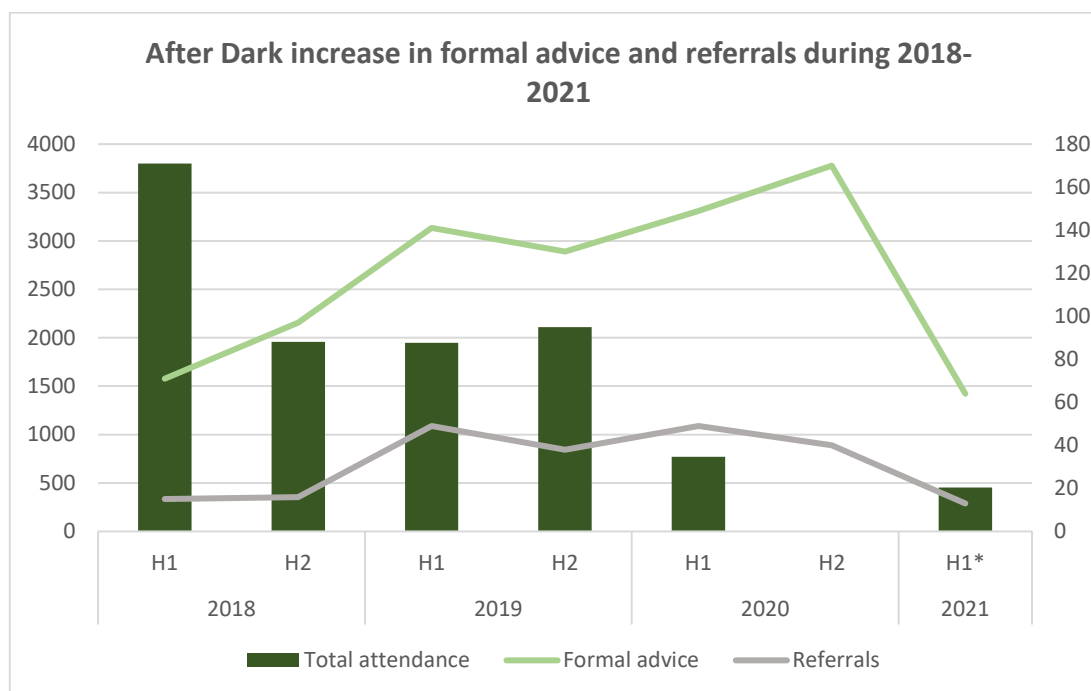
Figure 12. After Dark program referral numbers during 2018-2021 period (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)



*Time period inclusive of one-quarter year only

Figure 13. After Dark program case management numbers during 2018-2021 period (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

Interestingly, case management numbers remained steady (Figure 13) and formal advice peaked (Figure 14) during the second half of 2021, when the After Dark program provided no structured activities and had no attendees due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These findings support the Glebe Youth Service's flexible and proactive strategy of conducting weekly wellbeing checks and providing relevant COVID-19 health information alongside their meal distribution service to individuals in the suburbs of Glebe, Ultimo, Forest Lodge and Darlington during the pandemic (see Figure 15). These regular checks to support community members struggling with mental health issues caused by isolation resulted in an increase in formal advice and referrals in the second half of 2020.



*Time period inclusive of one-quarter year only

Figure 14. Pattern of formal advice and referrals relative to program attendances (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

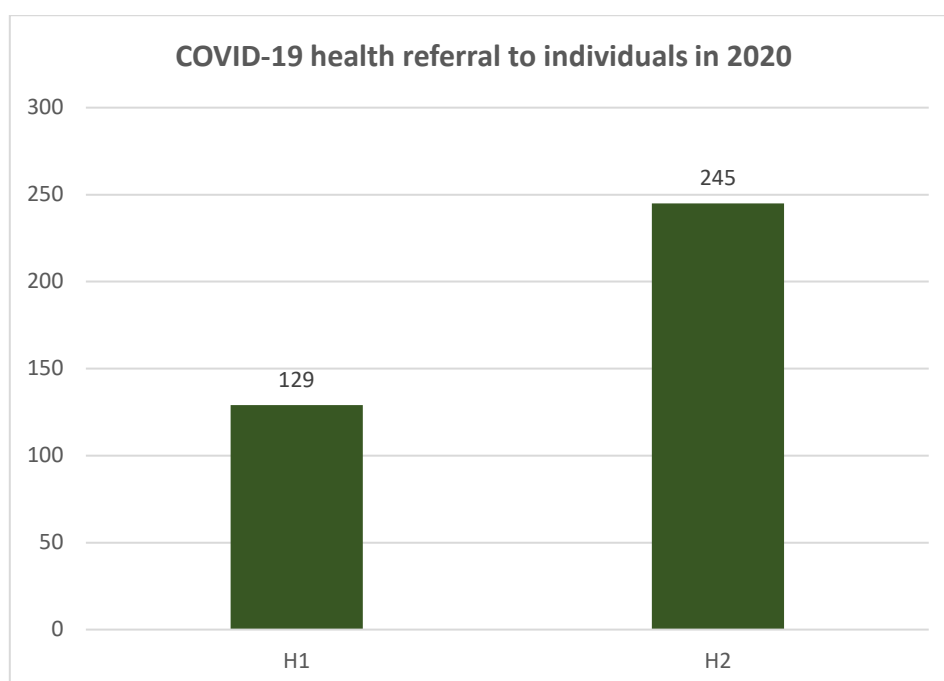


Figure 15. Glebe Youth Service provision of COVID-19 health information to individuals during 2020 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports, 2018-2021)

Staff members reflected on the importance of successfully connecting with at-risk youth in order to be in a position to meet their needs, and the critical role that After Dark plays in providing this gateway to subsequent programs and services.

We consistently engage some of the most at-risk young people in Glebe through their regular attendance at After Dark, which leads to their attendance at some of our more structured programs... and then for those that need it, connection with a case manager who helps them address their concerns before connecting them to education and employment opportunities. (After Dark staff member, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021)

Overall, almost all After Dark staff and volunteers surveyed (92%, n=11) strongly agreed that the program connects with local at-risk youth in the Glebe community (Figure 16). Staff and volunteers surveyed were less confident that the program was meeting the needs of the young people and community they were connecting with, with 17 per cent (n=2) strongly agreeing it was meeting the needs of local at-risk youth, and 25 per cent (n=3) strongly agreeing it was meeting the needs of the local Aboriginal community (Figure 16).

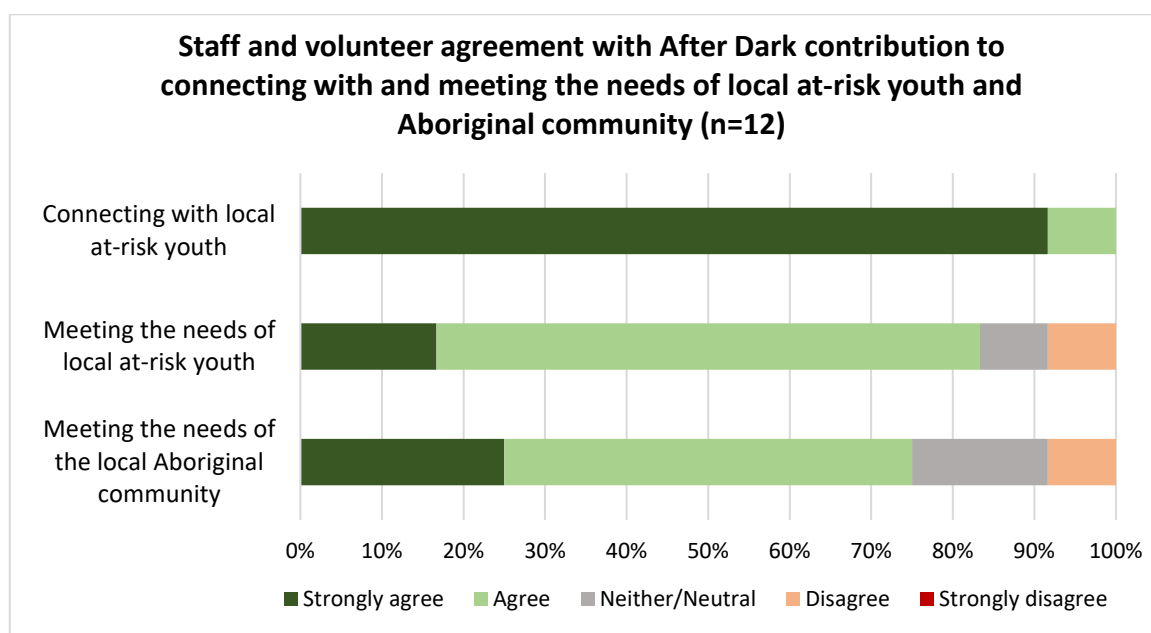
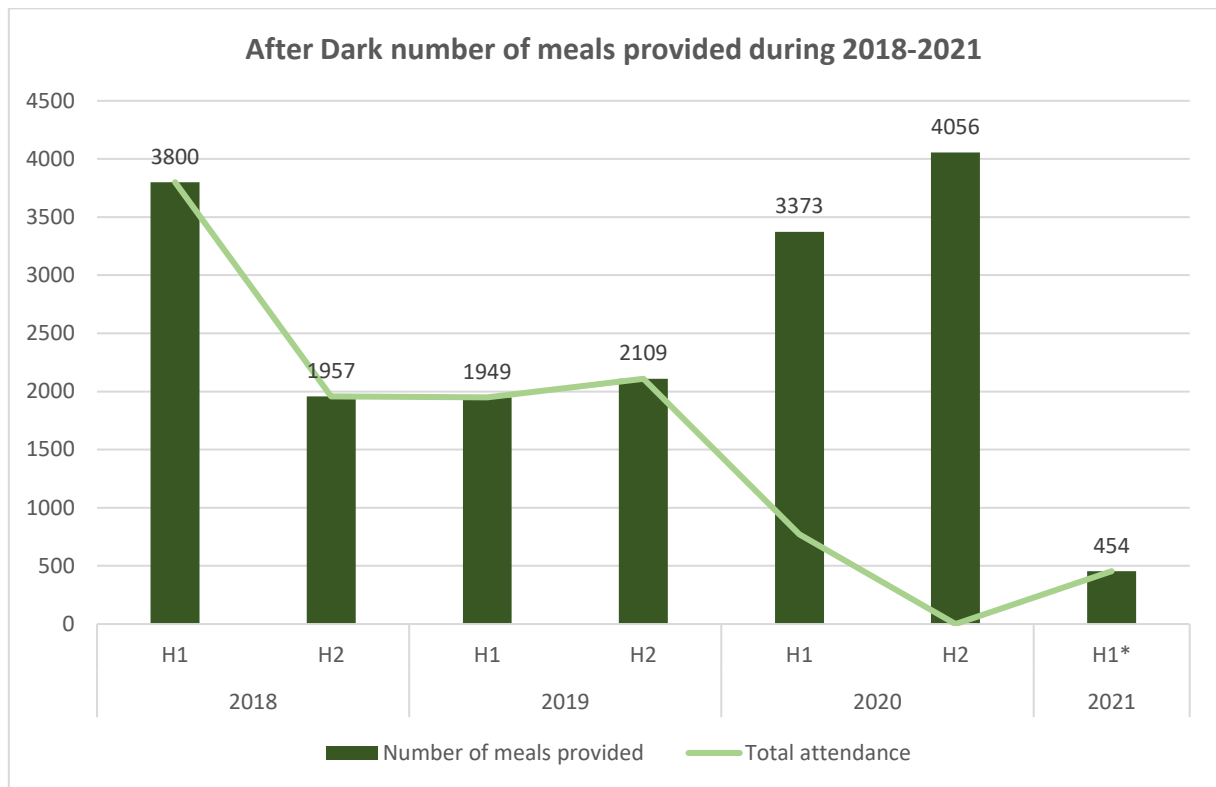


Figure 16. Staff and volunteer opinion on After Dark contribution to connecting with and meeting the needs of local youth and Aboriginal community (Staff and volunteer survey, 2021)

3.2.3 Provision of food

A key part of the After Dark program is providing nutritious, healthy meals to young people. The program receives donations of meals from partner community organisations such as Plate It Forward, as well as ingredients from food rescue services such as OzHarvest. With the number of meals served proportionate to the number of attendances, it was unsurprising that the number of meals provided decreased in the second half of 2018 and throughout 2019. In 2020, however, the number of meals served increased significantly while the program was unable to have attendees or run activities and pivoted to support to individuals and families in need during the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 17). Through consultation with the community, Glebe Youth Service staff rapidly redesigned the program over a five-day period and transitioned from a 'community gathering and activity focus to a meal and health information distribution program'²¹. The team hired a GoGet van and delivered meals and relevant COVID-19 health information to families in Glebe (Figure 18). The team also assisted GYS' Food Circle program to deliver fresh fruit and vegetables to households (Figure 19).

²¹ Glebe Youth Service Inc. (2020). After Dark Program: Quarterly Report April to June 2020, 3.



*Time period inclusive of one-quarter year only

Figure 17. Number of meals provided during 2018-2021 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)



Figure 18. After Dark food delivery team during 2020's COVID-19 pandemic (Glebe Youth Service Inc. 2020, p. 3)

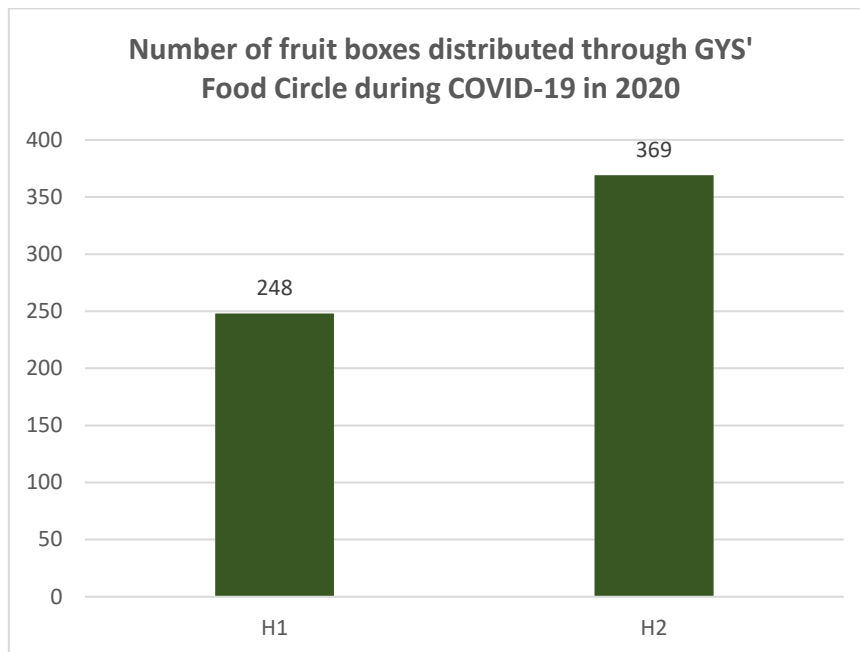


Figure 19. Number of fruit boxes distributed through GYS' Food Circle during COVID-19 in 2020 (After Dark Program Quarterly Reports 2018-2021)

The Glebe Youth Service conducts regular community consultation to ensure that is meeting the needs of program participants. For example, in 2018, a community consultation identified that young people were wanting increased variety in the food provided at After Dark. To address this, the program implemented Community Feed Nights where a volunteer from the community cooked a healthy homemade meal at the Youth Centre, which was then transported to PFA to serve at the program. The ingredients for the food were sourced from GYS' Food Circle program, which receives the majority of its food from food rescue organisations, such as 2nd Bite and Oz Harvest. The implementation of Community Feed Nights was well received by the program participants. Figure 19 shows an example of the variety of food served at After Dark on Community Feed Nights informed by community consultation.

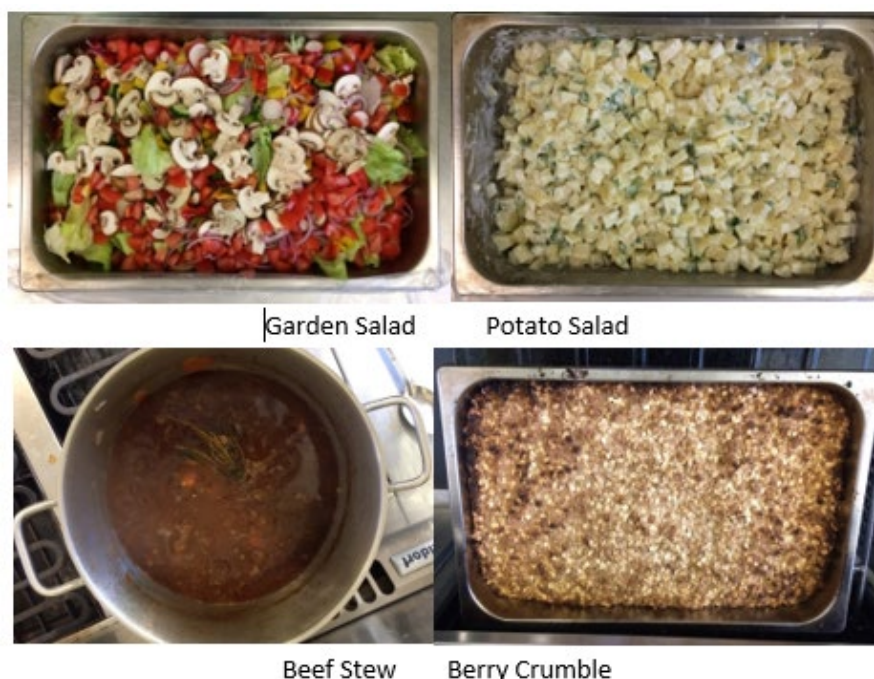


Figure 20. Example of the variety of food served at After Dark on Community Feed Nights after community consultation (Glebe Youth Service Inc. 2018, p. 6)

4. After Dark program effectiveness and impact

4.1 Program contribution to outcomes for young people

4.1.1 Improved health and wellbeing in young people

The After Dark program aims to contribute to improved health and wellbeing in young people through a range of physical activities, educational sessions on healthy lifestyle choices including nutrition, and by providing young people with nutritious meals. The opinions of After Dark participants, as well as staff and volunteers, who were surveyed on the contribution of the program to health and wellbeing in young people are shown in Figure 21. Nearly 90 per cent (n=17) of participants surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that the program helped them to feel mentally healthier. There was only slightly lower agreement in relation to physical health, with 15 per cent of survey respondents indicating either a neutral stance (n=2) or disagreeing (n=1) they felt physically healthier as a result of After Dark. Over 80 per cent (83%, n=10) of staff and volunteers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that the program contributes to improved wellbeing, and 67 per cent (n=8) were in agreement that After Dark promotes healthy living and choices (Figure 21).

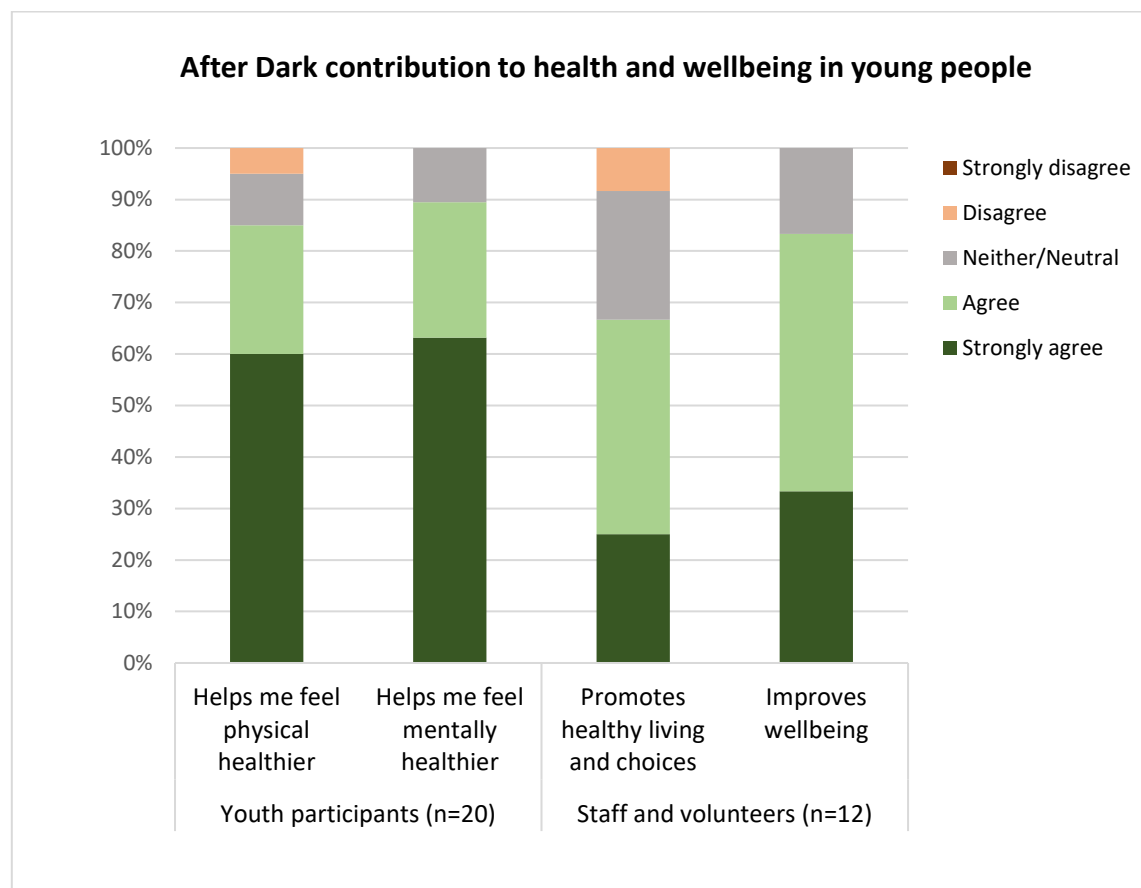


Figure 21. Participant and staff and volunteer agreement with After Dark contribution to improved health and wellbeing outcomes for young people in Glebe (Participant postcard survey, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021)

i. Contribution of food and activities to physical health and wellbeing in young people

Results of the evaluation showed that the provision of food and the opportunity to engage in physical activities are important motivating factors for young people to attend the program. Analysis of the completed youth group discussion activity templates demonstrated food and physical activities as the second and third most frequently mentioned reasons to attend the program, respectively. Participants referred to 'having a feed', 'munching on food', and 'yum food' as aspects of the program that they loved, as well as 'activities', 'basketball', and 'playing sports' (Participant focus group, 2021).

The provision of food to young people as part of After Dark was highlighted by staff and volunteers, past participants and community members alike as being a simple but critical aspect of the program to support health and wellbeing. Several staff and volunteers (n=6) included providing a 'healthy and substantive meal' or 'somewhere they can eat' in descriptions of the primary purpose of the program (Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). One volunteer reflected on the importance of providing food, 'a healthy meal which may be the only meal they get that day' (Volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

Program partners from community organisations also commented on the importance of providing healthy food and opportunities to be physically active to young people, in some instances reiterating their commitment to the program to continue facilitating this.

You know, eating a nice, healthy dinner that is satisfying as well... those really basic needs like good food but then also into more those healthy expression stuff I think as well, [After Dark] does a good job in that (Community partner, key stakeholder interview, 2021).

We've given them like cooking lessons. Healthy eating pathways, things like that and we'll do that. Well, we want to be part of that facilitation. I'm using our chefs and things like that, to kind of promote better diet choices, things like that (Community partner, key stakeholder interview, 2021).

Where we come in is healthy food, providing healthy food options and things like that. And some education around that I think that... keeping kids active and engaged is a huge part of what they do (Community partner, key stakeholder interview, 2021).

Community members emphasised the benefits of opportunities for young people to be physically active at After Dark as an antidote to mobile devices that effectively 'silence children' and result in them being 'nonverbal', and 'cranky' if 'interrupted' from their use (Indigenous Elder, Community yarn, 2021). The 'importance of getting out and doing physical activity and having your mob to talk to' was highlighted by community members as a positive and preventative approach to building health and wellbeing in young people (Indigenous Elder, Community yarn, 2021).

Community members provided critical insights into the benefits of making sure that young people in Glebe were healthy and not going hungry. A current community member and past participant shared their experience of 'literally having to steal to get some food, something to eat' and 'breaking into a car to get \$2 to take to the Indian shop' to buy rice, and emphasised the importance of providing food so that young people do not have to resort to those choices, will be treated with respect and not looked down on because they are hungry (After Dark past participant, Community yarn, 2021).

Staff and volunteers, and community partners also highlighted the importance of food as a foundational need, that once met, can be a precursor to building relationships, trust and 'helps [youth participants] to appreciate being part of a community (Community partner, key stakeholder interview, 2021). This theme is further explored in the following story of change (Story of change 1).

'...it kept me fit, kept me out of trouble. That's pretty much it. Fed me. I don't know about the kids now when I was younger, we didn't have a lot of food at home. That's why I used to come down here and eat...'

Indigenous community member
and After Dark past participant,
Community yarn, 2021

Story of change 1. The importance of addressing hunger on the path to improving health and wellbeing and building trust in young people in the After Dark program

Addressing hunger and building trust at After Dark

A moment that stands out for me is being in the kitchen at GYS, cooking up the After Dark menu one Friday, when a couple of young people came up to the window. They looked at me, a stranger to them, with distrusting faces, wary of me but willing to engage as I was in the kitchen obviously connected to the service, which I guess made me seem a little safer. They asked me if Sam* was in, which he was. He let the two boys into the building, and I could see, the way they looked at Sam*, I don't know how you gather this type of data statistically, they became children again in his presence. Their faces no longer the hardened gazes I got, Sam* received soft eyes and trusting faces. They quietly mentioned they were hungry, so Sam* made them both a couple of sandwiches and took them out of the kitchen to eat and have a chat about what was going on in their lives.

You cannot pay enough money to someone who does that with young people. And it's not just Sam*, it happens with all the staff and volunteers as they are well known in the community as beacons of support and safety too. A couple of ham and tomato sandwiches - \$10. Being allowed to be a kid, DURING YOUR CHILDHOOD – priceless.

After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

*Name changed

ii. Contribution of After Dark to mental health and wellbeing in young people

Community partners and members expressed serious concerns for the mental health and wellbeing of young people in the Glebe community. Community partners observed that After Dark 'builds on their mental wellbeing as well as their physical wellbeing', through creative activities with 'mindful elements', and learning the importance of 'healthy living in being connected, talking about how you are feeling, expressing yourself' (Community partners, Key stakeholder interviews, 2021).

Past participants highlighted the importance of After Dark as a safe space for young people to open up about negative emotions and feelings with people who are able to notice changes in their mood and behaviour that may be symptomatic of mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression. Community leaders spoke passionately and from a place of lived experience of the pain and loss associated with mental illness and suicide and foreshadowed the tragedy that would result if After Dark and similar programs were withdrawn from their community.

'You can't connect these kids to these services that they need unless you know them. They're not going to come to you and or to anybody they don't know and say hey, listen, I need help I'm struggling with this, I've got anxiety and depression.'

Indigenous community member
and After Dark past participant,
Community yarn, 2021

You can identify the kids... because you'll get to spend time with them. You'll see them as they interact with the other kids, you'll see if they're distant from them, you'll see if they're laughing with them... you'll notice things in their life. So you'll be able to say hey mate are you alright? Yeah, talk to them and engage with them and say, hey, what's happening... because maybe sometimes they don't know how to talk at home. They don't know how to open up about what's going on at home or school... so you'll notice and actually, these programs are important for the kids to go be able to reach out to somebody because right now we've got a

lot of teen suicides. They'll kill themselves left, right and center here because you take away things like this (Indigenous community member and After Dark past participant, 2021).

Community members also spoke about the effect of the program on the mental health and wellbeing of young people and their families, with one Aboriginal community member describing the After Dark program as a culturally appropriate form of counselling (Story of change 2).

Story of change 2. The experience of After Dark as a culturally appropriate form of support for mental health and wellbeing in Aboriginal young people and families

Culturally appropriate support for mental health and wellbeing through After Dark

I reckon that as a mom and can speak on my family... the After Dark program is a counselling session in itself... it's not like you got to sit there and have a counsel[ling] session. You know, these kids like they're in trouble... if I try and keep my son home, I know he just starts doing head bumps and his mental health starts to deteriorate and then that would be me kind of punishing him keeping home... and that's where I will always point him to go to After Dark.

They might think that it's not a counselling session, but it is, it's a counselling session for the mum because she knows where her kid is, and she knows her kid is safe. It's a counselling session for the kids to come here and have that place to go and have their outlet and get their frustrations out... you know, just being themselves. It's not how the white fellas say, if you've got problems, we'll send you to the counsellor... you know, it don't work for every kid and it don't work for families, because Aboriginal people shut down, they don't want to talk to white fellas when it comes to that. This is why this is most important. Because if you don't run this program, and they keep taking everything away from them, you got to see mothers that are going to start struggling, because they have to keep children home, because they've got nowhere else to go. And the kids are going to build more anger issues because there's no outlet for them...

We were raised by a mother that was taken as a very young baby she was stolen generation. And we hadn't known for a long amount of years. And then as I got older, it came to perspective - of why I was raised the way I was because my mother never received any loving treatment... They don't think that having a stolen generation parent or grandparent, affected the child, but it did because it affected the way that I became a child and affected the way that I was able to understand the world and then that was passed down to my son... And so it's not that long ago. So they have to understand that when it comes to work[ing] with Aboriginal kids, it's not the part where you just forget that that happened to their parents. Because that could be embedded in their children, and they won't navigate the same way [as] another child who didn't have stolen generation parents.

And that's all I'm saying. I couldn't send my son to counselling - they wouldn't understand it. And you know, I didn't base his life around that. I based his life around community and family and how they connect and engage with each other. That's what we are, where I come from as a mom... I don't navigate like that and nor do my kids.

Indigenous community member and After Dark past participant,
Community yarn, 2021

4.1.2 Increased confidence and agency in young people

Evaluation findings from young people participating in the After Dark program suggested increased confidence and agency to speak up, share their ideas and ask for help. Participants surveyed indicated very high agreement that the program resulted in them knowing who to ask for help, with all

respondents to the participant postcard survey (100%, n=20) either agreeing (n=5) or strongly agreeing (n=15) with this statement (Figure 22). Participants also reported high agreement that the After Dark program enables them to speak up and share their ideas (95%, n=19, Figure 22). Just over 30 per cent (33%, n=4) of staff and volunteer survey respondents strongly agreed the program contributes to increased confidence in young people to have a voice in the community, 50 per cent (n=6) agreed and the remaining 17 per cent (n=2) disagreed (Figure 22).

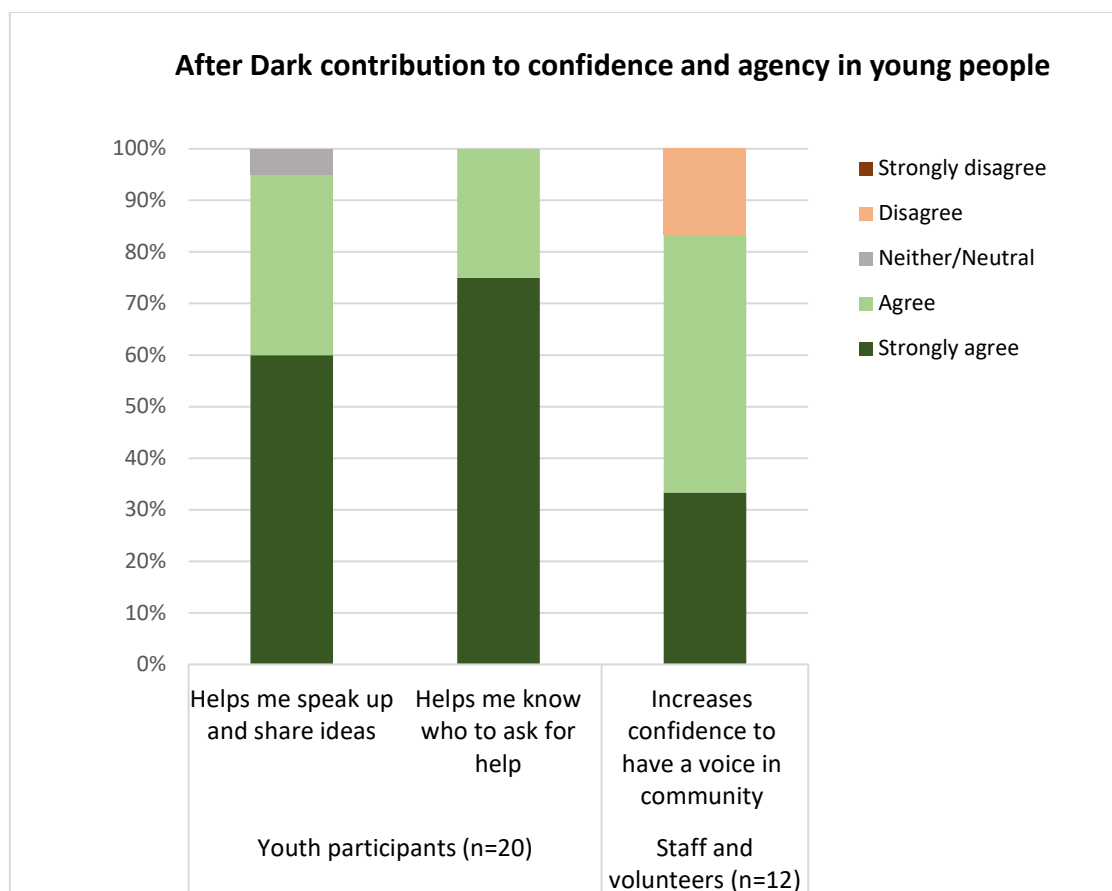


Figure 22. Participant and staff and volunteer agreement with After Dark contribution to improved confidence and agency outcomes for young people in Glebe (Participant postcard survey, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021)

Opportunities to develop confidence and leadership skills through the program were highlighted as a motivating factor to attend After Dark by participants, with one young person sharing that 'learning to be leaders' was one of the most appreciated aspects of the program (Participant focus group, 2021, Figure 23), and community partners observing the positive effects of young people having opportunities to 'speak with more responsible people in the community' (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021). Staff and volunteers commented on the contribution of 'education and skills building' on 'creating confidence' in young people (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021), and reflected on the importance of the program providing opportunities to enact personal responsibility (see Story of change 3).

Story of change 3. The contribution of After Dark to agency to enact personal responsibility

Cultivating youth agency to enact personal responsibility at After Dark

I'm a volunteer at After Dark, and the story about change that I'm thinking about involved local young people, a staff member, and myself. At the most recent After Dark program I attended, I saw a staff member who is also a former participant of the program challenge three young men to take responsibility for an area and its equipment. The young men had wanted to access a locked room and to use the equipment in there... I wasn't sure that they were allowed to, so I called on a staff member for advice. She addressed the group and informed them that they could use the facilities if they agreed to the rules and would take responsibility for the area. They did, and I saw before my eyes young people learning about agency, responsibility, and communication. I also realised that the staff member saw a lot of herself in those young people, and that she was on a journey of her own, one that the young people she was talking to clearly respected. And in myself, I gained an insight into kindness, trust, and community mindedness.

I think this change is important because agency is perhaps the most useful thing a young person can learn. Combining agency with information about healthy and rewarding behaviour is to me one of the most valuable things that the After Dark program provides to the community.

After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

4.1.3 Increased sense of connection to community and culture in young people

i. Increased sense of social belonging and connection to community

The contribution of the After Dark program to feelings of belonging and connection to community emerged as the most prominent theme identified in the participant experience of the program from the perspective of young people themselves. Comments related to meeting and socialising with community were the most frequently mentioned positive aspect of the program that motivated young people to attend. Participants expressed their love for and the importance of 'hanging with friends', 'meeting new people', 'catching up with family friends' and 'having fun with community' at After Dark (Participant focus group, 2021). One participant shared that what they loved most about After Dark was 'everything... because I feel welcomed and home' (Participant focus group, 2021).

*'[I love] everything...
because I feel welcome
and home.'*

After Dark youth participant,
Participant focus group,
2021

The importance of being and feeling a sense of belonging with friends and community was demonstrated through writing and drawings created by youth participants during the participant focus group discussion. Figure 23 shows examples of participants' placement of friends and community at the centre of the handprint in the activity template to represent what they love most about the program.



Figure 23. Participant descriptions of why they come to the After Dark program and what they love about it (Participant focus group, 2021)

After Dark staff and volunteers observed the importance of the program in providing ‘a meeting place’, a ‘place for young people to hang out’, ‘socialise on Friday and Saturday nights’, and ‘connect with their peers and community’ (After Dark staff and volunteers, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

Community partners also emphasised the importance of the program in reducing social isolation and ‘building a sense of community’ through establishing connections with each other and forming a ‘cohesive group’ of ‘young people who are then connected to the Glebe Youth Service’ (Community partners, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

Evaluation findings from the staff and volunteer and participant postcard surveys showed very strong agreement that After Dark increases participants’ sense of social belonging and helps them to feel part of the Glebe community. All participant postcard survey respondents either strongly agreed (85%, n=17) or agreed (15%, n=3) the program helps them to feel part of Glebe, and all staff and volunteer survey respondents either strongly agreed (75%, n=9) or agreed (25%, n=3) that After Dark increases a sense of social belonging in young people (Figure 24). Sixty-five percent (n=13) of participant postcard survey respondents strongly agreed After Dark helps them to make friends and that the program helps them to feel less lonely. Although these are positive findings overall, results demonstrate that there may be participants who would benefit from additional support in these critical areas, with 10 per cent (n=2) of respondents either not sure (n=1) or strongly disagreeing (n=1) that their participation in the program contributes to lessened feelings of social isolation and loneliness (Figure 24).

‘Young people are isolated generally across the board, nationally, but on a community level, After Dark is tailored uniquely for Glebe and young people in Glebe and is a great way of reducing isolation and providing so many different pathways to build skills, to feel connected... if we didn’t have After Dark, isolation would continue to be exacerbated and young people would have limited options and things to do.’

Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021

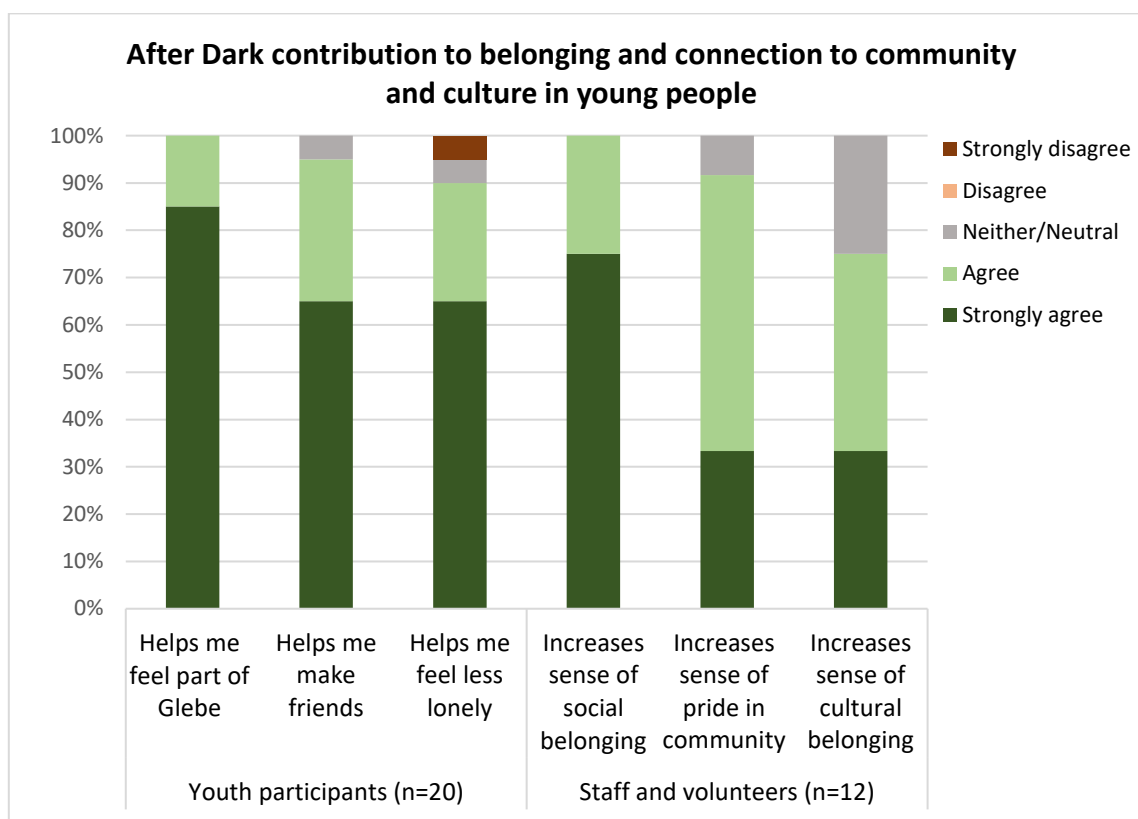


Figure 24. Participant and staff and volunteer agreement with After Dark contribution to improved sense of belonging and connection to community and culture in young people in Glebe (Participant postcard survey, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021)

ii. Increased sense of pride and connection to culture

In addition to contributing to a sense of belonging and community for young people, evaluation findings suggest a positive role of After Dark in supporting increased pride in and connection to culture for participants, and Aboriginal youth in particular. A participant in the youth focus group highlighted 'coming together with elders and learning' as one of the most positive aspects of the program (Participant focus group, 2021, Figure 23). Over 90 per cent (92%, n=11) of staff and volunteer survey respondents either strongly agreed (33%, n=4) or agreed (58%, n=7) the program increased participants' sense of pride in the community, and 75 per cent (n=9) either strongly agreed (33%, n=4) or agreed (42%, n=5) After Dark increases participants' sense of cultural belonging (Figure 24).

Community members and partners supported the role of the program in increasing pride and connection to culture for Glebe youth, and Aboriginal young people in particular. A community member reflected that a 'lot of kids, that are Aboriginal in Sydney don't know much about their culture' and benefit from being told 'where they are from' so 'they know it know', 'know the stories' (Indigenous Elder, Community yarn, 2021). Community partners highlighted promotion of 'cultural activities, that are particularly relevant to Aboriginal young people like weaving', acknowledging the program as a space where 'they are supported and there are opportunities to connect with culture and feel proud of it' (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

'When it comes to cultural belonging - like owning Aboriginality, I think they do that really well. There's a strong ethos of that right through the whole programming and cultural appropriateness and being really proud to be Aboriginal... I think is something that's really strong through the Glebe Youth Service...'

Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021

4.1.4 Increased feelings of safety for young people

Evaluation findings showed strong evidence of increased feelings of safety for young people who participate in the After Dark program. Seventy-five per cent (n=15) participant postcard survey respondents strongly agreed that the program helped them to feel safer in Glebe (Figure 25). Agreement was similarly high in staff and volunteers, with over 65 per cent (67%, n=8) strongly agreeing the program increased feelings of safety in Glebe youth (Figure 25).

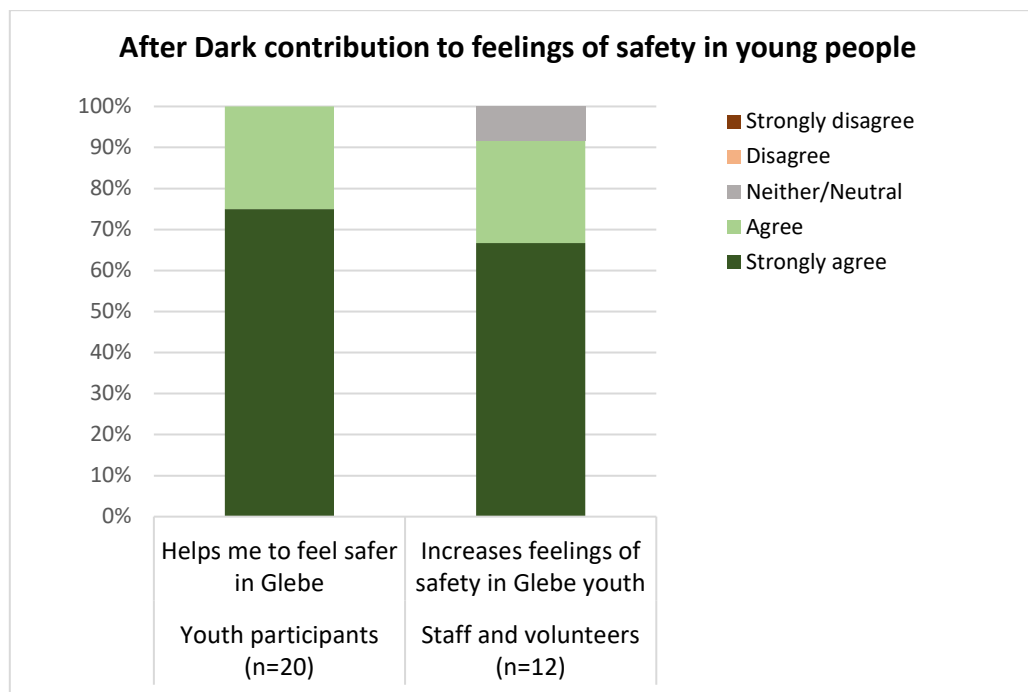


Figure 25. Participant and staff and volunteer agreement with After Dark contribution to improved feelings of safety for young people in Glebe (Participant postcard survey, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021)

Participants identified the program as ‘a safe place for youth’ and articulated that feeling ‘safe’ was one of the main reasons they attended After Dark (Participant focus group, 2021). Program staff and volunteers most frequently endorsed providing a ‘safe place for at-risk young people’ as the purpose of After Dark (n=10), highlighting the importance of an environment which is ‘safe and friendly’, ‘safe and healthy’, ‘safe and engaging’, ‘safe and fun’, and a source of ‘safe opportunities’ (After Dark staff and volunteers, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

Community partners further supported the program’s contribution to feelings of safety for young people in the Glebe community:

I think they really deliver on what they say, which is keeping kids, in a safe and secure environment (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

I think programs like [After Dark] are good for at-risk members of the community because it gives them somewhere, in my belief, that they feel safe to go... where they can feel safe and then these organisations can communicate with them (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

‘After Dark provides a safe and healthy third place for the young people in the community. When the schools are closed, and home isn’t comfortable, GYS and the After Dark program are the lifeline for a safe space for the young people to go.’

After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

So... diverting them that way to After Dark and having a varied opportunity to engage in something more positive that may make them feel more connected and more safe (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

After Dark program staff and community stakeholders also reflected on the connection between feelings of safety and trust, commenting that the 'important thing is the kids have somewhere to go to where they trust, whether it is outside of their family or away from the police' (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021), and that for some youth participants, 'home is not always the safest option' (After Dark staff member, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). A volunteer also observed that 'the local young Indigenous community feel comfortable with the After Dark program having grown up with it and building trust with the building and workers over time' (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). The interconnected themes of trust and feelings of safety for Aboriginal youth participants in particular are explored in the story of change below (Story of change 4).

Story of change 4. The importance of building trust to develop feelings of safety for Aboriginal youth at After Dark

Building trust and feelings of safety for Aboriginal young people through After Dark

Alex* had a difficult home life... was on the verge of dropping out of school... had some legal issues... doesn't trust many people and is sometimes couch surfing due to not feeling safe at home. Every Friday and Saturday night he comes to After Dark. After three months of attending, he [found] the courage to disclose details of situations to one of the youth workers. The worker referred Alex* to the GYS team who commenced case management and over time his situation stabilised, and his needs moved from addressing issues of risk towards setting aspirational life goals.

For Aboriginal young people it is so important to have safe places that provide a 'soft entry' into social services. Mistrust, a lack of confidence and 'service hesitancy' run deep - no doubt due to ongoing traumatic impacts of colonisation, stolen generations, child removal and over-representation in the justice system, systemic racism, overt and casual racism. After Dark is an antidote to the appalling gap in social, health and economic outcomes for Aboriginal People.

After Dark staff member, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

*Name changed

4.2 Program contribution to outcomes for the community

4.2.1 Increased feelings of safety in the community

In addition to evidence of increased feelings of safety for young people, evaluation findings suggest the After Dark program is contributing to increased feelings of safety in the wider Glebe community. Over 80 per cent (83%, 10) of After Dark staff and volunteers surveyed reported agreement that the program contributes to decreased youth offending, positively influences youth behaviour, and supports increased feelings of safety in the wider Glebe community (Figure 26). Staff and volunteers demonstrated particularly strong agreement that After Dark contributes to decreased youth offending in Glebe, with over 65 per cent (67%, n=8) strongly agreeing with this survey item (Figure 26).

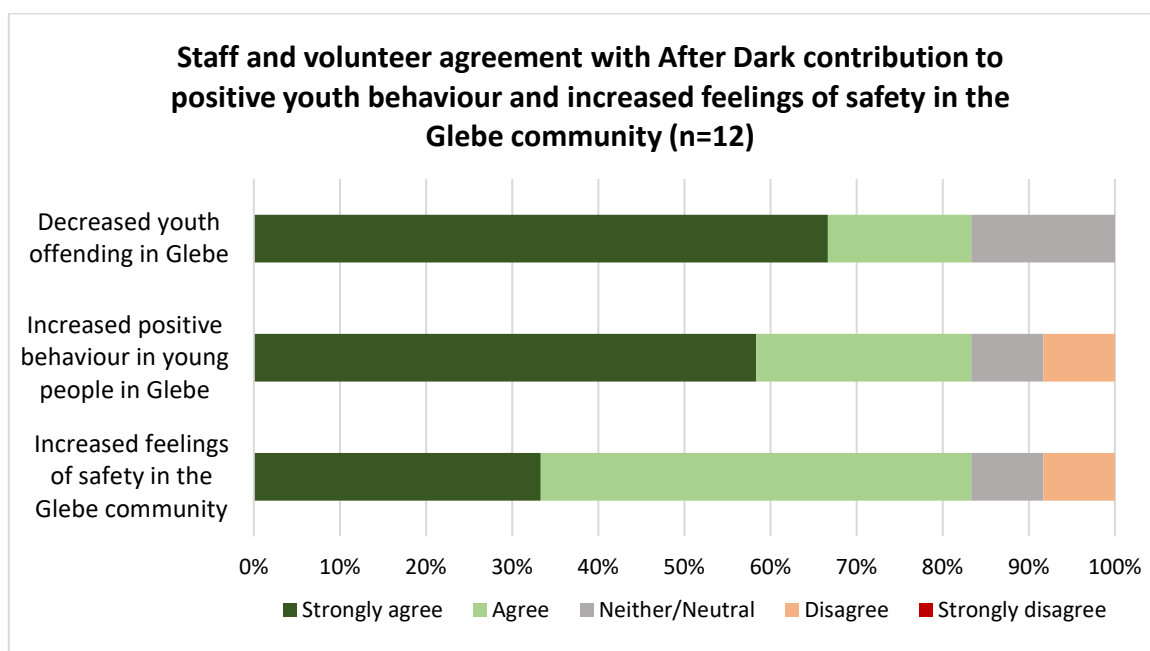


Figure 26. Staff and volunteer agreement with After Dark contribution to decreased youth offending, increased positive youth behaviour and increased feelings of safety in the Glebe community (Staff and volunteer survey, 2021)

Analysis of staff and volunteer survey responses to questions about where participants might be and what they might be doing if they were not attending After Dark showed emergent themes associated with increased crime and antisocial behaviour in the absence of the program. Staff and volunteers suggested youth participants would likely be ‘walking the streets’, ‘asking people for money’, and more likely to be involved in high-risk, unsafe and criminal activity, exposed to ‘increased drug and alcohol use’, and potentially ‘in contact with police and the criminal justice system’ (Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

If they weren't at After Dark, I think many of them would be on the street or in the park, feeling bored, frustrated, and vulnerable. I think they'd be acting out because of this, likely engaging in activities that will be harmful to their success in the future. Things like fighting or getting caught up in criminal activity (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

Program staff also reflected on the effects of increased antisocial behaviour in the absence of After Dark on the wider community, acknowledging that feelings of safety of community members may be impacted by increased presence of Glebe youth on the streets.

They would be hanging around the streets not just of Glebe but the City Centre too, roaming the streets in large groups, looking for something to amuse themselves, probably being a little rowdy and loud which disturbs neighbours and frightens some community members who fear large groups of young people unsupervised (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

Young people participating in the program were also asked to consider where they might be and what they might be doing on a Friday and Saturday night if they were not at After Dark. Responses to these open-ended participant postcard survey questions were collated and analysed jointly due to the considerable overlap in both individual responses and emergent themes. Half of the 30 participant responses analysed showed that young people thought they would be at home if they were not at After Dark, possibly ‘watching TV bored’, ‘chilling with family’, ‘asleep’, or doing ‘reading or homework’. Analysis of the other half of responses from participants showed an emergent theme related to being out in the community, either at ‘Broadway’, ‘with friends’, ‘out on the streets’, or ‘out partying’. Only one participant specifically reflected that if they were not at After Dark, then they thought they would most likely be ‘in trouble’. The relative frequency of responses is illustrated in Figure 27.

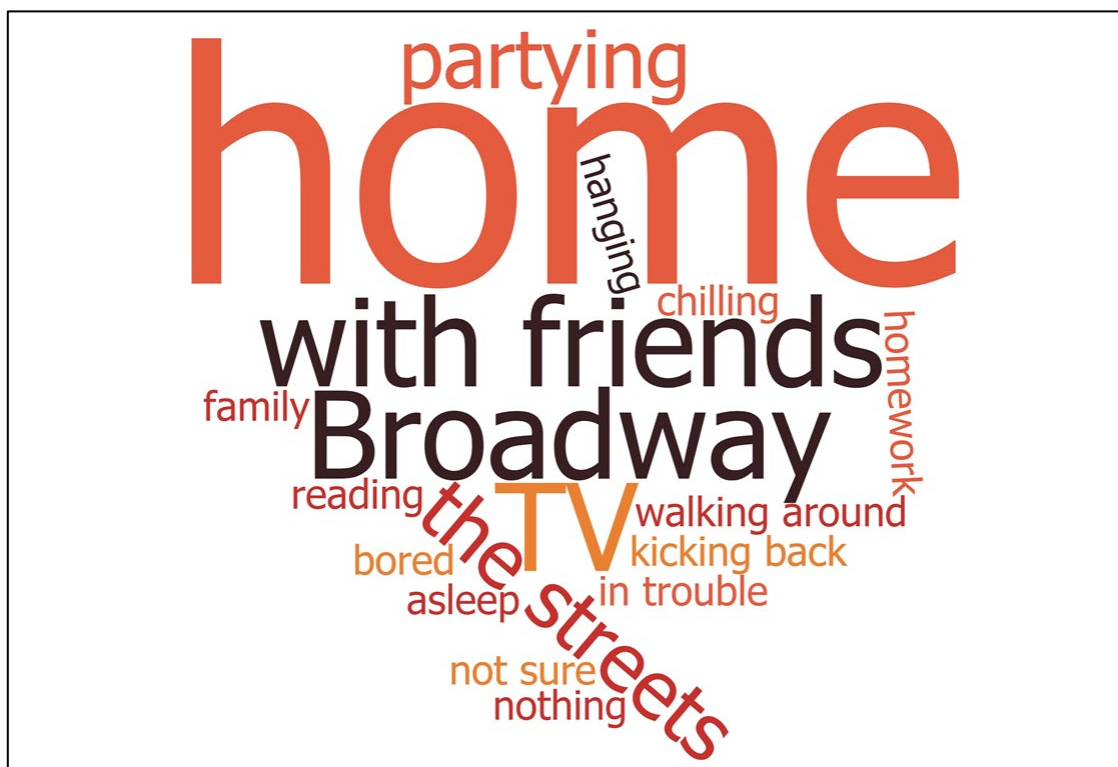


Figure 27. Participant descriptions of where they thought they would be and what they would be doing if they were not at the After Dark program (Participant postcard survey, 2021)

Community partners suggested that the After Dark program was an important contributor to wider feelings of safety amongst the community in Glebe, describing the program's 'premise to keep people off the streets', and 'working with the police in a better way' as 'great ways of keeping people safe' (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021). Providing youth opportunities through the program to 'meet some police' was also described as 'beneficial to the community' and 'obviously a better environment and a safer environment for the other people of the Glebe community as well as the kids themselves' (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021). After Dark was also purported to be 'reassuring for the parents or whoever is looking after those young ones that their kids are safe at Glebe Youth Service over being just out and about in Glebe at night-time' (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

4.2.2 Strengthened relationships between community members, stakeholders, and services

Alongside improved connections between Glebe youth and community members and services, the After Dark evaluation showed evidence of strengthened relationships between community members and key community stakeholders and service providers. Community partners commented on the benefit of working in an inclusive environment that embraces a range of target groups across the community, including young children and family members.

'What is really beneficial about our partnership with After Dark is that it is a youth-focused event... but it's not really just youth, it is still something that touches children and older people, you know it has a wide reach I suppose. So, while After Dark is a youth-based event, there are so many positive outcomes that come out of it for young families and young children. So that is why we have that partnership with After Dark' (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

The program was seen by community partners and stakeholders as a way of being seen in 'a different light' and a way to 'building those sorts of bridges' between community and services (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

Family involvement in After Dark and the Glebe Youth Service was particularly important for building relationships, from the perspective of both program staff and community partners. Staff described feeling 'more connected to the community' because of the program, and able to 'work more effectively with the families of Glebe' as a result (After Dark staff member, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). An After Dark volunteer commented that when 'families come along with the young people' to a program event it 'increases bonds with community members and GYS staff/ volunteers' and 'also provides valuable insight to Youth Workers about the community and family dynamics that may not be apparent when one-on-one with young people' (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

'Youth work isn't just about working with the young person but to involve their families is a vital role in order to break the cycle.'

After Dark staff member,
Staff and volunteer survey,
2021

One community partner highlighted the After Dark and Glebe Youth Service response to COVID-19 as an example of responding to community need in a way that built on and further strengthened relationships between community and services:

'We started working on the food relief program and they were dropping food off to people that were staying at home... they were able to have better relationships and foster better service provision and talk to people that they might not have been able to talk to before... it was being there, being around, being present, and then delivering something that was needed at the time that they needed that... an immediate relief program that the service enacted and fostered better relationships within the community... Once you have those relationships, you have a sense of who needs support and what support is required (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

4.3 Program impact

4.3.1 Program contribution to a more connected Glebe community

Program impact characterised by significant, positive and long-term changes in conditions requires patience and perseverance to evidence. The evaluation process unearthed perspectives on After Dark from community members who attended the program as children, and who now have their own children attending. These individuals experienced After Dark as part of the Glebe community's identity; a community-led solution that transcended formal program structures or schedules and enabled deep connections within and across community. As one community member and past After Dark participant observed, 'this program has helped a lot of kids... because there is no one outside of this, it's only all of us trying to keep it together' (Indigenous community member and past participant, Community yarn, 2021). A community member and past After Dark participant's insights into how the program brings community and services together to support young people in a way that transcends culture are explored in the story of change below (Story of change 5).

'It's also the rest of the community like we would go down as Mums and Dads, that's a place for us to catch up and see my nieces and nephews, and see the little kids running around. It was more than just the youth it was a community thing...'

Indigenous community member and
past After Dark participant,
Community yarn, 2021

Story of change 5. A connected and inclusive Glebe community supporting young people collectively through After Dark

A connected and inclusive community supporting young people through After Dark

Today's problem, we got kids raising kids, stolen generation happened to our elders, and still happening to the young. And now these kids, they might lose two or three of their kids, and they've got one, that one kid might come to this program... his mother doesn't know how to deal because she's emotionally traumatised. I've already lost two kids, you know, I don't know how to connect with this kid... so you know what, I need my kids to be here, come to this program, learn some life skills, because they don't know how to get that from their parents, they're kids being kids, kids raising kids.

So, it's a lot harder to just say it's all one little group... like this is a bit bigger than culture. This is community. This is family. We're all helping each other raise each other's kids, basically, because I got a different insight to how to help to how Aunty Pam* has a different insight. All the old Aunties and everybody else, you know... you'll have a yarn to them, they might listen, or they might not...

I think they emphasise the word culture too much. Because it's not just Aboriginal kids here. There's all different walks of life here. And when we talk about community, that's what this is.

Indigenous community member and past participant,
Community yarn, 2021

*name changed

Staff and volunteers recognised and articulated feeling part of this community experience as well, describing how the After Dark program 'brings the local community together' and enables people to 'check in on our fellow brothers and sisters some of whom have very challenging lives' (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). Community partners also remarked on the 'sense of belonging, that happens with Glebe and in the Glebe community' that is modeled by the Glebe Youth Service and is 'cultivating that experience, that connection to their greater community... being proud of being Glebe' (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

'The [After Dark] program brings local community together on a weekend evening for a bit of play, banter and breaking bread together. The positive effect of that kind of connection in that setting achieves far greater goals for each member of the group and community than words can proffer...'

After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

4.3.2 Program contribution to social change

Community members and past After Dark participants emphasised the importance of the program steering young people in the right direction at key moments to support choices leading to long-term positive social change at both the individual and community level.

So you get those kids that are twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, they either go down that road and these programs... can cater for them now, you can get in there right now and say listen... this is the way you want to go, and if you end up this way you're going to go to jail, and you end up that way, you're going to choose a different path. So, you can get in there now and use these programs to benefit all the kids and stop them now. Because you know why, in five to 10

years, you're gonna have crack heads, you're going to have drug addicts, you're gonna have the worst of the worst. If you do not try and change and use these programs to benefit them now. Because if nobody cares, they're not going to care for themselves... you got to push them in that direction (Indigenous community member and past After Dark participant, Community yarn, 2021).

Staff members who attended After Dark when they were young people growing up in Glebe shared lived experience of the long-term impact of the program, reflecting on how the connection to 'Youthie' (the Glebe Youth Service) 'assisted them to make positive choices when many around them were not' (After Dark staff member, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). These individuals were described as 'inspirational' by other program staff for the critical part they play as role models for 'the next generation' (After Dark staff member, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

Individual stories of change provide evidence of progress towards the After Dark and Glebe Youth Service vision of a thriving, healthy and socially just Glebe community, where people from all backgrounds, ages and economic status have opportunities to fully participate in civic life. After Dark staff and volunteers described providing support and advice at pivotal moments in the life trajectories of individual participants, leading to them completing education, gaining long-term employment, securing safe and independent accommodation, and in some cases providing financial stability for family members (Story of change 6).

'I think a change I've contributed to is being the change the kids need to see. As a previous young person that used to attend this program, I wasn't the best kid and some of the kids know this. I want them to know they can be better people. I already see it and it's beautiful to watch.'

After Dark staff member and past participant, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

Story of change 6. Reflections on the role of After Dark in contributing to individual positive social change

Reflections on the role of After Dark in an individual story of positive social change

Recently, I had the pleasure of seeing a young person who previously attended After Dark and received case management from Glebe Youth Service. This young person had experienced significant trauma and instability throughout her life. She received support from the program at a time of particular crisis. While there were some changes made at the time, it felt like baby steps. When she returned to After Dark, she proudly explained that she was now working full-time and living in independent accommodation. She held her head high and was proud of how far she had come.

I believe the seeds of self-worth were planted through her connection with After Dark.

Often, we don't see the impact immediately but taking a step back and having the time to reflect, we begin to see change.

After Dark staff member, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

5. After Dark program strengths and opportunities

5.1 Program strengths and enablers

5.1.1 Program strengths

Evaluation findings demonstrate evidence of progress towards outcomes for young people and the Glebe community across a range of areas including health and wellbeing, youth confidence and agency, social cohesion and cultural belonging, and community safety. Analysis showed clear areas of program strength in achieving progress towards improved social belonging and connection to the community, increased feelings of safety for young people, as well as providing a consistent presence and enjoyable experience for local Glebe youth.

Results showed a significant difference in the extent to which After Dark staff and volunteers assessed the program's contribution to outcomes for Glebe youth, particularly characterised by higher mean ranks of survey items 'increases sense of social belonging' and 'increases feelings of safety in young people'. These items achieved significantly higher rankings relative to other outcomes, with respective mean ranks of 5.5 and 5.0 out of 7 items ($\chi^2=24.3$, $df=6$, $p<.001$, Friedman test). Seventy-five per cent of staff and volunteers surveyed ($n=9$) strongly agreed that After Dark contributed to increased social belonging in youth participants, and 67 per cent ($n=8$) strongly agreed the program increased feelings of safety in young people (Staff and volunteer survey, 2021, Figure 28).

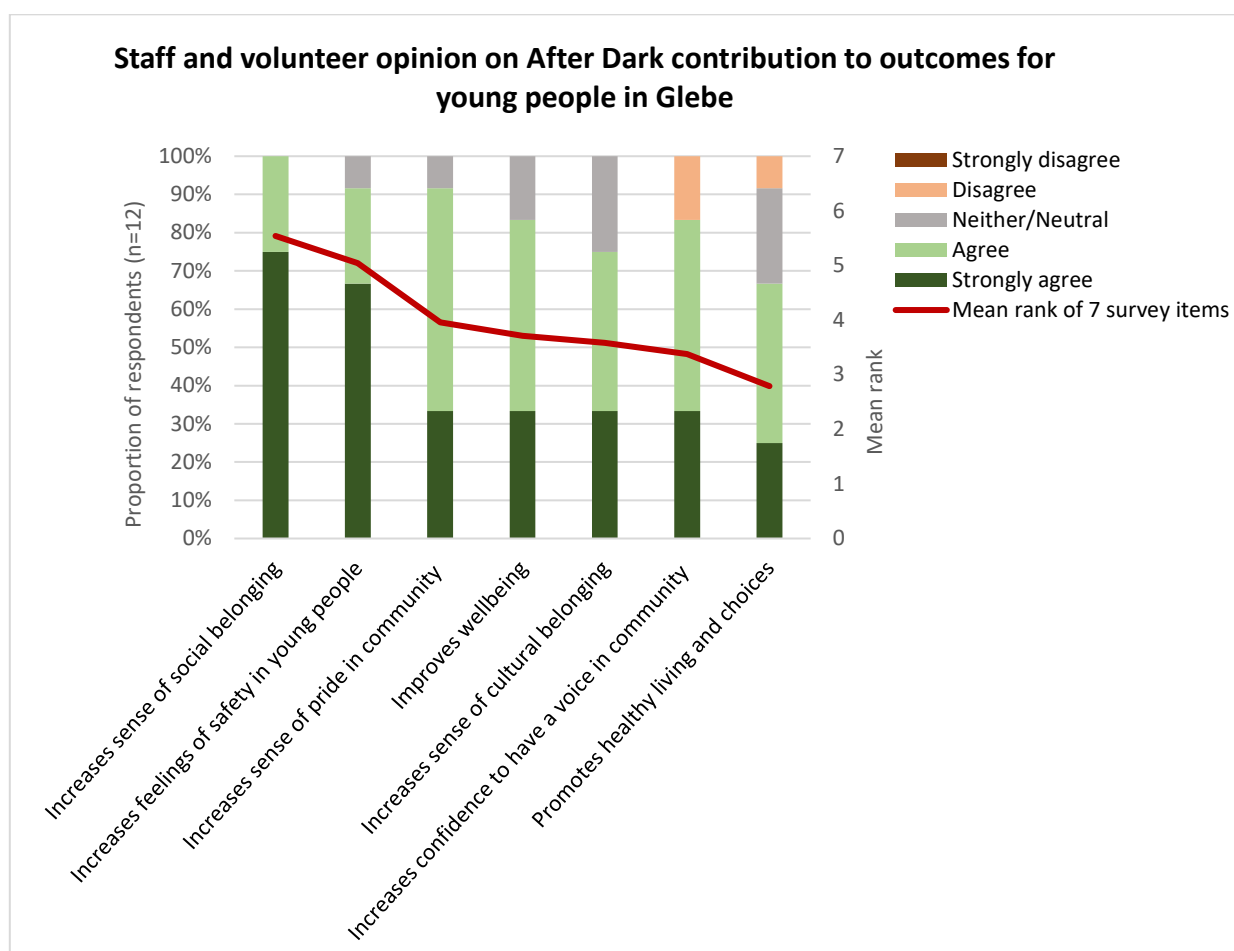


Figure 28. Staff and volunteer opinion on the After Dark program's relative contribution to outcomes for young people in Glebe (Staff and volunteer survey, 2021)

Figure 29 shows the relative levels of agreement of After Dark participants to survey items related to key program outcomes. Progress towards improved social belonging and connection to community was further endorsed by After Dark youth participants as a strength of the program, with 85 per cent (n=17) of youth participants surveyed strongly agreeing the program helped them to ‘feel part of Glebe’ (Participant postcard survey, 2021, Figure 29). Although differences across all items were not significant ($\chi^2=11.3$, $df=7$, $p=.13$, Friedman test), participant agreement that After Dark helped young people to ‘feel part of Glebe’ was significantly higher than agreement with specific survey items related to feeling ‘physically healthier’ and confident to ‘speak up and share ideas’ ($\chi^2=6.1$, $df=2$, $p=.048$, Friedman test).

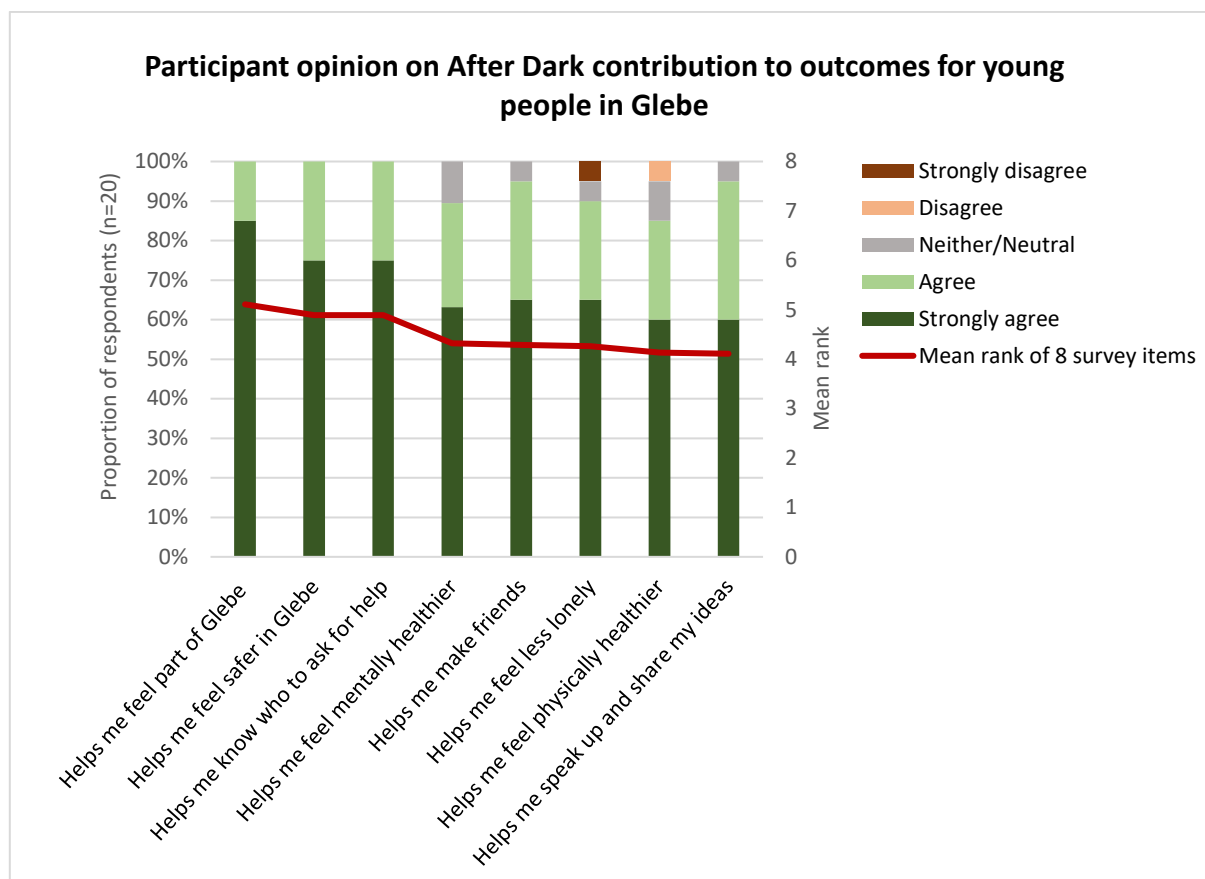


Figure 29. Participant opinion on the After Dark program’s relative contribution to outcomes for young people in Glebe (Participant postcard survey, 2021)

Evaluation findings suggest that providing a consistent presence and enjoyable experience for young people are also critical strengths of the program. Program staff and volunteers emphasised the importance of the message to Glebe youth that the program was ‘always there every week’, ‘consistently open’ (Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). Staff and volunteers also shared their observations of the program providing a space to enjoy time with friends and ‘create pleasant childhood memories’ (Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

From the participant perspective, a positive and enjoyable experience emerged as a key strength of the program. When asked to provide one word to describe After Dark in the participant postcard survey, the word ‘fun’ accounted for nearly 40 per cent (38%, n=8) of the responses (Participant postcard survey, 2021). Other frequently mentioned words to describe the program included ‘good’ and ‘safe’. Young people involved in the evaluation process sent a clear message that they have fun at After Dark and experience safer and more enjoyable lives as a result of

‘...as a consequence of all this they grow up forming happy memories in childhood and God knows some of these young people need at least one ray of light in their world.’

After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

the program. The relative frequency of words used by young people to describe After Dark are shown in Figure 30.



Figure 30. One word used by current participants to describe the After Dark program (Participant postcard survey, 2021)

5.1.2 Program enablers

The strengths and successes of the After Dark program are enabled by deep and historic connections with the Glebe community and local organisations and services and dedicated and compassionate staff and volunteers with lived experience of the program and the community, including from an Aboriginal perspective. The program was described by a community member and volunteer as being ‘woven into the local community’ (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

From the workers and volunteers who have community links, to the familiar community leaders who drop by to show support and enjoy the facilities. By engaging the entire community on lots of different levels, the program builds trust and engagement that continues to grow and strengthen as long as After Dark continues to operate (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

‘The staff, volunteers and the community involved have an intimate connection with each other that goes back several decades in some cases. The program lets that thrive and lets people in-need reach out to the group.’

After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

Community partners stressed the importance of After Dark to the local Aboriginal community, commenting on the number of Aboriginal staff and volunteers that are involved and ‘make positive contributions to the community’ (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021). Community partners also emphasised the extraordinary commitment of program staff and volunteers to the youth participants and to the community generally.

I know a couple of the [staff and volunteers] that that work on the program, and it is their heart and soul. You know, I've seen, them pretty much in tears after, after hearing circumstances for some of the people that they work with... that's how seriously they take their work... and it's not a job but it's a deep passion. And they live and breathe the Glebe community, they live and breathe, supporting the kids, you know, and they're there in ways 24-seven, you know... they give their lives up for this. It's not a nine to five in any way shape or form and the kids, the

kids know that - they respect them as true pillars of their community... they are doing a great job (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021).

After Dark staff and volunteers, themselves described their colleagues as 'enthusiastic', 'good role models', and 'passionate and committed to the welfare of the young people' (After Dark staff, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

5.2 Program challenges and opportunities

5.2.1 Program challenges

Availability and lack of sufficient resources emerged as an area of significant challenge for After Dark. Community partners observed that the program 'just needs more money' and is currently doing 'great work on a shoestring budget' (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021). The idea that the program 'needs more money' was reinforced by all community stakeholders, with one commenting that the reality is that 'to expand any further... more money and support around the program coordinator' is required (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021). Community partners also reflected on how resourcing issues within their own organisations were compromising their capacity to support After Dark in ways and at a level they may have done previously. For example, a community partner described 'staffing issues' associated with a long-term vacancy in a position that would normally help their service in 'connecting with the kids and Glebe Youth Service' (Community partner, Key stakeholder interview, 2021). Despite these constraints, community partners expressed positive intentions to build on and further strengthen existing relationships with After Dark and the Glebe Youth Service for the benefit of local youth and the Glebe community.

After Dark staff and volunteers also highlighted insufficient resources as the major challenge faced by the program, and that increased financial support for the program would contribute to improved activities and outcomes for youth participants and the wider community.

If After Dark were better resourced, it could provide more meals for the community and more staff members to better engage the young people. By employing more staff, the program can invest in running more engaging activities that will grow the program and keep the young people in a safe and healthy space rather than exposing them to harm on the street (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

There was a sense amongst program staff and volunteers that resourcing was less secure than it had been in the past, and that program funding had decreased for reasons that were neither transparent nor well understood.

[The City of Sydney] used to provide more support in terms of staff and resources towards After Dark but have pulled back recently for no reason that I can figure other than they don't want to spend money anymore on community services. However, these local young people's needs are more the responsibility of local council than state or federal [government]...' (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

After Dark staff and volunteers suggested that a more active role from local organisations and institutions could be beneficial to the program and provide opportunities for a large corporate such as Mirvac (Broadway Sydney) and local universities such as UTS, Notre Dame and the University of Sydney to 'step up and offer more assistance in terms of money, people and other resources to

'After Dark engages a very difficult to engage section of the community and more funding would allow us to use more external activity providers to develop skills and introduce our attendees to new experiences. It would also give us a greater ability to support requests for more intensive support in-house, as some of our more marginalised young people struggle to engage with external services.'

After Dark staff member, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

programs like this if they want to consider themselves responsible corporate citizens' (After Dark volunteer, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

Program staff also provided feedback on the demanding nature of the work involved, and the risk of staff being so busy they might seem 'unapproachable and too busy to show that they actually care about the young people' (After Dark staff, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). Issues with the program's work culture and professional environment were also raised, with staff indicating reluctance to speak up and report incidents for fear of reprisal.

5.2.2 Opportunities for improvement

The After Dark evaluation process explored opportunities for program improvement from the perspectives of participants, staff and volunteers, and a range of community members and program stakeholders. Community members and partners were asked to identify opportunities for program improvement during key stakeholder interviews and community 'yarns', and After Dark staff and volunteers were invited to suggest program improvements in the staff and volunteer survey. After Dark participants completed activity templates, discussed, and presented their ideas on how they would change or run the program differently during the youth participant focus group discussion. In total, these templates and presentations included 64 individual suggestions for the program, with a sample of participant drawings of these suggestions shown in Figure 31.

The emergent themes related to opportunities for improvements to the After Dark program included:

- improvements to and expanded offerings of program activities
- new or upgraded technology and equipment
- improvement of youth transport options
- increased active youth participant involvement and leadership.

i. Improvements to and expanded offerings of program activities

Participants provided several suggestions for additional activities to enhance the program, including boxing, cooking classes, driver education, presentations from services, and opportunities to watch sporting events together with other participants. Interestingly, many of the suggestions from participants were requests for 'more of the same' – for example, 'more cultural activities', 'art and craft', 'DJ and disco', and 'themed events'. Existing activities with slight modifications such as 'proper basketball games' and 'tournaments with prizes' were also frequently mentioned (Participant focus group, 2021). Opportunities for external activities such as excursions or outings to 'movies', 'bowling', and 'laser tag' were also suggested by some young people as a way to improve the program.

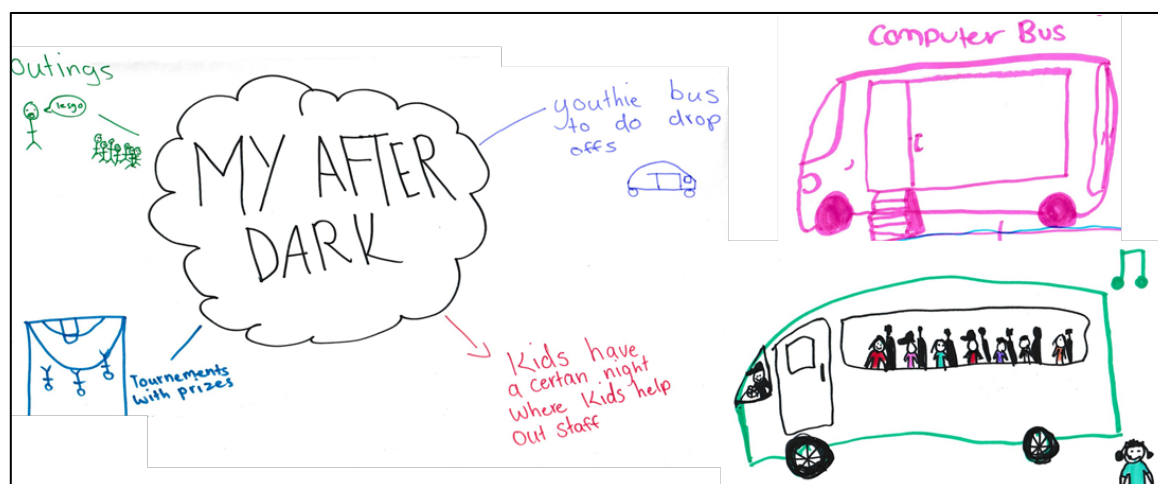


Figure 31. Extracts from posters created by current participants to describe how they would improve the After Dark program (Participant focus group, 2021)

After Dark staff made similar activity suggestions to participants, including more indoor and outdoor activities in general, and specific activities such as 'basketball 3 on 3 comps', 'themed nights', 'cooking and baking', 'guest community cooks (e.g., Aunties)', 'group projects', 'programs facilitated by young Indigenous staff which meaningfully link young people with culture', and workshops offered by other services (After Dark staff, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). Several staff also commented on the benefits of moving back to the Peter Forsyth Auditorium (PFA) on Friday nights, suggesting that the 'teens and families miss it' (After Dark staff, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). One staff member also suggested organising excursions for youth participants – such as, trips to footy games or to the movies.

'More recently, I believe After Dark has become more relevant/engaging for younger teens/tweens... while the older cohort report wanting more innovative and engaging activities and for After Dark to continue running at the PFA.'

After Dark staff member, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021

Interestingly, community members and After Dark past participants strongly emphasised the importance of excursions, particularly as an incentive for young people. For example,

They used to have a bus here. They used to fill the bus up, every weekend you'd go somewhere, every week. If you were good at school you got on the bus and you got to go everywhere, all the theme parks, Luna Park, Australia Wonderland, you got to go everywhere. You good at school, it would give you an incentive to go and stay and have a go at school. Yeah, a lot of them don't like school but you know what, if you know that you're not going to get on the bus on Friday or Saturday you'll want to try and do a little bit better... (Indigenous community member and past After Dark participant, Community yarn, 2021).

ii. New or upgraded technology and equipment

Participant presentations during the youth focus group also highlighted opportunities to improve the program through access to new and upgraded equipment. Improved digital technology available during the program was the most prominent emergent theme, with participants referring to computers, tablets, game consoles, speakers and a television. One staff member suggested providing 'a couple of computers in the activity area with access to a printer for young people to prepare and print resumes' (After Dark staff member, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021). A number of youth participants specified their desire to access the 'computer bus' during their time at After Dark (Participant focus group, Figure 31), a suggestion that was echoed by a community member.

And After Dark had a bus with all the technology. Yeah, and it had a cool little trailer and it had like, six, seven, about seven seats and all the kids would go in there, the ones not playing football or basketball. They're going in and have a crack at that... I don't know what's happened to that because it's stopped obviously because COVID did, but I don't know what's happened to that. But that was cool and if they're not going to introduce things like that well then that's something that needs to come back (Indigenous community member and past After Dark participant, Community yarn, 2021).

One community member agreed with the youth participant suggestion of access to a television and opportunities to watch sporting events as a group.

There should be a big screen here so all the kids can come, sit down and watch TV... because if I was a young fella and I was walking the street and it's freezing cold... and I think oh, but I'm going to go up to Youthie and its warm and there's a big TV that we can watch the basketball (Community member, Community yarn, 2021).

The need for new sports equipment and furniture was also raised by youth participants, including new nets and 'comfy furniture' such as 'bean bag chairs' (Participant focus group, 2021).

iii. Improvement of youth transport options

Many of the youth focus group participants requested a return to the program of a youth transport option ('Street Beat', 'Youthie bus'), to do 'drop offs' and take them home (Participant focus group, Figure 31). Providing safe transport home was also identified as a priority by several program staff and volunteers, particularly since the 'Street Beat bus has been discontinued and the police are harassing young people walking home' (After Dark staff, Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

iv. Increased active youth participant involvement and leadership

In addition to the suggestions outlined above, After Dark participants highlighted youth voice and leadership in the program as an area for improvement, with suggestions for 'more productive activities with increased youth involvement', 'a leadership team for After Dark', 'letting the kids decide' on food options, and encouraging participants to 'help run the program some nights' (Participant focus group, 2021). In response to the question about what could be improved about the After Dark program, one staff member also commented that it was 'up to the young people to decide' (Staff and volunteer survey, 2021).

'None of these children these days have really experienced, what the Youthie really was like back in the days... and how good it really did make an impact and it did make an impact...'

Indigenous community member and After Dark past participant, Community yarn, 2021

Although community members and past participants were overwhelmingly supportive of the After Dark program, when asked to discuss ways the program could be improved, there was an emerging sense of frustration that they were suggesting activities and services that used to be but were no longer provided, and a sense of sadness that support and services for young people and the Glebe community were in decline.

When is the Council going to pick up on what we need to have in this community? Because, like I said, it all comes down to suicide rates and crime. When are they gonna kick back off and say, okay, well, obviously, that was working in the past? Of course, a lot of things are not going to be working now, cause there's nothing here, there's nothing to keep going. They have After Dark here and it's like, yes, good, space for the kids to come and they love it. You know, maybe they are, but if we want to step our game up then we need to bring some of the old things back that really worked for the community and have them going again (Indigenous community member and After Dark past participant, Community yarn, 2021).

Community members also expressed a determined voice that young people needed and deserved greater support, and that it would be a great injustice for Glebe youth to 'miss out on services' that the community had access to in the past (Indigenous community member and After Dark past participant, Community yarn, 2021).

6. Key learnings and recommendations

The UTS Social Impact Team seeks the reflections and insights of the Glebe Youth Service and After Dark program leadership on this draft report in order to collaboratively inform key learnings and recommendations.

6.1 Key learnings

6.2 Recommendations

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Appendix 1

After Dark program evaluation tools: Participant postcard survey



Thank you for participating in the After Dark Youth Survey!






We care about your experience in the After Dark program. Your feedback is important and will help us to learn about and improve the program.

This survey is voluntary and will take about 5 minutes to complete. By providing your feedback to UTS you consent to the collection and use of this data for program evaluation. UTS will not, without your consent, identify you or use this information for any other purpose.

If you have any questions, please contact the Social Impact Team at the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion. You can contact Clare by sending an email to Clare.Netherton@uts.edu.au.

Thank you for completing this survey. Please place your completed survey in the box provided.

After Dark FEEDBACK

After Dark helps me to... (tick the box)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither/Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Feel part of Glebe					
Feel safer in Glebe					
Be physically healthier					
Be mentally healthier					
Know who to ask for help if I need it					
Make friends					
Feel less lonely					
Speak up and share my ideas					

After Dark in my words... (please write your answer in the box)

One word to describe my time at After Dark	
Where I would probably be if I was not at After Dark	
What I would probably be doing if I was not at After Dark	
How I would probably be feeling if I was not at After Dark	

About me... (please tick and fill in the blank)

I am	Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither <input type="checkbox"/>
At home we speak	English <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
I am	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
I am yrs old		

After Dark program evaluation tools: Participant discussion guide

Aim

The focus group aims to explore:

- I. What do youth get from attending After Dark/why they come?
- II. What do they enjoy most about After Dark?
- III. What would they change about the program?

Activity description	Approximate time
Acknowledgement of Country and Introductions Icebreaker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose to get used to the physical space, to each other and to facilitators. Each corner of the room has a different colour red, blue, yellow, and green. Participants answer questions by moving to the corner that aligns with their answer. Questions and options are also displayed on flip chat (post-it). Questions include: <i>In your down time what do you prefer to do:</i> Red - be on my phone Blue – play sport Green – hanging out with friends Yellow - other <i>If you could do anything in the future, what would you do?</i> Red - Footy player / sports person Blue – Music or Entertainment Green – Have my own business. Yellow - Other <i>What is your favourite genre of music?</i> Red - Pop Blue – Rap / Hip Hop Green – RnB Yellow - Other <i>Which food would you rather eat?</i> Red - Macca's Blue – Sushi Green – Clems Yellow - Home cooked	20 minutes
Why do you come to After Dark? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the activity template with left and right hands. On the fingers of your left hand write five reasons why you come to After Dark. Chat to the person next to you to see if your reasons are the same. Prompts? "I come to After Dark because..." 	15 minutes
What do you love most about After Dark? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the template from above In the palm of your left hand, write what you love most about After Dark. 	10 minutes
Imagine that you are in charge of After Dark (Friday and Saturday night). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On your right hand. Draw and write the activities that you would do if you were running After Dark. What would you change? Create a poster on blank A3 paper to summarise your ideas. Present to the group as a pitch. Present the best three pitches with a voucher (one per person). 	30 minutes

After Dark program evaluation tools: Participant discussion activity template



After Dark program evaluation tools: Interview schedule

Stakeholder interview introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in an interview as part of the 2021 evaluation of the Glebe Youth Service After Dark program. Your experiences and insights are extremely important to us and we are immensely grateful for your time.

The interview will take about 30 to 40 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. By providing your feedback you consent to the collection and use of this data for program administration and evaluation. We will not, without your consent, use or disclose the information you provide for any other purpose.

If you have any questions, either now or following the interview, please ask. You may contact me by email at [enter email address].

Stakeholder interview questions

About you and your connection to the After Dark program

1. Please say a little about yourself, including your current role in and connection to the Glebe community.
2. Please explain how you know about and are connected to the Glebe Youth Service After Dark program, including approximately how long you have had this connection.

About your opinion and experience of the After Dark program

3. Does the After Dark program meet the needs of young people in the Glebe community, particularly local at-risk young people and the Aboriginal community?

Interviewer prompts:

- *If yes, please say how.*
 - *Does the After Dark program identify and connect with at-risk young people? Does it also link them to services?*
 - *If no, what needs of young people in the Glebe community are not being met by the program? What could the program be doing differently to meet these?*
4. Does the After Dark program promote healthy living and wellbeing in young people?

Interviewer prompts:

- *If yes, probe for examples*
 - *Does the program provide healthy food that young people and their families would not otherwise have access to?*
 - *If no, what could the program be doing differently to promote healthy living and wellbeing in young people?*
5. Does the After Dark program promote a sense of social and/or cultural belonging?

Interviewer prompts:

- *If yes, probe for examples*
- *Does the program help young people feel connected to and proud of their culture? Feel part of and proud of their community?*
- *If no, what could the program be doing differently to promote social and cultural cohesion and belonging?*

6. Does the After Dark program influence feelings of safety in the Glebe community?

Interviewer prompts:

- *If yes, probe for examples*
- *Has the program had any impact on youth behaviour? Any impact on youth offending?*
- *If After Dark participants were not attending the program, what do you think they would be doing instead?*
- *If no, what could the program be doing differently to influence feelings of safety in the Glebe community?*

7. In your opinion and experience, what are the strengths of the After Dark program?

8. In your opinion and experience, how could the After Dark program be improved?

Please share a story about the After Dark program

9. Please think of and describe a story about, or example of, a change that you believe the After Dark program contributed to in some way. The change could be in the lives of After Dark participants and their families, or in an aspect of the Glebe community more widely.

You may have experienced or observed many changes related to the program. Please choose the change that you feel is most significant.

Additional interviewer prompts:

- *What was the change?*
- *Who was involved? What happened?*
- *Was the change connected to a specific activity or event?*
- *How do you know the change took place?*
- *Why was this change important? What difference has it made?*

After Dark program evaluation tools: Community yarn discussion guide

Yarn Guide

Does everyone know the After Dark program? Have you had much experience with the After Dark program? What's your understanding of it?

How the program supports the community:

- *Do vulnerable kids attend?*
- *Do you think that the GYS After Dark program is successful in connecting with the youth in the community that need their help, that need their support?*
- *How might it help kids to be strong and resilient?*
- *What role does providing food have in supporting young people and the community?*

Connections to culture and belonging

- *Are you able to provide any insights into the extent to which the program supports kids to develop social belonging, and also cultural belonging?*
- *Have you noticed any sort of changes in relation to social belonging and cultural belonging? Have you noticed any changes in kids that you think might be evidence of that increased sense of belonging?*

Feelings of safety in the community

- *For the young kids that are participating, do you think the program has any influence on feelings of safety in the community?*
- *Do you have a sense of what After Dark participants could possibly be doing if they weren't at the program?*

What you think of the program and what advice do you have for GYS regarding the program?

Story of Change

Think of and describe a story about, or an example of a change that you believe the After Dark program has contributed to in some way. This could be a change in the individual lives of After Dark participants and their families and also a change in the Glebe community more widely.

After Dark program evaluation tools: Past participant yarn discussion guide

Yarn Guide

Tell me what was it like to attend After Dark when you were younger?

- *Did you enjoy going to After Dark?*
- *How do you think After Dark made a difference to you when you were growing up?*

Connections to community and belonging

- *Do you believe that attending After Dark helped you to increase your sense of belonging? If yes, how?*
- *Do you think this is still the case today?*
 - *How does After Dark connect kids to community?*
 - *Culture? What place does identity and culture have?*

Safety

- *How can After Dark help kids to be strong and resilient?*
- *If you hadn't gone to After Dark, what would you have been doing?*

Things are different for kids now.

- *Do you think After Dark still has a place?*

How the program supports the community:

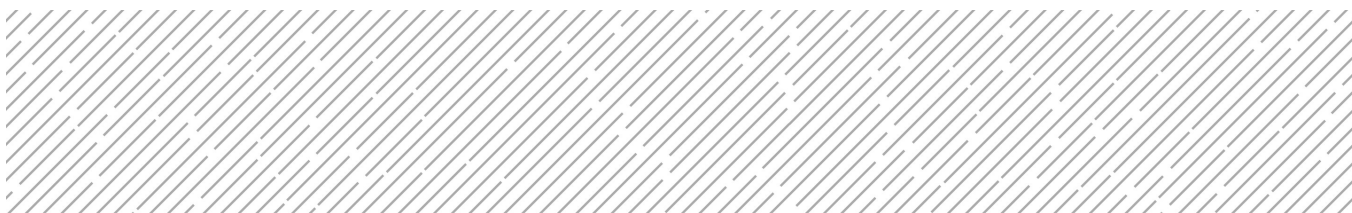
- *Do vulnerable kids attend?*
- *Do you think that the GYS After Dark program is successful in connecting with the youth in the community that need their help, that need their support?*
- *How might it help kids to be strong and resilient?*

What you think of the program and what advice do you have for GYS regarding the program?

Story of Change

Think of and describe a story about, or an example of a change that you believe the After Dark program has contributed to in some way. This could be a change in the individual lives of After Dark participants and their families and also a change in the Glebe community more widely.

After Dark program evaluation tools: Staff and volunteer survey



Centre for
Social Justice
& Inclusion

After Dark Staff and Volunteer Survey

Thank you for participating in the After Dark Staff and Volunteer Survey. We care about your experiences working in the After Dark program and are very interested in your ideas and opinions. Your responses are extremely important and will help us to learn about and improve the program. This survey is voluntary and will take about 10 minutes to complete.

By completing this survey, you consent to the collection and use of this data for the After Dark program evaluation. UTS and GYS will not, without your consent, use or disclose the information you provide for any other purpose. Any information used for the evaluation will be anonymous and deidentified.

If you have any questions, please contact the Social Impact Team at the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion. You can contact Clare by sending an email to Clare.Netherton@uts.edu.au. Thank you for completing this survey.

About the After Dark program

- * 1. Please think of one or two words to describe the After Dark program.

- * 2. Please read the following statements about the After Dark program and choose the response that best indicates what you think and feel.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The program connects with local at-risk young people in the Glebe community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program meets the needs of local at-risk young people in the Glebe community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program meets the needs of the local Aboriginal community in Glebe.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. What do you think the purpose of the After Dark program is?

4. Does After Dark achieve this purpose?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

Please say why or why not:

* 5. Please read the following statements about the After Dark program and choose the response that best indicates what you think and feel.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The program promotes healthy living and choices for young people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program improves the wellbeing of young people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program increases young people's sense of social belonging.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program increases young people's sense of cultural belonging.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program increases young people's sense of pride in their community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program increases young people's confidence to have a voice in their community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. If After Dark participants were not attending the program, where do you think they would be and what do you think they would be doing instead?

*7. Please read the following statements about the After Dark program and choose the response that best indicates what you think and feel.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The program increases feelings of safety in the Glebe community in young people specifically.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program increases feelings of safety in the Glebe community generally.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program positively influences the behaviour of young people in the Glebe community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program contributes to a decrease in youth offending in the Glebe community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. What are the strengths of the After Dark program? What works well?

9. How could the After Dark program be improved?

Please share a story about the After Dark program

10. Please describe a story about a change that you have contributed to, observed or experienced, through your work in the After Dark program. There may be many changes to choose from - big and small, positive and negative. Please choose one that stands out as being most significant. The change could be in program participants, staff and volunteers, or members of the wider Glebe community.

11. Why did you choose this change? Why do you think it is important?

About you

- * 12. Are you an After Dark program staff member or volunteer?

☐

Program staff

☐

Program volunteer

13. How would you describe your current role in the After Dark program?

- * 14. Approximately how long have you been working or volunteering for the After Dark program?

15. Are you a former participant of the After Dark program?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☐

Prefer not to say

If yes, what, if anything, did the After Dark program change for you?