



STRATEGIC PLAN

2017 - 2021



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Chair and CEO	4
Who we are	5
Our aims	6
Our values	7
Our work	8
The issues we address	9
Strategic goals and priorities	10

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND CEO

We have been responding to the needs of multicultural children, youth and young families for the past **20 years**, with independent evaluations consistently reporting that **MYSA** is a highly focussed, effective and innovative organisation.

We provide a holistic, integrated continuum of youth-specific, specialist services based on where youth are situated in the settlement process, English language proficiency, the absence or presence of family and community support systems, engagement in employment and education, risk and vulnerability, and the extent to which youth are experiencing settlement difficulties.

Our work is supported by all tiers of government, the private sector and individual members of the broader Australian public.

We engage in an ongoing process of organisational review and adjustment to ensure flexible, responsive and accessible services. As part of these activities, we have undertaken a strategic consultation and planning process to review our current work, set new priorities and focus our efforts and resources for future improvement and development. The Board of Management and CEO have developed this Strategic Plan to guide and inform our work for the next five years.



Harry Savelsberg
Chair



Tamara Stewart-Jones
CEO

WHO WE ARE

Multicultural Youth South Australia Inc (**MYSA**) is the state representative advisory, advocacy and service delivery body for multicultural youth aged 12-30 years, the only youth-specific multicultural agency in South Australia, and one of two leading youth-specific multicultural agencies in the country. MYSA is recognised locally and nationally for its leadership in multicultural youth issues.

OUR AIMS

We aim to work towards a world where all young people are equipped with the resources and opportunities to fully participate in the social, cultural, economic and political life of the community. We achieve this through:

- Raising the state and national profile of young people and the issues affecting them.
- Providing policy and program advice to state and national government decision-makers on multicultural youth issues.
- Providing supported opportunities for young people to present their views openly to key decision-makers.
- Working in partnership with other agencies to ensure that the achievements and contributions of young people are celebrated, valued and respected.
- Facilitating and encouraging strong partnerships and information exchange across and between service sectors and agencies to improve the type, nature and level of support provided to young people.
- Identifying and mobilising human and financial resources to respond to needs of young people.
- Providing meaningful opportunities for young people to contribute to our policy and service delivery work.
- Developing and building the capacity of the government and non-government sectors to respond more effectively to the needs of young people through training, resource development, joint projects and initiatives, information, advice and support.
- Engaging in an ongoing process of self-assessment and evaluation to ensure effective leadership and continuous learning and improvement.

OUR VALUES

Our core values include:

- **Leadership** – we are committed to reflecting the qualities of good leadership including vision, innovation, inspiration, adaptability, wisdom, competence, communication, self-evaluation and confidence.
- **Social justice** – we are committed to intervening in the conditions, circumstances, processes and practices that give rise to injustice, disadvantage, discrimination and oppression of multicultural young people.
- **Diversity** – we are committed to working against discrimination based on age, gender, culture, ethnicity, language, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, disability and any other aspect of diversity.
- **Empowerment** – we are committed to supporting young people and their communities to bring about their own change.
- **Professionalism** – we are committed to acting with honesty, integrity, responsiveness, transparency and accountability to maintain the trust and respect of youth, the broader community services sector, its funding providers and the general public.
- **Social responsibility** – we are committed to managing human and financial resources in an ethical and responsive manner.
- **Participation** – we are committed to ensuring that young people can meaningfully participate in decisions that affect their lives.

OUR WORK

We are involved in five key areas of work:

1. Research and policy development. We provide policy and program advice, information and support to policy and decision-makers on multicultural youth issues.
2. We are actively involved in a range of research projects as part of a broader organisational commitment to evidence-based practice and continuous service improvement. Over the last 12 years, we have partnered the three main universities in South Australia as well as universities in other states on over 20 research projects to improve understanding on the issues and needs of multicultural children, youth and young families.
3. Industry support and capacity building. We assist mainstream government and non-government organisations to become more culturally inclusive and responsive through cross-cultural training, resources, information, advice and other support.
4. Direct service delivery. We provide a wide range of specialised services, programs, and projects to youth. We currently support approximately 4000 children, youth and young families per year.
5. Community capacity building. We provide advice and support to youth and community groups for youth development and youth capacity building projects.

THE ISSUES WE ADDRESS

While young people from multicultural backgrounds demonstrate remarkable resilience, various conditions and circumstances place them at increased risk of a range of vulnerabilities that affect their wellbeing and social inclusion.

Vulnerability is the result of a complex interplay between the effects of forced displacement, resettlement in an unfamiliar host country, and the sociopolitical context of resettlement.

The experience is often one of loss and grief, family and community rupture, fragmentation and dislocation - an experience that is further compounded by the protracted poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage that generally continues long after migration.

Despite their increased risk of vulnerability, young people from multicultural backgrounds are the least likely to access community services due to a range of individual, cultural and service related barriers. Of these barriers, a system-wide lack of cultural awareness and competence, coupled with a general lack of cross-cultural training and support, features most prominently and not only prevents access to services but seriously affects the quality of services that are received.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Based on our consultations with young people, staff and other key stakeholders in the government, academic, community and private sectors, we have identified the following four strategic goals and priorities to guide our work over the next five years.

Strategic Goal 1

MYSA will broaden its income base to ensure long-term organisational growth, development and sustainability. The broader political environment impacts on the prioritisation of multicultural youth issues in relation to other social issues, the funding available, and the conditions under which programs can be delivered. With a changeable political environment, MYSA will need to become less reliant on government funding and pursue new possibilities and opportunities for growth, development and sustainability.

Strategies

- A.** Develop an income-generating, self-sustaining social enterprise.
- B.** Pursue new collaborations and partnerships across sectors, with a particular focus on the private and philanthropic sectors.
- C.** Engage new sponsors, backers and supporters through advocacy, education and relationship-building.
- D.** Expand the organisation's current fee-for-service program for the provision of cultural advice, training and resources to mainstream government and non-government service providers.

Strategic Goal 2

MYSA will strengthen its commitment to Collective Impact approaches in order to more effectively meet the needs of youth and young families with high and complex needs. Aligning resources and strengthening collaboration will improve MYSA's decision-making, make more efficient use of limited resources, enhance information exchange and increase organisational capacity to address complex youth problems which cross multiple sectors and systems.

Strategies

- A.** Equip organisational leaders with exceptional system and relationship leadership skills.
- B.** Build an organisational culture which values and fosters collaboration and partnership within and outside current networks.
- C.** Develop new strategic partnerships with the government, community, academic, private and philanthropic sectors.

Strategic Goal 3

MYSA will direct its energies more intensively to support young families facing multiple vulnerabilities. Many young parents, particularly teenage and single female parents, are disengaged from family, community, education and employment and have few connections to community services and supports. Many come from socioeconomically deprived families and families under significant stress, which is accentuated in the early years of settlement. They need improved access to age-appropriate and culturally responsive early intervention and prevention programs.

Strategies

- A.** Work in partnership with policy and decision-makers to develop early intervention and prevention programs to address the complex challenges facing young families post-settlement.

- B.** Pursue new partnerships with mainstream family services to review and adjust their programs to support parenting knowledge, competencies and capabilities among young parents.
- C.** Build the skills and capacity of staff to work more intensively with young families, particularly those with high and complex needs.

Strategic Goal 4

MYSA will strengthen its capacity to effectively respond to a rapidly changing policy and service delivery environment to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to the needs of multicultural children, youth and young families. A dynamic and changeable political environment requires ongoing organisational review, adjustment and diversification to identify new ways of working and align the organisation for the future.

Strategies

- A.** Develop the capacity of organisational leaders to identify and respond to environmental change and complexity through ongoing review, planning, monitoring, and evaluation.
- B.** Build the skills and capacity of staff to work more effectively in a complex and changeable practice context.
- C.** Develop new partnerships and collaborations with stakeholders across sectors to support fresh and innovative ways of working.



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