

Youth Affairs



Access, Innovation and Excellence: State Budget 2002



Minister's Message

The Bracks Government believes that young people should be valued, provided with social, educational, cultural and employment opportunities; and have every opportunity to live healthy satisfying lives, and realise their full potential.

The 2002–2003 Budget builds on the Government's commitment to achieve this goal, and includes more than \$8 million over four years to create additional opportunities for young people across Victoria.

The Government is committed to working with Victoria's young people, and the communities and organisations with which they are involved, to ensure they have the best opportunity to achieve their personal goals and contribute to a more caring Victorian community.

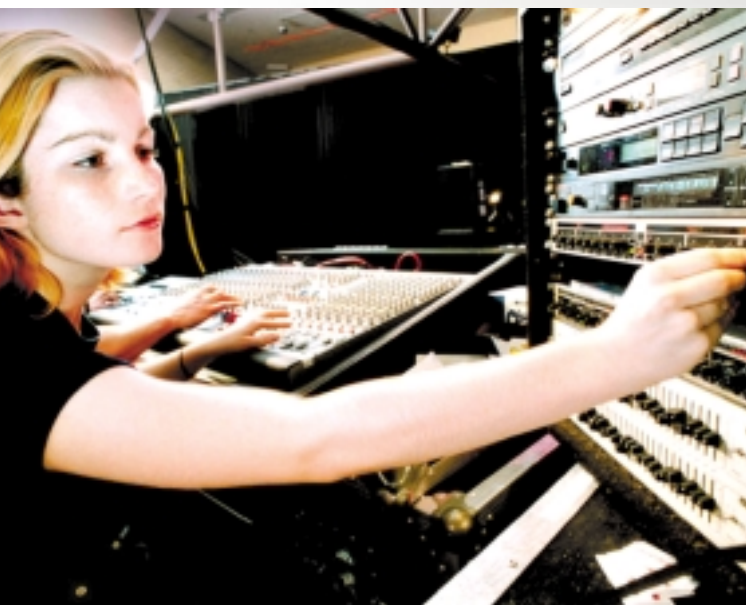
The Bracks Government is taking a 'whole of government' approach to help make this happen, from providing more and better educational options for young people, to providing the necessary health and social support networks.

By initiating Youth Round Tables, the Bracks Government is listening to the voice of young people. Through Regional Youth Committees and the reinstatement of support for peak bodies of youth organisations, the Government is also assisting those who work with young people.

Events such as National Youth Week and the widely endorsed FReeZA program continue to celebrate the creative contributions of young Victorians.

All of these initiatives underpin the Bracks Government's vision of an innovative, caring community that encourages the participation of all Victorians and, in particular, recognises how important our young people are to Victoria.

Monica Gould
Minister for Education Services and Youth Affairs



FreeZA Program Receives Budget Boost

The 2002–2003 State Budget has allocated \$8 million over four years for the continuation of the successful FReeZA program.

FReeZA, a partnership initiative with local government and communities, supports drug and alcohol-free live-band gigs and dance events. Importantly, they are organised by young people for young people.

The program has been created for young people aged 12 to 25, specifically targeting the 14–18 age group.

Last year FReeZA committees ran over 480 events, attended by more than 90 000 young people in over 100 venues right across Victoria.

Rural communities in particular benefit from the operation of FReeZA as it provides entertainment and skills development opportunities for young people that may not be otherwise available.

Continued Support for Ongoing Programs

The Bracks Government, through the Office for Youth, is supporting the development of Victoria's young people through a number of innovative and exciting programs.

Victorian Youth Development Program

The Government continues to support the Victorian Youth Development Program, which is delivered through secondary colleges across the state. Last year more than 6000 students in 178 schools participated in the program.

Youth Services Program

The Office for Youth will now coordinate a number of exciting initiatives, with \$3.9 million in funding for Youth Services Programs. This funding has been transferred from the Department of Human Services.

The Youth Services Program provides grants to community organisations that provide locally developed, practical programs to support and develop young people within their communities.