



Cadet Youth Development Framework

DOCUMENT 1



Cadet Youth Development Framework

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Cadet Youth Development Framework

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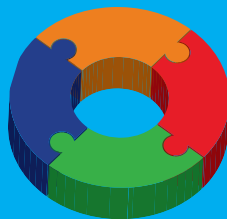
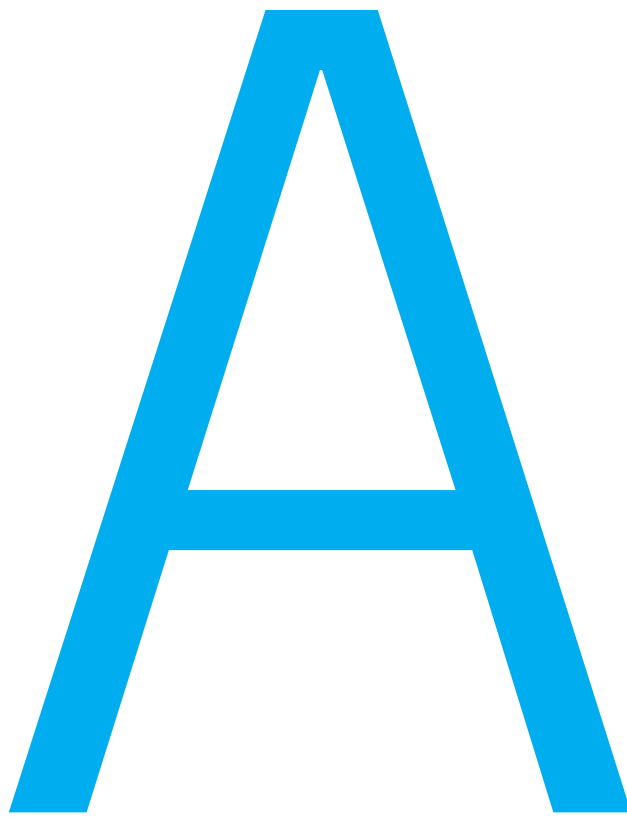
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Executive summary

Section



Cadet Youth Development Framework

Executive summary

Introducing this document

This document sets out a Cadet Youth Development Framework (CYDF). It recognises that a youth development framework is part of a strategic approach to promoting youth development for the Australian Defence Force Cadet organisations: the Australian Navy Cadets, the Australian Army Cadets and the Australian Air Force Cadets. The Department of Defence, through the ADF Cadets, is committed to engaging with youth development at a systems level.

The CYDF was initiated by the Department of Defence and developed by the Youth Research Centre at The University of Melbourne.

The first phase involved the development of a Generic Youth Development Framework, drawing on extensive literature research on best practice in youth development across a range of organisations. The decision to proceed to developing a Cadet Youth Development Framework was a shared decision by the heads of the three Cadet organisations. The second stage drew on the GYDF to identify the unique youth development footprint of the ADF cadets to develop a Cadet Youth Development Framework (CYDF) designed to reflect the distinctive program ADF Cadets offers to Australian youth, mindful of its particular delivery and governance requirements

This second stage of the research involved extensive consultation across the three Cadet organisations, including research through 40 focus group interviews with groups of eight cadets or Cadet staff, an extensive survey with 2718 cadets, 1055 staff and 716 parents, consultations with school principals and with personnel.

Three Cadet Youth Development Framework Documents contribute to the Department of Defence's strategic approach to youth development. *Document 1: Cadet Youth Development Framework*, identifies the values, principles, and practices of the Cadet Youth Development Framework. It draws on a strong evidence base that illustrates the interconnections between cadet experiences, staff experiences and organisational processes. *Document 2: Cadet Youth Development Framework Toolkit*, presents indicators of good practice in the form of a toolkit for benchmarking and strategic development. *Document 3: Cadet Youth Development Framework Implications*, presents observations and recommendations about strengths and growth areas in youth development in the ADF Cadet organisations.

The examples of good practice are relevant to cadets, to cadet staff and volunteers and to the Cadet organisations. The discussion of good practice elements in cadets addresses each of these in an integrated way through 'portraits' featuring the experiences of cadets and cadet staff, as well as organisational features.

Aims

This document is intended to be used as a resource to inform good practice in the ADF Cadet organisations.

The rapidly changing social, technological and economic landscape that confronts young people in the 21st Century creates new opportunities for the ADF Cadet organisations to build on their strengths and to develop growth areas in youth development.

This document aims to support the Cadet organisations to make the most of their opportunities and strengths, and to engage in reflection that will enhance good practice.

The ADF Cadet organisations already make a significant, positive contribution to key areas of youth development:

→ **Experiencing teamwork:** One of the most significant features of the current generations of young people is their belief that they alone are responsible for where they end up in life. In contemporary societies, young people can learn to be expert 'self managers', but many are missing out on the experiences and opportunities to practice doing things as a team, and achieving goals together with peers and across generations. Cadet organisations rate very highly on teamwork.

→ **Leadership:** In contemporary societies, the period of 'youth' is becoming longer. For young people this can often feel like being in the status of student or 'consumer' and labelled not-quite citizen, not quite competent, not able to contribute for many years. Ironically, communities need young people's contributions as much as they ever did. In this context, opportunities to participate in real roles that are recognised and skilled enable cadets to exercise leadership and to participate in a meaningful way in Cadet organisations.

→ **Belonging:** Belonging to something bigger than oneself is important to young people. One of the most significant challenges for teenagers, in particular, is figuring out who are their people and where they belong. Enduring experiences of belonging in community are becoming harder to find, and in this context, community-based groups and connections are extremely important. A majority of cadets report that they feel they belong in their unit.

→ **Understanding the right thing to do:** Social change brings uncertainty in many young people's lives. In this context, significant numbers of young people are looking for some kind of 'moral compass', or a set of understandings about how to 'do the right thing'. Cadet organisations rate highly on giving young people a sense of the right thing to do.

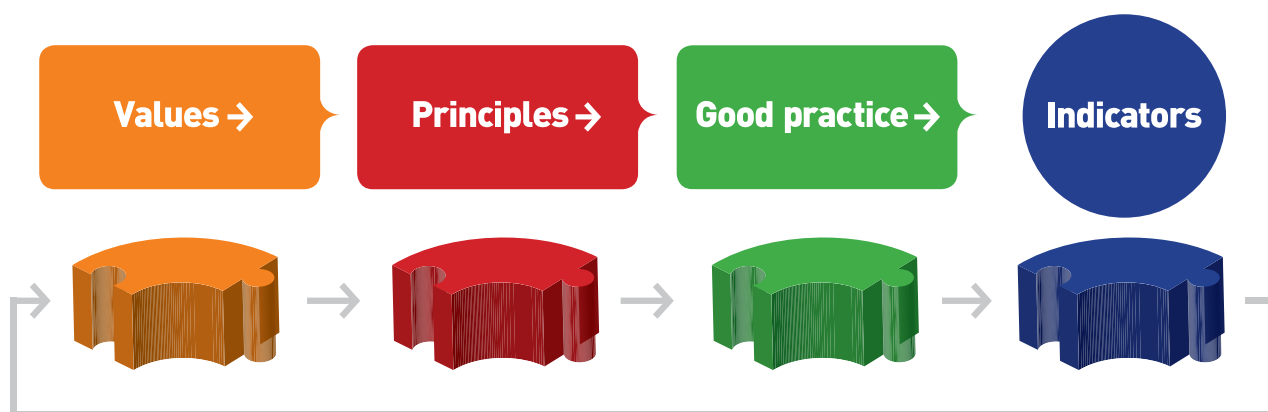
Framework at a glance

The framework identifies overarching **values**, the **principles** informing practice that follow from these values and examples of **good practice**.

- The distinctive but overlapping **values** of the ADF Cadet organisations reveal two value clusters:
 - Valuing people
 - Doing things of value
- The ADF Cadet youth development **principles** that derive from these values are:
 - Recognising strengths
 - Looking out for each other
 - Building the team
 - Learning and growing from experience and reflection
 - Engaging in the real world
 - Being active citizens

The CYDF identifies **practices** that exemplify these principles. It also provides a set of **indicators** for each of the examples of good practice. In *Document 2: Cadet Youth Development Framework Toolkit*, these indicators are presented in the form of checklists to be used in evaluation, benchmarking and strategic planning.

There is a fold-out flow chart of the Cadet Youth Development Framework at the back of this document. Use this flow chart to assist your understanding of the Cadet Youth Development Framework as you read through this document.



Key messages

The ADF Cadet organisations have overlapping values and achieve similar outcomes for cadets, but have distinctive and separate approaches and organisational cultures. The CYDF enables each organisation to identify its strategic priorities, strengths and areas of growth.

The CYDF has been tailored to meet the needs of the three Cadet organisations. Although there is a high degree of compatibility between the Generic Youth Development Framework and the practices of each of the Cadet organisations, the CYDF focuses on the unique contribution of the ADF Cadet organisations to youth development.

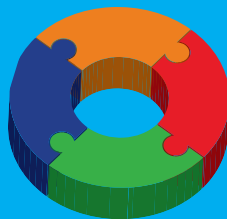
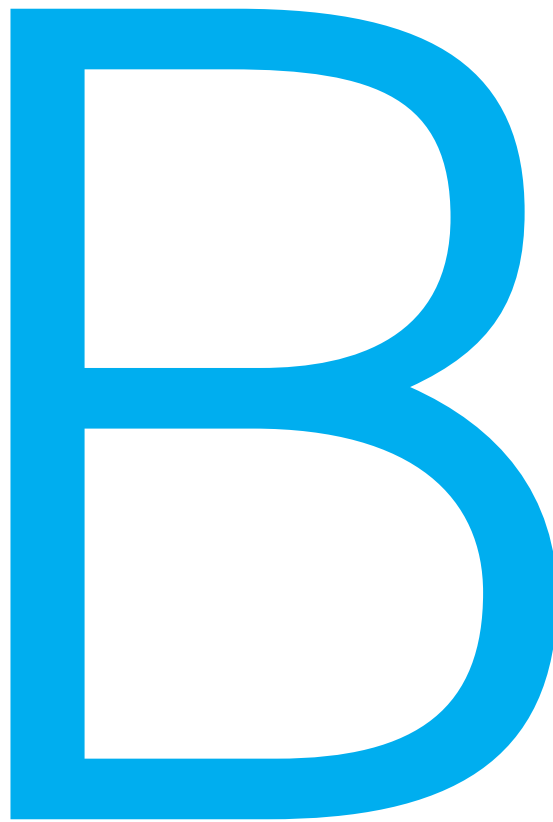
The ADF Cadet organisations are making a significant contribution to youth development.

The research informing the CYDF drew on the indicators of good practice to measure cadet and staff experiences and attitudes. The findings revealed new insights into youth participation that are relevant to the wider youth sector. The clear roles that cadets occupy within their units give them opportunities to participate in their organisation because they have responsibilities and opportunities to make decisions. Cadets feel valued within the Cadet organisation structure in contrast to how they feel in other organisations.

The ADF Cadet organisations are uniquely positioned to make a contribution to youth development in the areas of leadership, teamwork, belonging and knowing the right thing to do.

Overview

Section



Cadet Youth Development Framework

What is Youth Development?

Youth development builds the personal strengths that create positive attributes in young people. It is development in the sense of allowing for the growth of identity and sense of self in relation to the world. Youth development promotes personal development competencies and talents through age and culturally appropriate strategies. It builds young people's sense of belonging and connection in communities and, by supporting young people's contribution to their communities, it enhances cross-generational and cross-cultural communication. Youth development is a process that benefits all young people, whatever their starting points or circumstances. It is an ongoing process, which is strengthened by sustained and integrated application of good practice principles¹.

Youth development requires an integrated approach across physical, social, emotional, spiritual and mental dimensions².

A strategic approach

A Youth Development Framework plays an important part in an organisation's strategic approach to promoting youth development.

To optimise its use, a Youth Development Framework would be integrated in an organisation's meta-strategy. A meta-strategy is an approach (or methodology) used to implement organisational goals and plans. It is reflected in the way the organisation's business is done at every level. A meta-strategy makes visible the areas of responsibility for implementing goals and ensures that the whole of the organisation takes ownership for the successful implementation of plans.

The Department of Defence, through the ADF Cadets, is committed to engaging with youth development at a systems level.

The three Cadet Youth Development Framework Documents contribute to the Department of Defence's strategic approach to youth development. Document 1, the Cadet Youth Development Framework, identifies values, principles and practices, drawing on a strong evidence base illustrating the interconnections between cadet experiences, staff experiences and organisational processes. Document 2, the Cadet Youth Development Toolkit, presents the indicators of good practice in the form of a toolkit for benchmarking and strategic development. Document 3, the Cadet Youth Development Framework Implications, presents observations about strengths and growth areas in youth development in the ADF Cadet organisations.

Methodology

The Cadet Youth Development Framework was initiated by the Department of Defence and was developed by the Youth Research Centre at The University of Melbourne, in close consultation with Cadet organisations, personnel and cadets.

Cadet, Reserve & Employer Support Division (CRES D) initiated this work. CRES D is part of the Vice Chief of the Defence Force (VCDF) Group in the Department of Defence. CRES D engaged The University of Melbourne as Research Partners to develop this work.

The decision to proceed to developing a Cadet Youth Development Framework was a shared decision by the heads of the three Cadet organisations. This product, the Cadet Youth Development Framework, is the result of a consultative research process involving multiple stages.

The first stage involved the development of a *Generic Youth Development Framework (GYDF)*. This document was designed to be a credible good-practice standard against which any positive youth development program, conducted essentially by volunteers, can be compared. It recognises that many organisations, including non-government organisations, education systems, the Department of Defence and private institutions, contribute to youth development and that some have done so for many decades.

Evidence of good practice developed by these organisations, as well as Australian and international research and discussion documents was used to build a strengths-based approach to youth development. The GYDF was also built from a synthesis of available literature on youth development. Readers familiar with youth development will find much that confirms current practice.

Section B: Overview

The GYDF is available as a stand-alone resource to organisations in the youth sector. Two elements of the GYDF are designed to assist organisations to assess and learn about their own programs, and to assist with planning. These are (a) a synthesis of findings on governance, curriculum and program design, program leader requirements, inclusion, community involvement and continuous improvement; and (b) a set of indicators of good practice.

The second stage drew on the GYDF to identify the unique youth development footprint of the ADF Cadets and to develop a *Cadet Youth Development Framework (CYDF)* designed to reflect the distinctive program ADF Cadets offers to Australian youth, mindful of its particular delivery and governance requirements.

This second stage of the research involved extensive consultation across the three Cadet organisations, including research through 40 focus group interviews with groups of eight cadets or cadet staff, an extensive survey with 2718 cadets, 1055 staff and 716 parents, consultations with school principals and with Defence personnel.

These research findings have been used to tailor a CYDF that builds on the distinctive strengths of the three Cadet organisations to build on new areas of growth and to achieve their aspirational targets.

Section B: Overview

Key messages from the second stage:

- Fieldwork affirmed a strong resonance between the Generic Youth Development Framework values, principles, and elements of good practice within each of the ADF Cadet organisations.
- The ADF Cadet organisations have overlapping values and achieve similar outcomes for cadets, but have distinctive and separate approaches and organisational cultures.
- Consultations and research with cadets, cadet staff and Cadet organisations have *offered new insights* about the nature and process of youth development, thus potentially informing sector understandings of youth development (see section C, in this document).
- Three products have emerged from this process:
 - **Document 1: the Cadet Youth Development Framework**
 - **Document 2: the Cadet Youth Development Framework Toolkit**
 - **Document 3: the Cadet Youth Development Framework Implications**



Youth Development in the Australian Defence Force Cadets

The Australian Defence Force Cadets is made up of three organisations. The Australian Navy Cadets (ANC), the Australian Army Cadets (AAC) and the Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC) have distinctive, separate traditions. They conduct their youth development programs in military-like environments, and have units located in diverse settings across every state and territory in Australia³.

“

You'll learn to be confident, self-sufficient, and willing to 'have a go'. It is your opportunity to discover new challenges and have some unbelievable fun. You will also learn to lead others and work as a member of a team. Cadet life is physical but not risky – you won't have to be a superwoman or superman. Qualified and experienced cadet officers will instruct you⁴.

”



Section B: Overview

The ADF Cadet organisations are community-based youth development deliverers focussed on Defence customs, traditions and values. Cadets learn leadership, team building and survival skills to equip them for life⁵.

Australian Defence Force Cadets (ADF Cadets) is a collective term used to describe the Australian Navy Cadets (ANC), Australian Army Cadets (AAC), and Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC) and as such is not an organisation in itself. Service Chiefs have administrative responsibility for their respective Cadet organisations subject to the direction of the Minister, or, the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF), or, the Vice Chief of the Defence Force (VCDF), acting as the CDF's delegate. Each organisation provides a Service-specific development program for young people aged from 12 years, 6 months (ANC & AAC) or 13 years (AAFC) to 19 years, which is conducted primarily by volunteer cadet staff.

ADF Cadets comprises (December 2011 figures)⁶ 23,628 cadets and 2,549 cadet staff in 448 cadet units in every State and Territory of Australia.

As a result of a review⁷ in 2008, the following common Purpose, Goals and Inclusivity Statement exists for the three Cadet organisations (with some minor Service-specific modifications)⁸.

Purpose

The Australian Defence Force Cadet organisations offer personal development programs for young people, conducted by the Australian Defence Force in cooperation with the community. This benefits the nation by developing an individual's capacity to contribute to society, fostering an interest in Defence Force activities, and developing ongoing support for Defence.

Goals

Conduct a creative personal development program in a military environment that:

- extends individuals beyond their self-imposed limits,
- develops an understanding of the balance between personal freedoms and choice and the responsibilities that they bring,
- promotes self-reliance, self-esteem and self-discipline, and
- develops and recognises a broad range of skills, including leadership and teamwork.

Contribute to social development by:

- encouraging pride in self, community and nation,
- equipping young people to be better citizens,
- developing work and life skills, and
- providing a supportive and safe environment.

Contribute to the development of the ADF through:

- cooperation with the community,
- enhancing Defence's reputation in the community,
- maintaining Service customs traditions and values,
- understanding what Defence does, and
- demonstrating a return on the Defence Organisation's investment by promoting career opportunities within Defence.

Inclusivity statement⁹

ADF Cadets members and staff are drawn from a diverse range of unique backgrounds and experiences. All are committed to providing and enjoying a positive and safe youth development experience, respecting the value and dignity of all people, and recognising the particular rights and needs of young people.

ADF Cadet organisations aim to be inclusive of all, including those with disabilities, health conditions and allergies. All reasonable steps will be taken to include any person whose individual circumstances may necessitate special consideration in cadet activities, provided such steps do not jeopardise the safety or cadet experience of others.

Once certain age, citizenship, medical management and parental support requirements are met, young people will have the opportunity to join one of the three Cadet organisations: Australian Navy Cadets, Australian Army Cadets or Australian Air Force Cadets.



The strength profile for youth development in the ADF Cadets

Young people in all Cadet organisations highlight the following elements of their ADF Cadet experience as being most important:

1. 'Cadets helps me to develop teamwork skills'
2. 'Cadets helps me to show leadership'
3. 'I feel I belong in Cadets'
4. 'Cadets helps me to know what is the right thing to do and to behave that way'

The cadet survey, conducted by the Youth Research Centre at the University of Melbourne shows that for the young people in the program, these are the most frequently experienced elements of being a cadet (in each of the Cadet organisations).

A survey of cadet staff found that staff and volunteers agree that these are the four most frequently experienced elements.

Youth research shows that in a contemporary world, the elements identified by cadets and cadet staff are essential to positive youth development:

Experiences of teamwork: One of the most significant features of the current generations of young people is their belief that they alone are responsible for where they end up in life. In contemporary societies, young people can learn to be expert 'self managers', but many are missing out on the experiences and opportunities to practice doing things as a team, and to achieve goals together with peers and across generations.

Opportunities to show leadership: In contemporary societies, the period of 'youth' is becoming longer. For young people this can often feel like being in the status of student or 'consumer' and labelled not-quite citizen, not quite competent, not able to contribute for many years. Ironically, communities need young people's contributions as much as they ever did. In this context, opportunities for real roles, recognised and skilled roles, in which they can actively contribute to their communities are becoming increasingly important.

Belonging: Belonging to something bigger than oneself is important to young people. One of the most significant challenges for teenagers, in particular, is figuring out who are their people and where they belong. Enduring experiences of belonging in community are becoming harder to find, and in this context, community-based groups and connections are extremely important.

Understanding the right thing to do: In a rapidly changing world, research shows that uncertainty increasingly surrounds most decisions in young people's lives. In this context, significant numbers of young people are looking for some kind of 'moral compass', or a set of understandings about how to 'get it right'.



Youth Development in the Australian Navy Cadets

“

If you are into adventure, you'll get as much as you can handle as an Australian Navy Cadet. You'll get to go sailing, hiking, canoeing, and camping. Plus you'll learn everything about seamanship, from navigational training to Naval signals and communication. You may even get to participate in a sea trip in one of the Navy's ships, sail on the Young Endeavour or travel interstate or overseas. As well as the fun and games, you'll learn first aid and pass muster in parade training.”¹⁰

”

There are 2331 Cadets in 90 Navy Cadet Training Ships (cadet units) across Australia¹¹.

Philosophy^{12, 13}

While the Australian Navy Cadets (ANC) are not part of the Australian Defence Force, as part of the Navy family ANC has a significant role to play in linking the Australian community to the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). More often than not the ANC is the only uniformed presence in its local community, and Cadets provide a positive focus on the RAN in the eyes of the public¹⁴.

Section B: Overview

ANC values echo the values of the RAN. Values are a source of strength; they are a source of moral courage to take action. These values are:

- Honour – Honour is the fundamental value on which the ANC's and each person's reputation depends. To demonstrate honour demands honesty, courage, integrity and loyalty and to consistently behave in a way that is becoming and worthwhile.
- Honesty – Honesty is always being truthful, knowing and doing what is right for the ANC and ourselves.
- Courage – Courage is the strength of character to do what is right in the face of personal adversity, danger or threat.
- Integrity – Integrity is the display of truth, honesty and fairness that gains respect and trust from others.
- Loyalty – Loyalty is being committed to each other and to our duty of service to Australia.

These guide behaviour, how people treat each other, and define what is important.

Youth Development approach

The ANC guiding principles are:

- Justice – Encompasses the fair treatment of individuals, the application of due process, impartial decision-making, non-discriminatory actions and equitable outcomes. Power and authority are applied for the common good.
- Respect – Recognises and defends the rights of others. That is, treat others with respect and do not abuse, exploit or discriminate against them; and
- Responsible care – Based on the primary moral obligation of doing good, rather than harm, and the concept of responsible stewardship. People recognise their responsibilities towards others and contribute to the wellbeing of others and to the common social good.

In units across Australia, sponsored by the Royal Australian Navy, over 2,800 staff and cadets learn about sailing and seamanship, develop leadership skills and learn how to communicate effectively. They develop confidence, pride and self-discipline whilst having fun and making loads of new friends along the way.

Cadets reflect Navy's strong commitment to the Australian community and thousands of young Australians have improved their lives by learning citizenship through seamanship as Australian Navy Cadets. Many have progressed to successful careers in the Royal Australian Navy or made significant contributions to their civilian communities in later life¹⁵.

Many units are in isolated communities with limited youth facilities and others assist disadvantaged young people. Consequently, the ANC plays a significant community support role and is held in high regard¹⁶.

Activities

Cadets meet for a few hours each week during school terms, conduct one weekend activity per month, and at least one annual seven-day camp. The weekly commitment involves drill and ceremonial, teaching and activities.¹⁷

Cadet curriculum

Principles of cadet training include: youth focus; military orientation; equity; centralised direction – decentralised implementation; and flexibility¹⁸. The organisation provides the criteria and structure for units, who teach to these and have discretion in how to implement training. Inputs are accompanied by action-based learning. Each cadet receives a task book, in which they track their activity and learning against core elements. Meanwhile, annual camps provide training on a range of week-long activity based courses and qualifications.

The foci and necessary requirements for cadet learning evolve throughout cadet life. For example, core elements which must be learned to qualify for Cadet Seaman include introduction to the unit, emergency procedures, chain of command, unarmed drill at the halt and on the march, living in communal harmony, ANC ranks and badges, swim test, cadet uniforms, grooming and personal presentation, saluting, duty personnel, orders, procedures and routines, ANC colours and ensigns, sea terms, naval jargon and expression, and knots. The core elements for higher qualifications build on these areas, adding detail, structural knowledge, and elements of leadership and duty of care .

The ANC operates on a chain of command with a rank system similar to that of the RAN. Each rank is attained by fulfilling a series of promotional requirements through the course of training. All new cadets are 'Recruits'. The general promotion pattern is: Seaman, Able Seaman, Leading Seaman, Petty Officer, Chief Petty Officer then Warrant Officer. Once a cadet has achieved the rank of Petty Officer they may be considered for selection to a Cadet Midshipman's course¹⁹.

Staff development

The Officers and Instructors appointed for voluntary duty by the Australian Defence Force Cadets are selected for their suitability for youth leadership and commitment to undertaking the training programs. Staff are required to attend training courses across a range of topics, including work health and safety, first aid and youth development. Staff also have access to a range of short courses and to promotions opportunities²⁰.



The strength profile for youth development in the Australian Navy Cadets

Australian Navy Cadets say:

1. 'I feel like I belong in Cadets'
2. 'Cadets helps me to develop teamwork skills'
3. 'Cadets helps me to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way'
4. 'Cadets helps me to feel safe and supported to take appropriate risks'
5. 'Cadets helps me to show leadership'

Of all the experiences they have been asked about in the CYDF survey, the Australian Navy Cadets say the above items occur most often for them in their program (and in that order).

From a list of 17 items, the ANC cadets also identify these program characteristics are among the most important to them. The ANC cadets identify 'belonging' as the most important to them, followed by 'working together as a team'. They look forward most to the practical activities they do at Cadets.

ANC staff support what the cadets say. Staff say :

1. 'Cadets helps young people show leadership'
2. 'Cadets helps young people to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way'
3. 'Young people in Cadets are part of a supportive group that works well together'
4. 'Young people in Cadets work as a team to achieve their goals'
5. 'Cadets recognises diversity within the group and community'

So in addition to what the cadets say, ANC staff identify the importance of an additional area of strength in 'welcoming diversity'. This idea is supported by cadets, through the personal stories many tell in their focus group consultations.

Parental data further reinforce the messages in the cadets and Cadet staff data. Parents and guardians highlight the following strengths: 'My child feels like they belong in Cadets'; 'Cadets helps my child to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way'; and 'my child achieves goals in Cadets working as a team member'.

In addition, ANC parents say 'Cadets helps my child to feel safe and supported to take appropriate risks', and 'Cadets includes practical activities that make a difference'.



Youth Development in the Australian Army Cadets

“

In the Australian Army Cadets, you get to go camping, abseiling, boating and learn to properly use firearms. Apart from getting involved in all kinds of action and adventures, you'll also make heaps of new friends. Joining the Army Cadets is your chance to experience a really awesome time by getting into some adventurous activities conducted in a military setting. You'll learn basic skills like bush survival, first aid and fieldcraft, and heaps more. Activities include drill, ceremonial parades, roping and rappelling, watermanship, use of Service firearms, navigation, living in the field and first aid²¹.

”

There are 14,886 Army cadets based in 220 units around Australia²².

Philosophy²³

The AAC is a leading national youth development organisation, with the character and values of the Australian Army, founded on a strong community partnership, fostering and supporting an ongoing interest in the Australian Army.

Section B: Overview

The AAC is a personal development program for young people, conducted by the Australian Army in cooperation with the community, which is designed to benefit the nation by developing the individual, their community and the Australian Army.

The AAC adopts the values of the Australian Army – Courage, Initiative and Teamwork – to empower youth to achieve their potential.

A centre of gravity is the primary source of moral or physical strength, power and resistance, a critical capability that allows an entity to act or accomplish a task or purpose. 'The Centre of Gravity' for the AAC is the ongoing support from the people of the Australian community, without which the AAC loses its source of cadets and adult staff, sources of funding for Cadet units and source of Government will for the program.

Youth development approach

Philosophy – The AAC optimally achieves the development of youth through:

- their ongoing and regular participation in a continuum of activities and experiences;
- a military-style hierarchical structure and environment (including the adoption of military uniforms, titles, ranks, customs and traditions);
- sequentially building their skills through the stages of adolescence in their transition to adulthood (such as providing graduated leadership opportunities and using the more experienced cadets in the planning and conduct of activities and in senior advisory and representational roles).

Activities²⁴

Cadets usually meet once a week after school at their Army unit, or on weekends. School-based units do their training during school time and/or on weekends. Here they learn basic skills like bush survival, first aid and fieldcraft. Activities and courses include: drill, ceremonial parades, roping and rappelling, watermanship, use of Service firearms, navigation, living in the field and first aid.

Additionally, cadets can gain field and bush experience, undertake adventure training, and engage in marksmanship awards or qualify for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. As an Army cadet, individuals also visit Army camps, attend annual camps and participate in competitions during the school holidays.

Cadet curriculum²⁵

AAC activities are conducted in formal and non-formal settings. Cadet Activity Manual(s) (CAM) set out the facilitation models adopted by the AAC to better engage cadets in the learning experience.

At all levels, cadets are taught drill, fieldcraft, first aid, navigation, radio communications (Ratel), aviation, leadership, marksmanship.

Alongside the regular training which takes place in units, tiered training happens at annual camps²⁶. The tiered training structure is used to maximise the benefits to cadets, and to ensure that annual camps meet the mission and goals set by the AAC. Tiered training is based on the following groupings: Tier 1A is recruit training; Tier 1B involves first year Cadets; Tier 2 involves all cadets who do not fit into Tier 1A, 1B or 3; Tier 3 involves those cadets who have attained the age of 16 years, have completed cadet recruit training, have attended at least one annual camp, and have been a cadet for longer than 12 months. These tiers may be conducted separately and/or together.

Section B: Overview

Ranks²⁷ are available as cadets attend and pass specific courses, for example, Junior Leaders Course, Senior Leaders Course and the Cadet Under Officer/Warrant Officer's Course. The ranks through which cadets can be promoted are: Cadet, Cadet Lance Corporal, Cadet Corporal, Cadet Sergeant, Cadet Staff Sergeant, Cadet Warrant Officer and Cadet Under Officer.

Staff development²⁸

Army Cadet staff training is articulated in the Army Cadet Staff Training Package. Four core areas are prioritised: Army Cadet staff roles and responsibilities, health and safety, the military environment, youth management and development.



The strength profile for youth development in the Australian Army Cadets

Australian Army Cadets say:

1. 'Cadets helps me to develop teamwork skills'
2. 'Cadets helps me to show leadership'
3. 'I feel like I belong in Cadets'
4. 'Cadets helps me to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way'
5. 'We work as a team to achieve our goals'

Of all the experiences they have been asked about in the CYDF survey, the Australian Army Cadets say the above items occur most often for them in their program (and in that order).

From a list of 17 items, the cadets identify that these particular program characteristics are the most important to them. 'Leadership' and 'teamwork' are equally identified as the most important, by this group. They look forward most to the practical activities they do at Cadets.

AAC staff echo what the cadets say. Staff say:

1. 'Cadets helps young people show leadership'
2. 'Cadets helps young people to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way'
3. 'Cadets work as a team to achieve their goals'
4. 'Young people in Cadets are part of a supportive group that works well together'
5. 'Cadets involves practical activities which make a difference'

AAC staff identify these as the most important areas also. This AAC staff input reinforces the messages from the cadets. The element of 'belonging' is picked up in the staff reportage of a supportive group. In addition to what the young people identify, staff highlight the strength of practical activities which make a difference.

Parental data further reinforce the messages from cadets and staff. Parents and guardians of Australian Army Cadets highlight the following strengths: 'My child feels like they belong in Cadets'; 'Cadets helps my child to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way'; 'my child achieves goals in Cadets working as a team member' and 'Cadets includes practical activities that make a difference'.

In addition, AAC parents say 'Cadets develops resilience among its young participants.'



Youth Development in the Australian Air Force Cadets

“

As an Air force Cadet you'll learn about aviation through flying, gliding, aerospace studies, communications and navigation, air traffic control, aeromodelling, aircraft engineering, orienteering and map reading. Most Air Force Cadet Squadrons meet for around three hours one evening each week during school terms. During the school holiday you can also go on field camps and other specialist courses conducted at Air Force bases²⁹.

”

AAFC has a total strength of 7862 cadets and 1122 officers and instructors, in 138 units (Air Force Cadet Squadrons) across the country. There are eight operational wings located in each state and territory^{30, 31}.

Philosophy³²

The principal role of the Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC) is to train and develop its younger members – cadets – aged between 13 and 20 years. The AAFC is a youth training and development organisation set in a military and aviation environment which receives its support from both the community and the Commonwealth through the RAAF.

Section B: Overview

The AAFC operates within a military-like framework, supported and administered by the Australian Air Force³³. Core activities of AAFC involve developing confidence, self-discipline and leadership skills of youth. AAFC emphasises civic values and service to the community. It is staffed by Officers and Instructors of Cadets, a dedicated group of volunteers drawn from all sections of the community.

The core values of the AAFC are Honour, Honesty, Courage, Integrity, Loyalty, Teamwork and Citizenship³⁴

Youth Development approach

Cadets of the AAFC organisation are understood to be valuable members of the community who make significant contributions to community life. Further, cadets' participation in the activities and operation of their Squadron provides one of the more enduring environments in which cadets can develop as members of the community in a tangible and practical sense. Cadets' participation in decision-making provides opportunities for them to influence or 'have their say' on issues of importance to them. Getting involved also means cadets will apply new organisational and leadership skills learnt through their involvement in the AAFC and acquired on promotion courses³⁵.

Actively engaging senior cadets in the design and delivery of approved training and services presented to more junior cadets within their Squadron environment is critical to their success both during their years in the AAFC and later in life. It is understood by AAFC as contributing to a balanced, representative and democratic community that ultimately benefits all Australians³⁶.

Section B: Overview

The AAFC, its Officers and Instructors are committed to the following principles in the conduct of AAFC activities³⁷:

- Involving ranking cadets in the planning and delivery of local services to their Squadrons and Wing activities, commensurate with their maturity and interest;
- Equipping cadets with the relevant skills so they can increasingly contribute to the decision-making in their Squadron and Wing;
- Creating opportunities for cadets to become actively involved in their Squadron and Wing;
- Empowering cadets to participate through the provision of information, training and support, including clearly defining roles and responsibilities;
- Providing cadets with feedback on decision-making outcomes;
- Always striving to do it better by ensuring systems and processes for reviewing and improving cadets' active involvement in the AAFC;
- Ensuring that participation is to be beneficial to cadets and will be a positive, meaningful experience that acknowledges cadets' input and contributions.

Activities³⁸

Activities include: on base camps, air experience flights, aviation related activities, firearms training, fieldcraft competition, cadet excursions, staff incentives, international activities and work experience access.

Cadet curriculum³⁹

Australian Air Force cadets have five stages of Squadron Home Training to complete during their Cadetship: Cadet Recruit Stage; Basic Stage; Proficiency Stage; Advanced Stage; and Qualified Stage. Cadet Recruit Stage involves two to six months, including at least one weekend of training. It provides fundamental knowledge for participation in AAFC Home Parades and activities. It involves recruit-level input in drill and ceremonial; Service knowledge; team building and fieldcraft. Basic Stage builds on fundamental knowledge learned in Stage 1. Approved cadets participate in promotional courses, firearm and weapons training and other AAFC training activities. This involves Basic levels in aircraft recognition; aviation; drill and ceremonial; fieldcraft and Service knowledge. Proficiency Stage lasts one year and refines cadets'. This is to refine Cadets' knowledge and skills preparing them to take on more specific training such as promotion courses. This involves developing proficiency in aviation, drill and ceremonial, fieldcraft, aircraft and survival. In Advanced Stage, cadets gain extensive knowledge about the RAAF and AAFC. This is conducted over two years to be less intensive. It involves advanced levels in aviation, drill and ceremonial, Service knowledge, aircraft recognition, and survival. Qualified Stage involves completion of a mix of projects and electives.

Section B: Overview

Leadership and followership training is delivered through attendance of promotion courses building through each rank level. Cadets are reclassified as Leading Cadet after completion of Basic Stage and eligible for selection to attend Junior Non-Commissioned Officer (JNCO) course. Selection to attend SNCO course requires completion of Proficiency Stage. Basic Stage is a pre-requisite for attendance at JNCO promotion course and Proficiency for Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (SNCO) promotion course. Time in rank is applicable to all selection, including Cadet Warrant Officer (CWOFF) and Cadet Under Officer (CUO) courses. The senior cadet leaders promotion courses of CWOFF and CUO prepares cadets for significant leadership roles within the Squadron and on Detachment embracing the Youth Development philosophy of responsibility and authority.

Staff development

The aim of AAFC staff development is to give staff the best possible training so that, in turn, they can provide the best possible experiences for the cadets. There is an introductory Staff Induction Program for all new staff and an Executive Development Program for staff aspiring to be Commanding Officers, Officers Commanding or Detachment Commanders. Programs are scenario-based, experiential programs. Main topics covered are: organisation and administration; Service knowledge, writing skills, command and leadership, societal and legal, and youth development. The programs supporting staff development are designed to be just that, development programs not courses or hurdles to get over, which encourage the staff to become self-aware.



The strength profile for Youth Development in the Australian Air Force Cadets

Australian Air Force Cadets say:

1. 'I feel like I belong in Cadets'
2. 'Cadets helps me to develop teamwork skills'
3. 'Cadets helps me to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way'
4. 'Cadets helps me to show leadership'
5. 'Cadets helps me to feel safe and supported to take appropriate risks'

Of all the experiences they have been asked about in the CYDF survey, the Australian Air Force Cadets say the above items occur most often for them in their program (and in that order).

From a list of 17 items, the AAFC cadets identify that these particular program characteristics are the most important to them. To them, 'belonging' and 'leadership' are the most important of all. They look forward most to the practical activities they do at Cadets.

AAFC staff reinforce the messages from the cadets. They say:

1. 'Cadets helps young people show leadership'
2. 'Cadets helps young people to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way'
3. 'Young people in Cadets work as a team to achieve their goals'
4. 'Young people in Cadets are part of a supportive group that works well together'
5. 'Cadets recognises diversity within the group and community'

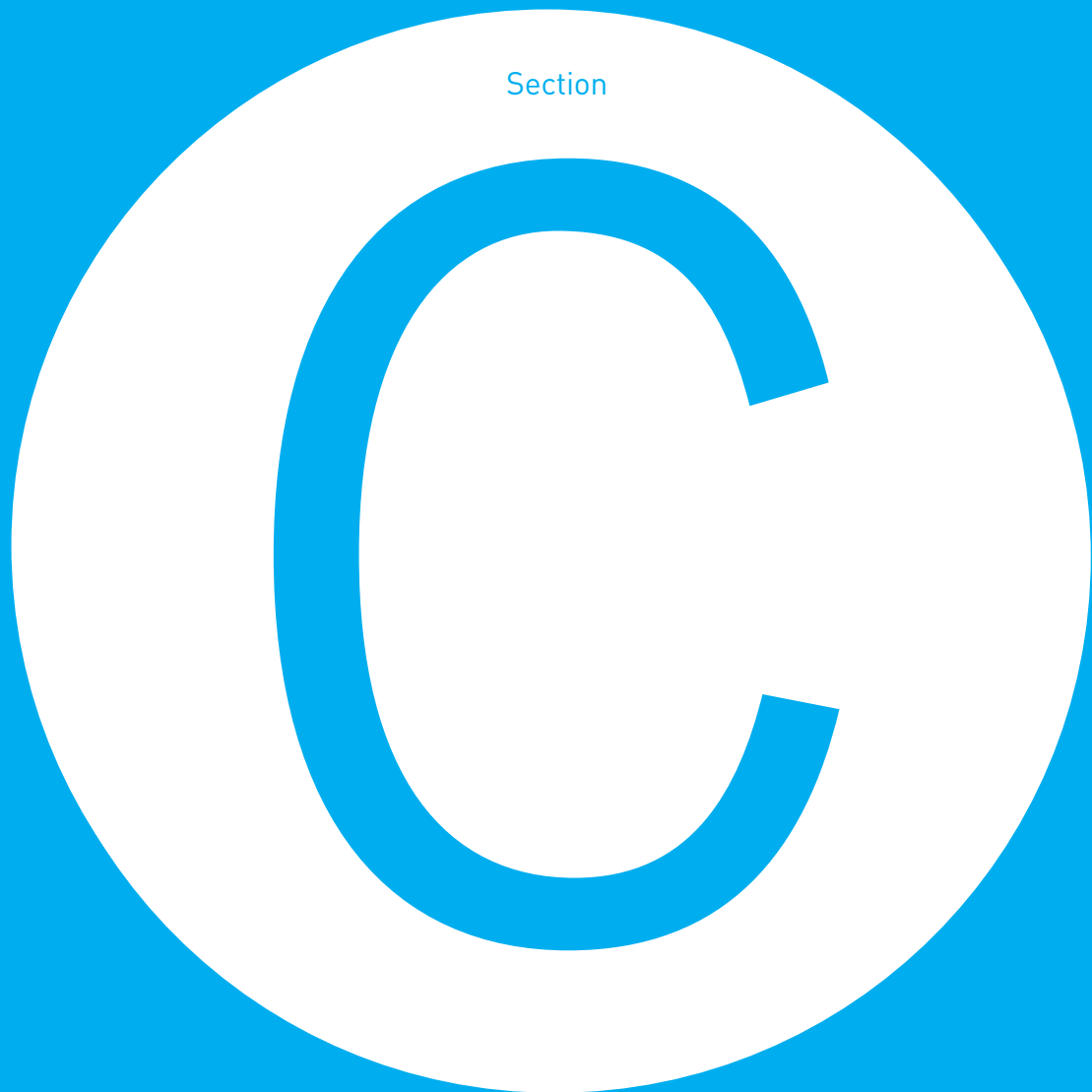
The 'supportive group' picks up the element of belonging reflected in the cadet data. In addition to what the young people say, staff also highlight the priority the organisation gives to welcoming people from diverse backgrounds. This idea is supported by cadets, in their focus group consultations.

Parental data further reinforce the messages in the cadets and cadet staff data. Parents and guardians of Australian Air Force Cadets highlight the following strengths: 'My child feels like they belong in Cadets'; 'Cadets helps my child to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way'; 'My child achieves goals in Cadets working as a team member'; and 'Cadets helps my child to feel safe and supported to take appropriate risks.'

In addition, AAFC parents and guardians say, 'Cadets develops resilience among its young participants'.

Background image: Australian Air Force Cadets march through Gawler, December 2011. Photograph: Newspix / Brooke Whatnall.

The Framework



Cadet Youth Development Framework

Generic Youth Development Framework

Organisational values and insights

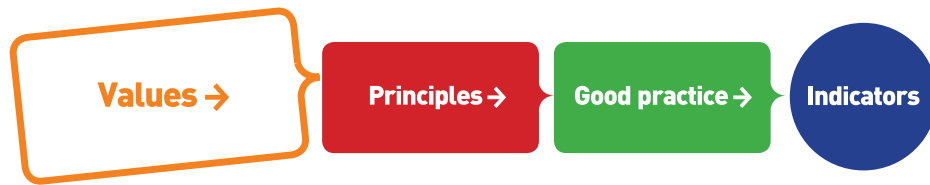
Young people in the twenty-first century:
being aware of the context and being aware of the lives involved



Cadet Youth Development Framework






Section C: The Framework



The Framework

This section explains the elements of the Framework:

-  **1. Value clusters**
-  **2. Principles**
-  **3. Good practice elements**, introducing the elements of good practice, with 'portraits' of good practice from ADF Cadets

Value clusters

Following an extensive literature review, the Generic Youth Development Framework was based on two overarching values which recur throughout the research literature. These values are:

(i) Valuing people

Respectful engagement, at all levels, is a focus of progressive organisations in the twenty-first century. It is a feature highlighted in both youth program design literature⁴⁰ and volunteering guidelines⁴¹. Strength-based approaches are increasingly accepted as being the most effective for working with young people⁴² and these are being adopted in health, education, social policy and research.

(ii) Doing things of value

In the twenty-first century, communities need young people to be active citizens⁴³ and are increasingly concerned with issues of social engagement⁴⁴. Meanwhile, in a fast-changing world, research reveals that young people seek real, purposeful roles⁴⁵ and welcome opportunities for meaningful, accessible ways to engage.

Section C: The Framework

The emphases of these GYDF overarching values are borne out explicitly in value statements of the three ADF Cadet organisations:

- **Australian Navy Cadets:** Honour, Honesty, Courage, Integrity and Loyalty
- **Australian Army Cadets:** Courage, Initiative and Teamwork
- **Australian Air Force Cadets:** Honour, Honesty, Courage, Integrity, Loyalty, Teamwork and Citizenship

Each of these core values speaks to the heart of either 'valuing people' or 'doing things of value' (or both).

Therefore, in the Cadet Youth Development Framework, the core values of the Cadet organisations can be represented as two 'value clusters'.

What do cadets value?

(i) Valuing people

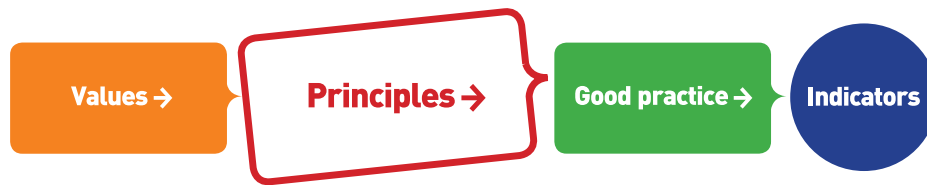
- Over 85% of cadets say 'I feel I belong in Cadets', representing the extent to which Cadets is seen as supportive and accommodating to young people.
- Focus groups show that there are many layers to this belonging: to friends, to unit, to the particular Service with which their Cadet organisation is aligned, to the country, to an important tradition with past, present, and future generations.
- Staff report feeling particularly valued by their cadets.

(ii) Doing things of value

The following elements of being a cadet are reported by the cadets mainly as very important. They are listed in descending order:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Working as part of a team | 8. Meeting and spending time with other young people |
| 2. Training you receive | 9. Opportunities to travel |
| 3. Challenging yourself | Cadet staff agree fairly closely with the cadets' assessments about what is important. |
| 4. The uniform | There are significant differences in the types of activities cadets do, and the types of activities they say they like best. Most of the list below are enjoyed 'a lot', and they are listed in the average order they are favoured by cadets. |
| 5. Opportunities for a future career/employment | 1. Practical learning (learning by doing) was liked by most |
| 6. Leading a group | 2. Safe use of firearms |
| 7. The camps attended | 3. Leadership |
| | 4. Seamanship/fieldcraft/aviation |
| | 5. Ceremonial activities |
| | 6. Physical fitness |
| | 7. Sport |
| | 8. Drill |
| | 9. First aid |
| | 10. Citizenship events |
| | 11. Music |
| | 12. Learning the theory |

Section C: The Framework



Principles

The value clusters underpin a series of principles for the Cadet organisations:

(i) Valuing people

The first set of principles acknowledges that people engage with, and remain connected to Cadet organisations because of the overall experience and the particular qualities of the social relationships they experience there. The set of principles highlights the importance of organisations attending to processes that create trust and underpin engagement, as well as organisational and group culture:

→ Recognising strengths

Creating a supportive context is a strong element of any youth development strategy. Acknowledging young people's participation and celebrating their achievements are particularly important.

This element is featured first in the CYDF because cadets in their interviews highlight the importance of structure, respect and rank for all that follows. The research suggests that the tight structure and hierarchy provided in the ADF organisations provides the vessel for everything else in the framework.

→ Looking out for each other

In a world that is increasingly understood through the lens of 'risk', youth development programs need to engage with what this means. At all levels (individual, group and organisation) this may mean strengthening protective behaviours. In terms of the many risks that face young people as they grow up, Australian and international work highlights that strength-based approaches double as preventative approaches. Rather than avoidance, it is important to intentionally bring the lens of 'management' of risk to perceived 'risk' areas. New Australian research⁴⁶ highlights that young people can be supported to position themselves protectively in relation to the risks they encounter.

Section C: The Framework

This element is featured in the CYDF for several reasons. In the interviews, cadets highlight the importance of learning to look out for each other, and some explain how that becomes a personal quality or skill-set they take into other social settings. Staff highlight the importance of supporting each other. At an organisational level, as units and organisations run activities, there are challenges of risk management in an increasingly risk averse world.

→ Building the team

Young people look for a sense of connectedness and seek belonging. Some prominent authors talk about young people looking for their tribes⁴⁷. A welcoming program atmosphere has been identified as an important feature in youth development studies. Within organised groups, inclusion of young people from diverse backgrounds is important but often overlooked, unless explicitly placed on the agenda. For the strength of the program, supporting potential, growing partnerships and recognising diversity are particularly important.

This element is featured at the heart of the CYDF. In the research, young people highlight belonging as one of the most important elements of Cadets for them. They express this in terms of teamwork and many describe their cadet unit as a family. Cadets, staff and organisations show an awareness that building the team means attending to dedicated, intentional process.

Section C: The Framework

(ii) Doing things of value

The second set of principles recognises how and why young people engage, stay engaged in, and grow through program-based activity. It highlights the importance of experience, and the 'stretch' element of people extending themselves and achieving things that they did not know they could do.

→ Learning and growing from experience and reflection

Action and reflection are central to growth, as together they create space for learning from action. It is important to recognise a learning continuum at three levels: individuals, leaders and organisations.

This element is featured in the CYDF because when young people are asked what are the most worthwhile parts of being a cadet they explain that it teaches them skills for life, for work and teaches them to grow as a person. Staff too, emphasise the skills and personal qualities they gain through their involvement in Cadet organisations. Third, the Cadet organisations have shown a commitment to good practice and learning from their practice.

→ Engaging in the real world

This principle is about engagement in the world. Research is suggesting that young people can be very perceptive about what is 'real', purposeful and worthy of respect. Young people more readily engage in community-based activity that they perceive to be meaningful or purposeful. Young people appreciate exposure to new things, and to opportunities to stretch themselves.

Section C: **The Framework**

This element is featured in the CYDF because cadets constantly show their enthusiasm for practical learning experiences, hands-on activities, and opportunities to use and test these in real-life experiences. Also, cadet units and organisations are aware of the importance of engaging directly with the elements (for example through water, land, air) and with other members of their communities.

→ **Being active citizens**

Citizenship is described differently across the literature as a status, a set of obligations and entitlements, and a significant element of personal identity. It is also linked to responsibilities and rights. Each of these elements is important. The emphasis for youth development organisations is on 'active' engagement and on providing accessible ways for people to engage with their communities. There is a strong body of research specifically addressing this area, focused on civic engagement and civic service.

This element is featured in the CYDF because of the strong element of collective identity shown in interviews with cadets, and the strengths in service and leadership that cadets and Cadet organisations potentially bring to their communities.

Section C: The Framework



Good practice elements in Cadets

The principles are illustrated by examples of good practice:

Valuing people

→ Recognising strengths

Recognising achievement

Cadets and cadet staff are individuals who like to have clarity about what is important, about how to achieve, and the right way to do things.

Individuals are drawn to Cadet organisations and units because of the clear structure, culture of respect, and the ordered nature of activities and achievements. They appreciate being able to achieve, in clear increments, at their level. Rank, qualifications, badges and other insignia create a system where achievements can be recognised.

Most cadets rate it as important that 'my achievements are recognised and celebrated in Cadets'. Cadet staff echo this theme in the survey indicating that recognising and valuing excellent outcomes is important. Also they appreciate recognition for their level of experience and the work they do.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

Cadets value being part of a tightly managed system and having clear, structured, and understood ways in which to participate and to achieve the desired outcome. Hierarchy and command are important here as cadets explain they create a safe and known structure for engaging in roles and practices. Within the spectrum of youth development activities on offer in Australia, alongside contrasting flatter or youth-led structures, the CYDF research highlights the important role played by hierarchical, highly organised activities like Cadets.

Section C: The Framework

Earning your badge

In a focus group consultation, a group of eight cadets explain:

We are currently at annual camp – all our units and our flotillas. You put your name down for which classes you want to do, put in classes for week (we are in PT) then do final parade. There is an opportunity to get our rates – that describes what you've done.

It's something you wear on your uniform.

In the navy this is a signal that tells people what you do but in Cadets you may get several different ones but only wear one at a time – each year you might choose a different specialty.

There are different specialties like engineering, seamanship, ceremonial, and promotion, although you also have to be approved to do this course.

In advanced class you get a mentor who is a higher rank than you. When you get one of those badges, you've got something to show for the week of work you've put in.

The Commanding Officer awards you rates when you get back to your unit- parade day (some units are a bit different). But if instructors don't think that you're good enough to pass then you don't – there are standards [if you don't do something correctly]. Though it has to be something pretty bad.

It is clear at the beginning of the week what you have to do to get your badge – there is a booklet that says everything you have to do.

During the week we have to show that we can lead a sport and recreation class – i.e. will have to make up games for the rest of the group. How they lead it, how they include everyone.

(Focus group, ANC cadets)

Appreciating a strong culture

AAC unit staff explain their experiences of how an existing culture of respect shapes the way people communicate with each other:

It's a great leveller.

Cadets has a pre-existing culture that people step into.

There is a discipline instilled here.

Discipline contributes to the way people treat each other.

There is a respect. People trust each other.

Wearing a uniform, I become a role model.

People become mentors.

(Focus group, AAC cadets)

Understanding rank and respect

Cadet organisations honour achievement at different levels of responsibility among staff, volunteers and cadets. AAFC cadets reflect on this in their focus groups:

We get taught about [rank structure] so we can pay our respects to the officers. It gives you more respect for people, like when I came I wasn't too sure who was which rank but after a while you learn to respect people ... If someone goes through something, you respect that.

Young people are given rank and responsibilities, and they are discovering this gives them extra capacities in relation to those they are leading: *We're virtually their mothers on this course.* Junior cadets get homesick *but you can help them because they respect the rank.*

In one focus group there is discussion about leading young people older than themselves: *I don't tell the lower ranks how old I am; they just respect the rank.* They say *Age doesn't matter if you have good leadership.*

(Focus group, AAFC cadets)

Section C: The Framework

Valuing people

→ Recognising strengths

Prioritising participation

Placing a high priority on participation is about benefiting from the contribution of all participants. It is about governance, and employing models and mechanisms to make the roles of young people, staff and the organisation in decision-making and program outcomes clear. Acknowledging and promoting participation is also a key strategy for enabling young people to belong.

Participation is recognised by youth organisations as centrally important. It is also one of the greatest challenges for contemporary youth organisations to achieve. It is traditionally a challenge for people in charge of any organisations to allow and equip other people, particularly young people, to have responsibility for activities within the organisation, and this needs to be recognised as an ongoing learning curve and training area for all involved.

The three Cadet organisations are each committed to the ideal ‘for cadets by cadets’, and each is exploring what this means at unit level, regionally and nationally. In reality this is expressed in the ADF Cadets in a different way to many other youth development organisations. This is because in the ADF Cadet organisations, young people have real, active (and clear) roles within the hierarchical structure. Even though decision-making is based on a hierarchy, within their designated roles, cadets (and cadet staff) have clearly defined responsibilities and discretion.

In focus groups cadets and cadet staff explain that they value mechanisms where they can provide feedback on programming and ideas and have these heard.

Insights/new contributions about youth development practice from cadets:

Traditionally in thinking and writing about youth participation, people talk about ‘voice’ and ‘young people in decision-making’. Both of these traditional indicators seem to sit somewhat at odds with top-down hierarchical structures, often leading to the (premature?) conclusion that top down hierarchical structures are bad.

However, in this research, cadets highlight a different but equally important facet of participation. Cadets explain that they value the extent that they have real, active roles and responsibility for achieving program outcomes. The young people in focus group interviews explain that the opportunities offered them to exercise responsibility sit in stark contrast to the roles available to them in schools and other community-based settings. Interestingly, young people report the hierarchy and rank structure in cadets creates the conditions where they can lead and be respected, and have their level of knowledge and experience recognised – at a glance – by both their peers and adults. The uniform and its markings were identified as useful here, both in terms of creating a role and expectations, and helping them to live into it.

Contemporary youth research⁴⁸ also highlights why this is important: one of the things young people struggle to find in communities is roles which they see as real and where they can contribute meaningfully.

Section C: The Framework

Stepping in to real roles

In cadets, the organisational roles offered to young people are public and ceremonial as well as practical and internal. The conversations with groups of ANC cadets below capture some of that ethos:

When you are out in the public doing a service, people respect you, you symbolise and carry that history- makes you proud- wearing the uniform.

[ANC senior cadet]

Like drill. It's physical. You get to learn stuff ordinary people don't get to do.

It's good, for ANZAC Day, you feel proud to honour people.

The public respect you. You've done the training and you know what you're doing.

Honouring ex-service men and women is a pretty big part of cadets.

[ANC senior cadet]

Moving between roles

In an AAC focus group consultation, all participants agree that they take more pride in this uniform than in their school uniform: *The Army protects Australia. We take all that responsibility on when we wear these uniforms. In Cadets there is an opportunity for you to become the adult.* The cadets explain that it can be frustrating moving between the different worlds – between school and cadets.

School uniform signifies: *I come here (school), I learn, I stuff up.* Cadets agree that when they are given meaningful roles, they grow into them. When asked whether they would be able to be in roles like this anywhere else the cadets explain that the rank is important to make the system work. Uniform, badge and stripes are important symbols.

Developing and promoting participatory mechanisms

The Cadet organisations have in place a range of mechanisms to support cadet and staff input into Cadet programs. Although focus groups show that not all junior cadets are aware of them, there are individuals or cadet representative groups at regional or national levels. Within their units, the cadets are familiar with chain of command and who they should talk to with suggestions. This is normally another young person of a higher rank. Although some are not sure, other junior cadets say they feel they can have some real input through these channels.

AAFC Cadets explain their system: *Some squadrons have a suggestion box, suggestions get addressed in the staff meeting ... I've put suggestions in the box myself and I've seen the squad change.*

Senior Cadets explain how their role and input has grown over time.

As you go up the ranks you have more weight on your shoulders ... as a corporal you teach, as a sergeant we'll have a role in planning the bivouacs ... Meanwhile many junior cadets seem content with the understanding that they will have their time.

Section C: The Framework

Valuing people

→ Looking out for each other

Allowing challenges and risk

One of the characteristics of the twenty-first century is a world saturated with an awareness of risk⁴⁹.

For young people, this is revealed as an awareness of the many challenges and uncertainties that face children as they grow up. There is an increasing awareness that, rather than being completely shielded, young people need to learn to engage with and manage some of the risks they are likely to encounter.

At the level of groups and organisations, in an increasingly risk-averse society, understandings and perceptions of risk and risk management are becoming well developed. Organisations become increasingly aware of their responsibilities to keep individuals safe and minimise harm.

Recognising the importance of engaging with risk, they face a tension about how to manage risk rather than avoid it.

Insights / new contribution about youth development practice from cadets:

Despite new regulations from parent organisations and insurance companies, the leadership of all three Cadet organisations have given voice to the idea that there are very few activities which are banned. The case study in progress is how to communicate with and support those in their organisations so that they are equipped to face appropriate challenges.

Section C: The Framework

Negotiations at an organisational level

These issues are significant for the activities which happen in Cadets, for example, sailing. Training of staff becomes more important. This training is more valuable to staff and organisations if it is in some way accredited. In this case staff can get accreditation 'small craft' with Yachting Australia.

It is an organisational aspiration to make it as easy as possible for volunteers to get training, and at the same time build capacity and skills for volunteers to use skills within community.

(ANC HQ staff)

Risk management at unit level

Unit staff explain: *We need to find a good balance between cadets taking as much responsibility as possible, but having staff there to guide them, and staff have to be appropriately trained to do this.*

(AAC staff)

Activities and challenges

Cadets reflect on WHS (*Commonwealth Work Health and Safety Act 2012*) and new restrictions in relation to skydiving, guns, parachuting, knives, leadership training in the bush, paintball, adversarial activities, ball activities. They know that their organisation needs to manage this with them: *think the whole world is like that too ...*

(AAFC senior cadet)

Section C: The Framework

Valuing people

→ Looking out for each other

Protecting and supporting

How to support young people and their staff to engage with activities that involve a level of risk? There is a lot of debate about how best this can be achieved⁵⁰. Australian and international research highlights that strength-based approaches double as preventative approaches to many of the challenges that young people face⁵¹. A strengths-based and resilience-building approach brings an important lens to youth development programs, and it means paying particular attention to both culture and curriculum.

More than half of the cadets report that 'Cadets helps me to feel safe and supported to take appropriate risks'. Cadets feel this should happen in future with the same frequency as it does now. Staff (85%) support for the idea that 'young people in Cadets are part of a supportive group that works well together'. Cadet staff indicate that this should happen the same amount in the future.

Importantly, all talk about the importance of being able to get things wrong and learn from that experience.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

In focus group interviews cadets talk about 'looking out for each other' and the challenge of doing this well in activities. They highlight the lived experience of being looked after under pressure. 'We always have each other's back. If someone's doing something to someone and that person's not feeling good about it ... then the rank will come over and do something about it.'

Cadets highlight particularly how this experience has taught them to look out for everyone – even now in other contexts. Although 79% talk about this experience of working together and looking after each other, less than half of the cadets say that they always feel that they are part of a supportive group that works well together, showing that they have developed a keen awareness of this, and can continue to see room for growth.

Section C: The Framework

Looking after each other

ANC cadets talk about looking after each other in the context of discipline at camp or during drill – if one person goes down by getting something wrong, the team goes down.

There is a sense of the tension and high stakes, so cadets speak proudly about the high level of communication and support within units.

Developing a risk management tool

At the Defence Youth Congress, senior AAC cadets and staff talk delegates through the new online risk management tool. This tool is designed to be used by young people and staff who are planning activities. Cadets can study examples of

previous activities and learn about safety requirements, the risks that were managed and how it was done. Having cadets engaged in this process lightens the planning and administration load for staff and makes activities possible.

Supporting staff / supporting cadets

In some settings senior cadets are working in partnership with community-based Cadet staff, sharing time and paperwork in order to make activities possible. In their focus group, some senior cadets talk about how they experience this division of labour: *The cadets run the*

organisation. I'm in an admin role, I fill out forms. The staff rely on us but they support us to do it. They supervise, we do it.
(AAFC cadet)

Section C: The Framework

Valuing people

→ Building the team

Communicating

Young people support that 'Cadets make it clear what I am expected to do'.

Because cadets and Cadet staff, as a group, are very strongly oriented to getting things right, clear and consistent communication is particularly important.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

Being large national organisations as well as made up of local units with their own context, communication is a particular growth edge for the Cadet organisations.

Particular practical challenges include:

- How to get information where it needs to be, but avoid information overload (particularly for staff).
- How to communicate with the speed and efficiency to which young people are becoming accustomed in other settings.
- How to use communication technologies with cadets and staff to the greatest effect.
- For an organisation with a long history and with staff who have long memories, how to keep the written materials in circulation (e.g. manuals) current.
- Local appropriateness and national consistency in communications.
- How to communicate with the public about the nature and activities of cadets, while these activities are still fresh.

Section C: The Framework

Communicating effectively

Cadet organisations each note the importance of getting messages where they need to be. In the research workshop with ANC, a range of approaches have been canvassed,

from emails to bulletins, to accessible key documents online. Up for discussion: using SMS messages to communicate with cadets may be a sensible option.

Communicating on the net

A local group of AAC cadets has made a Facebook page so they can keep up with what's going on. In their focus group,

cadet staff explain how they are learning to use Facebook now so they can keep up with the cadets.

Communicating on the quiet

Meanwhile, traditional methods of communication are still part of the world of cadets. AAFC cadets explain:
On the seniors course the standard is really, really high. It demands more of you. If you work as a team, it's fun and occasionally we get away with quick chats. [In Drill] say, if you've got three markers and someone is out of

step, you're telling them 'Hey you're out of step' so the whole unit looks good ... you're talking to each other really, really quietly ...

[AAFC senior cadets]

Section C: The Framework

Valuing people

→ Building the team

Fostering teamwork

The experience of teamwork and skills for teamwork are no less important in contemporary societies, but youth research suggests that apart from sport, young people lack opportunities to develop in this area.

Teamwork is one of the two most frequently occurring elements measured in the cadet survey. There is very strong support (almost 90%) that 'Cadets helps me to develop teamwork skills'. Most cadets report that teamwork is the most important of all the elements they were asked about. There was relatively strong agreement that 'young people in Cadets work as a team to achieve their goals'.

This item was reported by cadet staff to be the third most frequently occurring item and one of the top three most important. Consequently, it looks to be matching expectations.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

Young people in the focus groups explain how an environment which contains elements of challenge, stress and high expectations also creates the conditions for teamwork. Examples include the morning muster, drill, and taking on the elements within team activities. Cadets explain that they realise they can not achieve what they need to, alone. Also that it is in everyone's immediate interest that no one fail (or else the group's progress will be set back).

Section C: The Framework

Teamwork in the galley

The catering group are preparing food for the training camp. Staff and cadets are working together to prepare lunch. They explain:

We are learning cooking, teamwork – getting to know each other. Some knew each other when they came to this camp

and some didn't. We are from different flotillas. We found interests were the same. With cooking you're working together in a small area and you have to cooperate as a team. A happier environment is a better environment.

(Focus group, ANC staff)

Teamwork at our annual camp

We have been split up to mix, which is good and bad. It's good to meet new people but hard because you don't know people's strengths and weaknesses. It's OK for us but, harder for younger cadets. [So we help them.]

We have grown to be like family even though we are all pretty much from different units. [We learned that] the units seem to be pretty similar but different units have different jokes.

(Focus group, AAC cadets)

Teamwork doing our chores

Cadets gives you both independence and teamwork. You have to have your bed done a specific way, shoes, windows ... If we finish early, we go and help someone else.

(Focus group, AAFC cadets)

Section C: The Framework

Valuing people

→ Building the team

Supporting potential (to grow and lead)

The strength of any organisation lies in its people. Supporting potential involves the recognition of people's capacity and active mentoring of this capacity by peers and adults. In youth development, potential is often supported through developing leadership.

'Leadership' is an element of Cadets which is particularly important to the young people involved. Cadets report that leadership is one of the two most important of all the items they were asked about, and the third most frequently occurring. Cadets say that this emphasis should continue in future the way it does now. This is echoed by Cadet staff: Among cadets there is also agreement that 'Cadets helps me to reflect on my progress, identify my weaknesses and build upon my strengths'.

For staff, leadership for young people is the highest ranked of all of the indicator statements and seen by Cadet staff as the most important item. Staff, too, find the area of leadership and leadership development to be really significant to their own role. With humour, staff identify the particular challenges of standing back and allowing young people to move ahead, particularly as they are responsible. Mentoring is something that both staff and young people identified as particularly helpful and important.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

A particular growth edge for Cadet organisations is about how to make use of all the leadership energy and skill which is invested in their young people by the time those young people 'age out' of the organisation.

Section C: The Framework

Developing potential to grow and lead in the ANC

Staff in a focus group explain the important stage of transition between being a cadet and becoming a staff member. A young woman who has just undergone this significant change reflects with older staff. They explain what matters.

There is a challenge going from being a cadet to being a staff member. Relationships need to change. We are all confidants for cadets – keepers of secrets.

Meanwhile ANC senior staff explain that awareness and good management is an important part of successful transition from being a cadet to being cadet staff. It is really important for junior staff to have good management and mentoring.

Developing potential to grow and lead in the AAC

Young people in an AAC focus group explore their understandings of leadership:

You've gotta be honest with it. You can't just ... use it for yourself.

Anyone can have a stripe on their arm and say, 'do this', 'do that', but in the end if your troops don't follow you you're not a leader ...

[Good leaders] put so much in to their unit.

They're so disciplined but they also have a fun side ... if too easy, they don't get [so much] respect, if too much discipline they don't get [so much] respect.

You've got to find a balance.

Cadets explain how they learn to lead:

You make mistakes basically – you make mistakes, get corrected by your CO.

You always learn from your mistakes. Those above you will always tell you what you did wrong. But you always learn from them.

If we have rank, our higher officers are always telling us to let the cadets exercise their leadership skills. So we just let them do something, otherwise they won't exercise their leadership skills.

It's a good feeling, knowing you're helping someone achieve their own personal goals.

(AAC cadets)

Developing potential to grow and lead in the AAFC

Young people in an AAFC focus group discussion explain how Cadets develops their leadership potential:

You can't stay shy in cadets, as rank you're a role model to the cadets below you. You change, they give you the tools to change.

We get taught how to teach a class and do public speaking and make lesson plans, so we learn how to do teaching.

It's fun.

Stressful!

We also get taught leadership, how to be a good leader.

I command the flight for half the parade.

I'm a section leader and I have to know the people in my section, if they have allergies or anything, I have to know how to treat them. I also learn time management.

We get cadets where something has happened at home and were sworn to secrecy.

I'm a house captain at school and I know these responsibilities.

I like command and control, take over the flight, it improves them, and [improves] you as well because you're teaching them ... you become more competent ... you learn yourself, you remember for future times as well.

(AAFC Cadets)

Section C: The Framework

Valuing people

→ Building the team

Welcoming diversity

Welcoming diversity is a challenge for almost all organisations.

Nearly 80% of cadets support the statement: 'Cadets recognises diversity within the group and the community'. A majority of cadets feel this should happen in future with the same frequency as it does now. Among staff there is also moderate agreement that 'Cadets recognises diversity within the group and community'. Staff indicated this should happen the same way in future. The organisations have policy statements, and staff are involved in training.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

In focus group interviews across the organisations, some young people mentioned being picked on at school but being accepted at Cadets. These same people talked about the safety of the control, culture of respect, structure and order.

Section C: The Framework

Portraits of diversity:

- **Gender:** 25% of the survey sample is female. The survey indicates a very positive experience for young women in Cadets. Regarding gender issues, in a focus group one young woman explains: *Here we don't feel like pieces of meat, we're all mates and we all look the same in this uniform.*
- **Race:** 97% of one Sydney high school population are of Asian descent. Nearly all of the 180 cadets are too. These students report valuing the connection to Australian history and symbols. Two of their teachers explain that when engaged in community events, they always challenge the stereotypes held by the public.
- **Indigeneity:** almost 5% of the Cadet survey sample identify themselves as Indigenous. There is significant tri-Service activity in the Northern Territory.
- **Rurality:** due to its government support, cadets may be the only youth organisation operating in some towns.
- **Disability:** in the focus groups for this project nationally, when asked, What does involvement in cadets give to you? significant numbers of young people spontaneously identify themselves as having learning disorders. These young people indicate that they particularly appreciate the certainty and structure of Cadets and the support it gives them for achievement and for learning how to learn or engage constructively. One staff member explains: *We have cadets with hearing disorders and skeletal and muscular conditions.* Another explains: *We get a lot of kids with Aspergers or ADHD. They love the structure that is offered here. It is satisfying to see kids with Aspergers thrive. At my unit I will take anybody regardless of ability, unless the doctor says they are not fit to join. Our policy states that the only time someone should be prevented from joining is where their disability or issue could cause harm to others.*

Section C: The Framework

Doing things of value

→ Learning and growing from experience and reflection

Developing skills in life and careers

Research on the outcomes of Australian youth development programs finds that young people who participate in youth development programs acquire confidence, skills, knowledge and develop teamwork skills and attributes. This is most likely to occur in youth development programs which involve 'hands-on' activities and work for the community. Programs that allow young people to participate in planning achieve the best outcomes⁵².

Among cadets, 'Training you receive' is felt to be central to the cadet experience (71.2% said very important, 23.5% quite important, 94.7% combined). 'Opportunities for a future career/employment' was a little less important (64.0% very important, 19.4% quite a bit important, 83.4% combined).

In focus group interviews, when asked what was most worthwhile in Cadets, cadets from across the three Cadet organisations explained that it was about learning. Learning specialist skills, practical life skills and learning for character development.

Alongside their specific organisation-based skills they list qualities like 'independence and time management.' 'communication skills – be direct and to the point – and self-confidence, being able to talk in front of people. This has also helped with school assessments'.

In focus groups, staff also respond extremely positively to the professional development opportunities which they are given. As staff are often busy, committed individuals who are extremely time-poor, the key challenge for such organisations is about how to fit this in to busy lives alongside regular commitments with young people.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

Both the survey and focus groups speak to the significant learning opportunities afforded when young people have long-term engagement in an organisation. This speaks to the sociological idea of 'a career'. It is not necessarily about money but about a sustained investment of time and energy, as well as identity. Organisations of this size have multiple roles in which individuals can serve and grow.

Section C: The Framework

Learning new things

In focus groups, cadets responded to the question, What has Cadets taught you?

Cadets teaches you how to work as a team.

How to iron your pants – we had an ironing lesson last night.

I think it has taught me discipline.

We have a lot of self-pride: what we wear, how we walk, how we hold ourselves.

I now automatically start walking in step with others.

(ANC junior cadets)

Learning to teach

Young people in an ACC focus group discussion explain how Cadets develops their skills in teaching.

Teaching lessons is challenging for people who are at the right rank. Cadets explain that there is a particular structure to teaching: State what you are teaching, why and what you will learn from session ... It's good having young

people teaching us rather than adults (everyone agrees) except when they don't know their stuff. Some have experienced this. In that situation you could give them some feedback and advice gently afterwards. Cadets explain: Trusting us with the rank – the responsibility – is supportive.

(Focus group, AAC cadets)

What else we are learning

Cadets were asked to give some examples of the kinds of things they are learning.

Aircraft recognition. Cadets like this as it leads to future career opportunities for the cadets interested in aviation.

Fieldcraft. This is a popular activity amongst the cadets because they enjoy learning and using these life skills.

Service knowledge. Cadets indicate they like this subject as it gives them knowledge, including who wears what uniform – when and why, formation of the RAAF, ranks and badges.

(Focus group, AAFC cadets)

Section C: The Framework

Doing things of value

→ Learning and growing from experience and reflection

Gaining attitudes and building character

Research on young Australians highlights the value of the qualities they learn through youth development programs. The attributes developed through good programs⁵³ include personal, societal, cultural attitudes and values⁵⁴.

In the survey, young people report that 'Cadets helps me to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way' (53.8% always, 31.8% often, 85.6% combined). There are only three indicator items that occur more often showing that this is experienced frequently, and is one of the strongest elements of the Cadets program. Among staff, the second highest ranked indicator item for frequency of occurring was 'Cadets helps young people to know what is the right thing to do, and to behave that way' (48.9% often, 39.4% always, 88.3% combined). This was also reported by Cadet staff as one of the top three most important items. Consequently, it is occurring often and is rated very important by both groups.

About half the cadets in the interviews really liked 'Drill'. Some said it was the best thing for character formation. (In the survey, 50.1% liked 'drill' a lot, 27.5% liked it a little, and the rest liked it less.) However, nearly everyone explained that it was good for attention to detail, and discipline.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

Cadets speak at length about how their engagement in the program has built their character. They highlight the value of challenge – of going beyond their known limits – and achieving.

Section C: The Framework

Gaining confidence and becoming visible

How have you changed as a result of being a cadet?

Before I joined cadets I wasn't really seen. Peers and teachers started to notice me – you feel good about it.

You're not invisible.

Even your principal notices you.

[ANC cadets focus group]

Learning from Cadets

How has Cadets shaped you?

Confidence. Sense of self-discipline and respect for others.

Pride in such a free country we live in.

Pride in wearing the uniform.

When I first came here I was just a little brat, barely knew what responsibility is.

You get a helping hand in learning from your mistakes.

A firm hand to help you.

Discipline is just a strong boundary that you shouldn't cross.

Without it you lose order and respect.

[AAC cadet focus group]

It makes you more mature.

Because you are made to grow up really fast.

You get real work problems.

It gives you a new role – not being a kid ... you can step out of being a kid and be a mature person.

I used to be a very independent person and since joining cadets I've become more of a team player ... Its also given me the self-confidence to speak up and voice my opinion in all aspects of life.

[AAC senior cadet focus group]

Patience.

Communication skills.

I've learned to be more accommodating of others.

It helps in my professional life. My boss is really happy with my involvement with Cadets.

It gives you more resilience.

[AAC staff focus group]

Learning from drill

Drill because it gives us discipline. I believe that drill can actually shape a person. A right royal little pain can turn into someone decent, well mannered. I used to be like that.

How did that happen?

Drill, classes, making new friends. Drill is a mandatory thing unless you're injured. If you don't follow the orders you get corrected. The discipline side is just perfect.

[AAFC cadet]

People are relying on you. There is a focus on getting things to a certain level, like drill. [It takes a lot to accomplish this].

[AAFC cadet]

Discipline is having the self control to not fidget, swear, get up in the morning, make your bed, not backchat, follow rules ... [This is different to media representations of youth.] When we step out of line there are consequences.

[AAFC senior cadet]

Section C: The Framework

Doing things of value

→ Learning and growing from experience and reflection

Building resilience and capacity

Resilience is about developing adaptive capacities. It is about having the ability to 'bounce back' under tough conditions. Young people are often quick to highlight the value of the skills they learn through youth development programs⁵⁵. The skills developed are both life-skills that support them with everyday challenges, and capacities that open further opportunities. Research in youth and community development emphasises the important relationship between resilient young people and resilient communities⁵⁶.

A majority of the cadets report that 'Cadets develops resilience'. Staff agree. This is an area where cadets' parents notice a real difference – interestingly, parents' assessment of the work Cadets does in developing resilience in their children is stronger than that of cadets or staff.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

In focus groups, cadets explain how hardship contributes to resilience and capacity.

For example, in many focus groups, cadets have been out in the bush for a night with no shower and limited food. They all joke that a warm shower was something they looked forward to.

Section C: The Framework

Getting outside your comfort zone

Junior cadets reflect on their first training week away from home:

It's scary coming here when you are new to cadets, I am not a good marcher. We have to do things when I'm not sure how to do them. Keeping in time, square gating, not allowed to look at the ground ...

I have never been away from my parents for this long – it's hard.

Standing at attention for ages ...

Getting out of your comfort zone.

[ANC junior cadets]

Developing as a staff member

What impact has involvement in Cadets had on you?

It has made me a better person – now I want to make a contribution.

Before my involvement I had been at home with sick kids. Now I feel much more contented, if I am supported with clear professional development then I can really see myself developing ...

It is a lot more work as a staff member – it is challenging for me committing the time. It is good to feel you are giving something back. It is also powerful for cadets to see a former cadet [like me] on staff.

[AAC staff]

Growing as a cadet

What impact has involvement in Cadets had on you?

Individuals reflect on how being in the Cadets has grown new capacities in them:

[It has changed] my personality, my view on things, respect more people.

I'm less selfish. In Cadets you do more things for other people.

There's a lot of confidence I've gained in cadets; like most recruits I used to be shy, but I've developed being in a leadership role.

Cadets has made me more tolerant and less old!

It's made me more aware of what I'm doing. I think about things more, their effect in the long run, made me plan things more and be less spontaneous.

[AAFC senior cadets]

Section C: The Framework

Doing things of value

→Engaging in the real world

Embracing challenges

Young people who are exposed to new experiences, who feel supported to take on new challenges, and who achieve their goals, come to think about themselves and the way they relate to the world quite differently. We might think of this as confidence. For those who fall short of goals but are supported, there is powerful learning.

‘Challenging yourself’ is a very important part of being a cadet. (On the survey, it is reported very important by 67.7%, 25.6% quite a bit important, 93.3% combined.)

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

Part of what speaks to cadets is the sense of potential – to get this right or to get it very wrong. Staff indicate that having supports thought through and built in to activities is an important part of their job.

Section C: The Framework

Being in the spotlight

What's the most worthwhile part of being a cadet?

Self-development and leadership.

It develops you as a person.

For example, on the Young Endeavour, there's 24 candidates on board. Originally you don't know each other but by the end you're best mates because you go through so much together during that period.

Comradeship. All of you went through that swell, most of you got sea sick. Because you go through the same stuff together, you build a really great rapport.

You start to be put in the spotlight – get to show your skills, for example, to set up a sport and recreation session.

You have to think of an action plan or develop one on the spot. It's good for thinking on your feet.

(Focus group, ANC senior cadets)

Running a command post

A few of us got selected by our OC at our units to run radio command post. The first part was a lesson on how to use radio, and now we are moving on. The lessons adhere to a structure. The first few days were focussed on theory but

now it's getting more practical. You will leave camp with a qualification and become qualified to teach the course.

(Focus group, AAC cadets)

Going on bivouacs

In focus group consultations everyone agrees that bivouacs (field camps, usually run over a weekend) are fun and beneficial. The cadets say they really enjoy getting out and doing something they don't get from school-based activities or from sitting at home with video games. Cadets say they appreciate going into the bush and using the survival skills they have been taught.

Cadets learn how to tie knots, set up tents, cooking. They value these activities because they allow cadets to work on their independence, leadership and problem-solving skills.

Cadets explain that bivouacs provide a different environment *so you can get to know your squadron better.* The challenge helps cadets come out of their shell. Some people do this even if they are fairly quiet in the classroom.

Sharing a hootchie (basic tent) with a mate, working together to set it up, helps bring cadets closer. *Also the friends you make on biv. are the closest because you win by working as a team.*

Some squads have a theme to their bivs and some of them are just about learning. For example, they talk about *survival bivs. This year we found a place with a water course and that was really good and everyone was looking forward to that.*

One senior cadet explains: *Cadets is an upside down jigsaw puzzle ... without all the pieces, including the bivs, it doesn't all make sense.*

For many cadets, the biv is the piece of the puzzle that brings it all together.

(Focus group, AAFC cadets)

Section C: The Framework

Doing things of value

→Engaging in the real world

Hands-on experiences

Research on the outcomes of Australian youth development programs finds that young people who participate in youth development programs acquire confidence, skills and knowledge, and develop teamwork skills and attributes. This is most likely to occur in youth development programs that involve 'hands-on' activities and work with the community. Programs that allow young people to participate in planning achieve the best outcomes⁵⁷.

There are some significant differences in the types of activities cadets do, and the types of activities they say they like best. For example, 'Safe use of firearms' (78.9% like a lot, 14.2% like a little, and 93.1% combined) 'Seamanship/Field Craft/Aviation' (which was liked a lot by 65.0% of cadets 17.5% liked a little, 82.5% combined), 'Physical fitness' (54.5% like a lot, 25.8% like a little). 'Sport' (51.4% like a lot, 23.9% like a little). 'First aid' (39.5% like a lot, 30.6% like a little). 'Music' and 'learning the theory' are the three least well liked activities with music (26.9% like a lot, 20.2% like a little, 47.1% combined).

Practical learning (learning by doing)' was liked by nearly everyone (80.1% like it a lot).

There is general agreement by cadet staff that 'Cadets includes practical activities that make a difference'.

In focus groups, conversations about hands-on experiences nearly always become conversations about risk management and administration, revealing how closely these subjects sit in the minds of both cadets and cadet staff.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

Young people are interested in activities that allow them to combine theory and practice, and also that have real world application. Cadets are interested in pursuing this type of activity even further in the future.

Section C: The Framework

Favourite activities

Sailing is the best activity. Water-based activities we usually do in summer. Keeping the boat balanced – flicking the wrist and managing ropes.

Being on HMAS ship from Darwin to Cairns (a sea-ride). It was one of the best experiences I've had. I experienced Navy life.

Like the kickback ... The excitement, the rush, the adrenaline.

Being out in the ocean is thrilling. We go on powerboats which is fun.

It is not something you usually do.

The thrill of being able to say I went to the Navy base and shot a weapon [in a simulator]. This week we are going to do WTSS [Weapons Training Simulation System]. It feels awesome.

Being young and still being able to have a lot of privileges. There are not many places in society where you get to be young and privileged and trusted (many participants agree).

We couldn't get this experience anywhere else. It gives you firsthand knowledge on the military.

(Focus group, ANC cadets)

Favourite activities

Weapons! WTSS [the gun shooting simulator]. Not many people can say they have a giant computer screen to shoot at. No everyday person gets to come and do this at an Army base.

Food!

Drill!

Learning the history. Field work, radio procedure, navigation.

Competing with B Company.

Meeting new people, I met so many new friends.

Going out in the bush.

Health and hygiene in the field.

Feeling like you're closer to nature. Makes you appreciate things more ... like a shower.

Survival. It's challenging mentally and physically. Gives us something to strive for. "We did that".

It's a bit like what the Army is really like.

Vehicle checkpoint [field exercise] ... they rig [cars] up with fake explosives and drugs.

We found a [planted] gun in the back seat.

Actual Army people giving up their time, they come and pass on their knowledge and what they do when they get deployed.

(Focus group, ANC cadets)

Favourite activities

Lantern Stalk, and being out bush. It means we can put all the theory we have been learning into practice (especially stealth). You have to be very alert, listening for any noise.

WTSS (Weapon Training Simulation System). I'm looking forward to having a go at firing a weapon.

Watching the planes take off from the base runway. It's very loud, but such a great experience!

The fire truck demonstration. Learning about the fire trucks and watching the demonstration of the big water cannon.

Gliding weekends!

Drill!

Out of all the activities you are involved in, what do you feel is the most worthwhile?

GST (General Service Training camp). The length of this activity is good as it gives you a chance to really put your skills into practice instead of just over a few hours or a day.

Bivouacs (field camps, usually run over a weekend).

Not having the luxury of a hot shower, flushing toilets, home cooked meal really teaches you a lot. Participating in air shows – we get to meet lots of people and some even get a chance to fly in a plane.

Think back over the last 12 month of all the things you have done at cadets. What activities would you like to have more of?

More of Everything!

(Focus group, AAFC cadets)

Section C: The Framework

Doing things of value

→Engaging in the real world

Contributing to the community

Serving involves doing things of value that are useful in the real world. Young people talk about this in terms of 'giving something back'. 'Civic service' is a concept that has been developed around the globe⁵⁸. The value of service to the community is identified and promoted. Many ways of providing service to the community are explored. There is scope for exploring the value and relevance of this idea more widely in Australia.

In order to conduct activities, community-based units are highly reliant on skill base and resources within the local community. As well as serving, this emphasises the importance of relationship more generally: of links, bonds, partnership and reciprocal arrangements in the wider community.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

Cadets are proud to wear the uniform that is respected as part of that organisation. They say they feel part of something bigger, with an inherent value to the community that they do not have to explain. They appreciate being asked questions by the public when they attend and march at ceremonial events, or even when they wear their uniform in the shop. This is an interesting insight into the way that young people gravitate towards being somebody valued in the community – if they are offered that role.

Section C: The Framework

Forming partnerships in communities

Partnerships are being fostered at local, regional and national levels to enhance the work of Cadets in communities. For example, ANC is partnering with Apex,

in recognition that both seek to serve the community, to have a presence and be visible in the community.

Honouring those who have gone before

As part of its leadership program, one Australian high school has created a room where cadets can learn about those from their own school community who served

in wars. The students can see pictures, read and hear stories, and engage with how life must have been for these active Service personnel.

Marching with the flag

Our squadron, we're supported by our RSL, and they invite us to do the marching with the flag. It's very valued and respected. Only the most respected from that squadron can do it because the CO trusts them.

[AAFC cadet]

The cadets agree that they feel a strong sense of being valued by retired veterans. At ANZAC Day marches the cadets are always approached by veterans, asked about what they do and are also told stories. This is really important to the cadets and they can also see how much the veterans like telling their stories to young people who will listen and also have a degree of understanding about the Defence Forces.

Section C: The Framework

Doing things of value

→ Being active citizens

Building collective identity

Research indicates that it is very important for young people to know they are part of something bigger than themselves⁵⁹.

One of the two most frequently occurring items in the cadet survey is 'I feel I belong in Cadets' (over 85%). This represents the extent to which Cadets is seen as supportive and accommodating by the young people who attend regularly. It is also reported by young people as one of the three most important elements of their cadet experience.

Young people talk about forming enduring friendships by being challenged together.

Cadets form a lot of great friendships with other cadets in their state or across Australia during various camps. Beyond 'friends', repeatedly in focus groups, cadets talk about this being part of 'a family'. One younger cadet put it this way:

'CUO's are like grandparents, Warrant Officers are like your mum and dad because they [correct] you when you haven't done your drill properly, then Sergeants are like your big brothers and sisters teaching you lessons.'

The young people talk about having a particular affiliation with Service personnel and would love to have them more involved in the cadet activities.

'The uniform' is felt to be very important to cadets. (66.5% very important, 24.7% quite a bit important, 91.2% combined).

Beyond their unit and organisation, many of the young people express a particular interest in getting together for tri-Service activities.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

Interestingly, 'Meeting and spending time with other young people', was deemed very important by less than 50% of cadets (or 80% when combined with those who thought it was a bit important).

Focus group interviews reveal that there are many layers to the belonging they speak about, and it is not simply summed up in the word 'peer group'. Young people say they belong to friends, to unit, to the particular Service with which their Cadet organisation is aligned, to the country, to the past, present and future generations involved with their Service. All levels are important, but the latter stands out as unusual and potentially very significant in an Australian context.

Section C: The Framework

Honouring and being honoured

In one focus group, one young man explains: *that is partially the reason I joined – to find a way to honour ex-service men and women. It is different when you wear the uniform (others agree strongly). It is a different experience from ordinary civilians. I was 12 when I decided I wanted to join the Navy Cadets. I didn't have any family who had been part of Defence Force. This was just after an ANZAC Day.*

A young woman says: *I wanted to join at 12 but didn't have anyone to join with so waited till I was 15.*

Others chime in: *I wasn't interested in Defence Forces at first (I had a serving family) but I got introduced to it. My friend introduced me. I fell in love with the traditions, service and the values.*

It's really emotional too when you put on that uniform when you have a cutlass in your hand and you listen to the music ... I had tears in my eyes.

After ANZAC day we have a reflection. Think one day this could be us. People might one day be honouring us.

We get referred to as a family. It's like that for everybody. They make you feel like that.

[ANC cadet focus group]

Being part of something big

The thing that keeps me going is pride. Respect and pride.

I want to do something big in my life, and the Army is a big thing in Australia.

It's about being part of something bigger.

ANZAC Day feels really big. People smile and are happy. It's a really good thing to do.

[AAC senior cadets]

Feeling valued by society

Cadets in a focus group explain that they feel their uniform is a sign of representation of the RAAF/AAFC. Putting on the uniform makes them feel valued and a part of something: *You feel valued by society, like ANZAC Day, people see uniform, discipline ... community members see you.*

[AAFC senior cadet]

Cadets say they feel very valued by RSL members. They talk with veterans at ANZAC Day marches and really feel the veterans are interested in knowing what the cadets are doing and sharing their knowledge and stories with the cadets.

Cadets say they feel valued by their grandparents and parents. These family members always show an interest in what activities they are doing and what they are learning.

In this way their engagement in cadets also strengthens other links across the generations.

Section C: The Framework

Doing things of value

→ Being active citizens

Leading in communities

Leading in communities can be seen as a gathering together of all that has gone before.

One of the cadet Commanders talked about the role of Cadet organisations in community in terms of 'dignified service'.

Insights about youth development practice from cadets:

Particularly from focus groups and consultations, data suggest that:

1. Cadets are learning to be leaders, and some are finding that they can show leadership wherever they are in their daily lives
2. Staff are leading in sustained ways in their communities, and this is an important role worthy of wider recognition
3. Through this project and their ongoing work, Cadet organisations are further contributing to a wider understanding of youth development within the Australian youth sector

Section C: The Framework

Leading young people in communities

One staff member explains: *In society, people are more disconnected. Often there is a break in the chain of knowledge passed through families. Cadets is an important site of inter-generational relationships.*

I was a cadet myself and have a lot of respect for them. My daughter joined and I got involved again. I have a ball with the kids.

(Focus group, ANC staff)

Using leadership skills in other settings

Cadets has taught me some leadership skills that I can use out in the civilian world as well.

Learning about trust, learning how to deal with people.

The more you progress in your cadet career the more you develop personally and the more your social skills develop.

You have a background knowledge of what leadership is and how to make it effective.

(Focus group, AAC senior cadets)

Teachers can see you are different

Cadets explain that students and teachers make cadets feel valued. Teachers are generally aware of the skills taught at cadets and often choose these students to be leaders in class activities as these skills are more developed within cadets.

When you go to school, the teachers expect a lot of you ... it's not a burden but the teachers expect more of you, they expect that you can explain it in terms all can understand.

Teachers can see you're different.

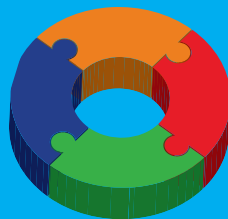
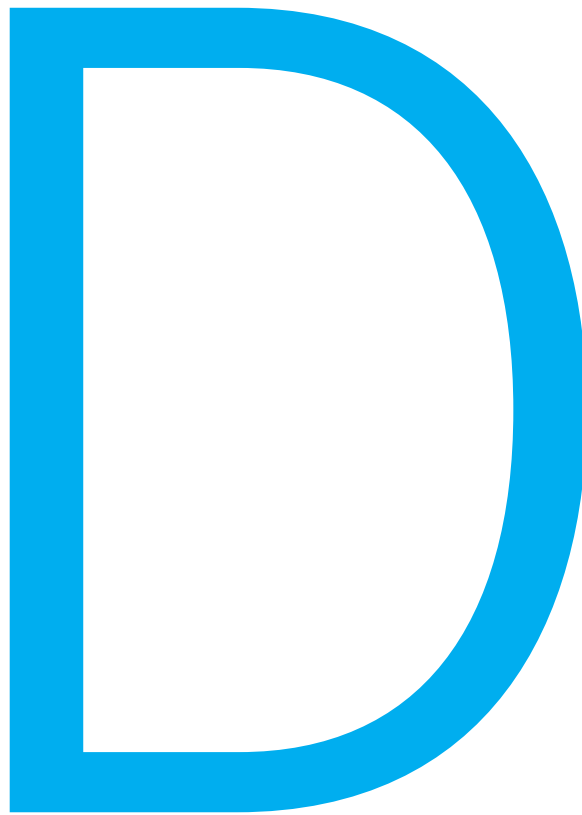
As you go up the ranks you get more mature because you learn more ...

Adults trust you more because of the standards expected of cadets.

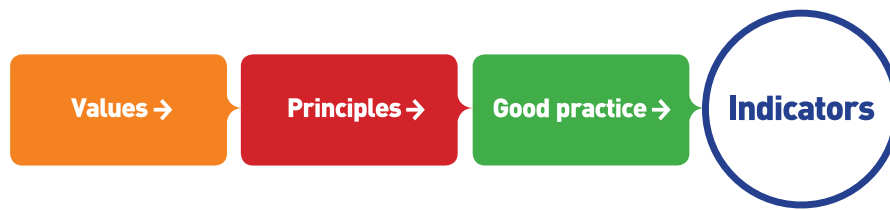
(Focus group, AAFC senior cadets)

Good practice

Section



Cadet Youth Development Framework



Indicators of good practice

This section provides indicators for the principles articulated in the Cadet Youth Development Framework.

Document 2 presents these indicators in the form of a toolkit, in which the indicators are presented as a checklist that is intended to be used by the Cadet organisations and units to benchmark practice; to track progress against their goals; and as an evidence base on which to develop strategies for growth areas.

The indicators are tailored to enable the organisations to gain a perspective on their own practice in relation the Framework's good practice elements for:

- a. cadets
- b. staff and volunteers
- c. the organisation

The principle of continuous improvement has emerged as a key element in youth development frameworks. A cycle of inquiry that enables all participants to engage in reflection and to contribute to improvements to programs is an essential part of a strengths-based approach. It is only through the recognition of strengths and growth areas, and the embedding of a process that enables young people, volunteers and the organisation to build on these that programs remain relevant, vital and effective.

Indicators, linked directly to the principles of good practice, are integral to any learning organisation and embed a dynamic, ongoing process of improvement within the Framework, building on strengths.

a. Indicators: Cadets

Valuing people	Indicators for young people
Recognising strengths	Recognising achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → My achievements are recognised in the program → Cadets' achievements are celebrated → I am able to achieve at the right level for me
	Prioritising participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I have responsibility for my unit's achievements → I am able to influence what we do in our program → I am able to give feedback on the quality of our program
Looking out for each other	Allowing challenges and risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I feel safe to participate in activities that involve risks → I understand the risks and how to manage them → I am able to get some things wrong and learn from them
	Protecting and supporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I feel I belong in my cadet unit → I receive clear feedback on where I can strengthen my activities next time → I am actively engaged in risk assessment and planning for safe activities
Building the team	Communicating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I understand what is expected of me by my leaders → When I give feedback to my leaders I feel it is taken seriously → I interact with people in the community as part of my cadet activities
	Fostering teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Teamwork is part of my cadet experience → I develop teamwork skills as a cadet → I work in a team with adults in cadet activities
	Supporting potential (to grow and lead) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I feel supported to develop my talents and skills → I am mentored in my Cadet organisation → I am able exercise leadership in my Cadet organisation
	Welcoming diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I feel welcome to participate in any activities in my Cadet unit → I can take part in activities that are at my level → I have opportunities to meet people outside my usual social circle

Section D: Good practice

Doing things of value	Indicators for young people
Learning and growing from experience and reflection	Developing skills in life and careers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I learn practical life skills → I learn work and career-related skills → I engage in activities that enable me to combine the theory I have learned with practice
	Gaining attitudes and building character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I learn how to solve problems → I learn how to reflect on actions and communications with others → I learn how to show respect to others
	Building resilience and capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I learn how to cope and face challenges → I learn how to work with other people → I am supported to reflect on my capacities
Engaging in the real world	Embracing new challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I am exposed to new experiences → I feel confident to take on new challenges → I feel challenged by the activities we undertake in cadets
	Hands-on experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → In Cadets I gain hands-on experience → In Cadets I am supported to learn by doing → In Cadets I learn from practical activities
	Contributing to the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → In Cadets I engage with the wider community → In Cadets I do activities that make a difference in the community → I understand the value of serving the community
Being active citizens	Building collective identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I understand the goals of my organisation → In Cadets I understand my responsibilities to the team → In Cadets I experience being part of something bigger than myself
	Leading in communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I understand what is expected of me as a leader in the community → In Cadets I engage with the community on a regular basis → In Cadets I lead activities that make a difference in the community

b. Indicators: Cadet staff and volunteers

Valuing people	Indicators for young people
Recognising strengths	Recognising achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Excellence in mentoring and leadership by staff and volunteers is formally recognised within my Cadet unit → When I achieve excellence it is formally recognised in my Cadet organisation → I am able to use my expertise in my Cadet organisation
	Prioritising participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I have responsibility for my unit's achievements → I am able to influence what we do in our program → I am able to give feedback on the quality of our program
Looking out for each other	Allowing challenges and risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I have tools to help me assess the risks involved in activities → I am able to manage risks → I have the resources and support I need to manage risk → Activities are challenging
	Protecting and supporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I feel supported by the organisation if things do not go as planned → I receive feedback on my strengths and growth areas → I am mentored by my organisation
Building the team	Communicating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I have a clear understanding of my roles and responsibilities → I use a range of communication technologies → I communicate with members of the community about cadet activities
	Fostering teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I feel part of a team → I am supported to develop my teamwork skills → Cadet staff build effective teams with each other
	Supporting potential (to grow and lead) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I have useful training in how to be a good mentor to young people → I have regular opportunities to review my professional performance with supervisors → I have opportunities to be mentored within my Defence organisation
	Welcoming diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Staff and volunteers take steps to ensure that all young people in their community are welcome in their organisation → Staff and volunteers promote tolerance and teamwork in their unit → Staff and volunteers participate in professional development to heighten awareness of cultural and social diversity

Section D: Good practice

Doing things of value	Indicators for young people
Learning and growing from experience and reflection	Developing skills in life and careers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → My role develops social and practical skills that I use in other areas of my life → I practice work and career-related skills → My role enables me to combine theory and practice
	Gaining attitudes and building character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → My role requires me to solve problems → My role involves reflection on my actions → I show respect to others
	Building resilience and capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I am supported to cope with challenges → I am supported to reflect on my capacities → I am supported to build on my strengths and recognise my weaknesses
Engaging in the real world	Embracing new challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I am exposed to new experiences → I take on new challenges → I feel challenged by the activities in cadets
	Hands-on experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Our unit has access to the resources we need to conduct hands-on activities → I can use my experiences and skills to promote learning by doing → I receive training in the use of a hands-on approach to learning
	Contributing to the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I am supported and trained to build links and partnerships with the local community → My unit engages in activities that are visible in, and benefit the community → My unit has a sustained involvement in the community
Being active citizens	Building collective identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I feel I belong in the organisation → I understand my responsibilities and rights in the organisation → I feel I am part of something bigger than myself
	Leading in communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → I understand what is involved to be a leader in the community → I/we lead activities that make a difference in the community → Staff and volunteers receive recognition for excellence in civic service

c. Indicators: Cadet organisations

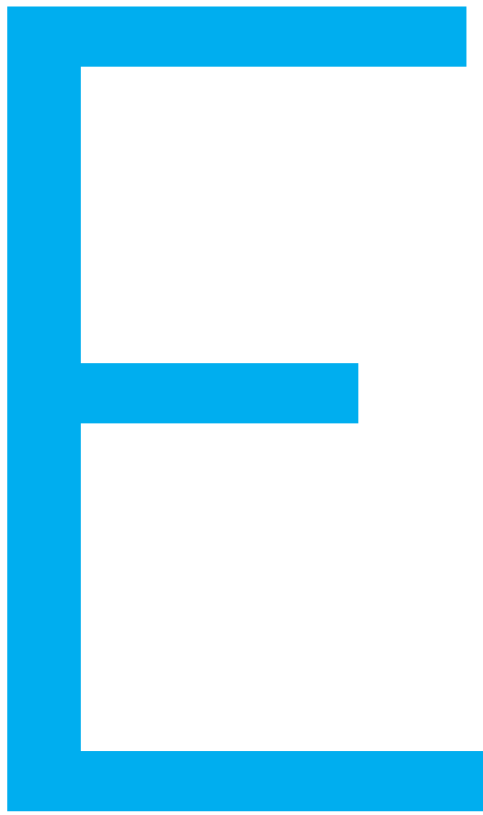
Valuing people	Indicators for young people
Recognising strengths	Recognising achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation has mechanisms in place for reporting excellence → The Cadet organisation gives formal recognition to excellence in positive youth development in cadet programs → The Cadet organisation celebrates achievement at different levels of responsibility among staff, volunteers and cadets
	Prioritising participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation identifies and communicates cadet and staff decision-making roles to staff, volunteers and cadets → The Cadet organisation has in place a range of mechanisms to support cadet and staff input into cadet programs → The Cadet organisation has a meta-strategy for youth development
Looking out for each other	Allowing challenges and risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation has protocols for risk management to be used by staff, volunteers and cadets → Cadet staff undertake professional development in risk management → Staff are supported to initiate challenging activities
	Strengthening protective behaviours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation has ethics guidelines for the positive youth development program in cadets → Staff have opportunities to receive feedback on their performance from their supervisors → Staff receive professional development in age and developmentally appropriate activities for cadets that enable cadets to be extended
Building the team	Communicating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation clearly communicates the correct processes and outcomes expected of programs → The Cadet organisation employs communication processes that ensure reciprocity: including two-way dialogue and communication between the organisation, staff, volunteers and cadets → The Cadet organisation provides clear entry points for staff, cadets and community organisations
	Fostering Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The role of teamwork in the organisation is clearly communicated → Teamwork skills are recognised and rewarded → The Cadet organisation acknowledges the role of social networks for positive youth development in the Cadet organisations
	Supporting potential (to grow and lead) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation provides incentives to attract and support staff and volunteers from a range of cultural and professional backgrounds → The Cadet organisation identifies the key competencies needed by staff and volunteers → The Cadet organisation provides leadership training opportunities for staff, volunteers and cadets
	Welcoming diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Resources are provided to support the participation of socially-excluded and marginalised young people to cadet programs → The Cadet organisation identifies and addresses the barriers that exclude young people and potential staff from participating in the organisation → The Cadet organisation recruits staff from diverse groups and contexts

Section D: Good practice

Doing things of value	Indicators for young people
Learning and growing from experience and reflection	<p>Developing skills in life and careers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation invests in the development of skilled people at all levels → The Cadet organisation ensures that volunteers have professional development to equip them to use their expertise → Where appropriate, cadet and staff activities contribute to externally recognised credentials <p>Gaining attitudes and building character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation ensures that the curriculum enhances problem solving by cadets and staff → The Cadet organisation ensures that the curriculum is aligned with the organisation's values → Staff and volunteers have structured, regular opportunities to reflect on their actions with a supervisor <p>Building resilience and capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Professional development in the use of activities that extend cadet capacities is provided for staff and cadets → Resilience is supported through the active building of teamwork at and between all levels of the Cadet organisation → The cycle of inquiry is used to build capacity within the Cadet organisations
Engaging in the real world	<p>Embracing new challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation builds on a cycle of continuous improvement in all aspects of their youth development program → As part of the cycle of continuous improvement, the Cadet organisation identifies areas of growth through the use of the cadet and staff checklists → The Cadet organisation provides professional development for staff and volunteers in the use of tools to implement a cycle of continuous improvement <p>Hands-on experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation supports recognition of prior learning by staff and volunteers → Recruitment strategies for staff and volunteers, and partnerships in communities, ensure that relevant practical expertise is available → Risk assessment and risk management procedures enable cadets to engage in hands-on experiences <p>Contributing to the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisation contributes to the community and provides clear public messages about how it aims to contribute → The Cadet organisation identifies and promotes the value of service to the community → The Cadet organisation has protocols for productive partnerships between Cadet units and community groups to ensure sustained engagement
Being active citizens	<p>Building collective identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The value of Cadets is communicated regularly and persuasively to the relevant Defence organisations → There are opportunities for tri-Service Cadet activities → The Cadet organisation provides opportunities for staff and volunteers to reflect on their performance with a supervisor <p>Leading in communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cadet organisations claim, and aim to further develop, a leading role in youth development within the Australian youth sector → Staff excellence in leadership in communities is formally recognised → The organisation highlights and celebrates Cadet and alumni leadership in other areas of community life

Supporting Material

Section



Cadet Youth Development Framework

Notes

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Cadet Youth Development Framework

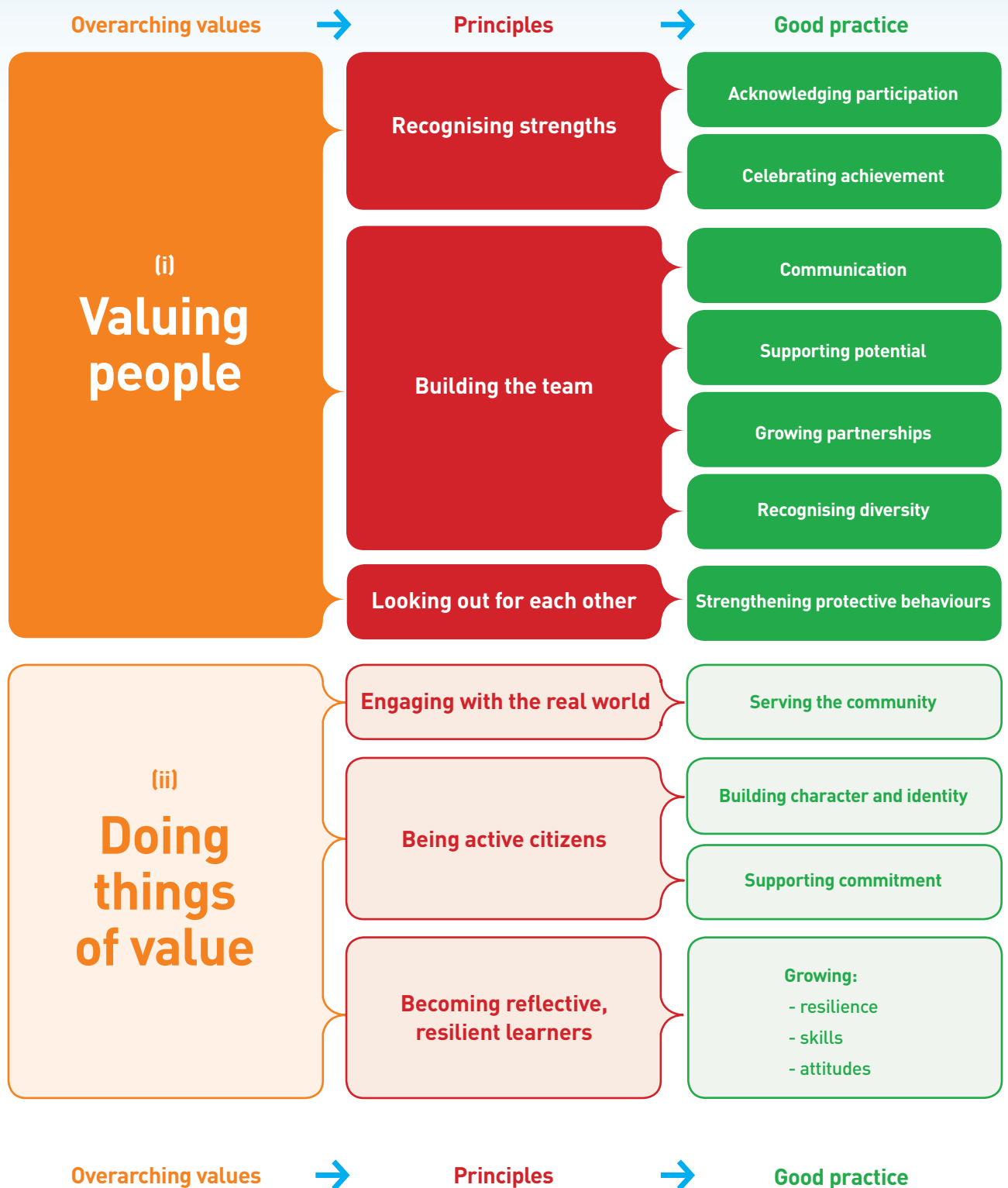
Fold-out flow chart

This supplementary section includes a fold-out flow chart.
Use this flow chart to assist your understanding of the
Cadet Youth Development Framework
as you read through this document.

Generic Youth Development Framework

Organisational values and insights

Young people in the twenty-first century:
being aware of the context and being aware of the lives involved



Cadet Youth Development Framework



Cadet Youth Development Framework



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