



**youth affairs council**  
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**MEDIA RELEASE: For immediate release**

## **Young people getting through** **Dealing with mental health in regional South Australia**

**Tuesday, 21 November 2006**

The Youth Affairs Council of South Australia's (YACSA) will launch its study into the mental health of young South Australians at 12.30 today in the Torrens Building, 220 Victoria Square, Adelaide.

The report, called *Getting through: responding to young people's mental health issues in the youth sector*, looks at the mental health needs of young South Australians and the needs of youth workers in supporting them.

The study found more mental health services are required in regional areas, along with the expansion of existing outreach services. Young people said that the confidentiality in regional mental health services was crucial, and youth workers need more information about how and refer young people who need specialist assistance.

"Youth workers in regional areas need training and practical resources to help identify and understand mental health issues, especially as mental health services in country regions are limited. Most importantly, they need those services to be available in their local areas," said Jennifer Duncan, Executive Director of YACSA.

The study found young people need more information about where to go if they have a mental health problem. "Our research shows young people are very savvy at finding information about mental health on the web, but problems arise when they need to access services, because they just don't know where to go," Ms Duncan said.

Young people also identified the move to adult-focused mental health services as an issue. "Young people need access to appropriate and consistent services on the basis of need, not age," Ms Duncan said.

The report found there is continuing stigma surrounding mental health issues. "There is a need for information that focuses on portraying mental health in a positive light, promoting wellbeing and the ways to stay healthy and build resilience," Ms Duncan said.

The study was initiated in response to concerns across the youth sector about young people's mental health and is based on extensive consultation with youth workers and young people across South Australia.

YACSA is the peak youth affairs body in South Australia, providing an independent voice for young people and the youth sector.

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