

Australia's Youth: Reality and Risk

**Young people and labour market disadvantage:
The situation of young people not in
education or full-time work**

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Summary

- This article examines the situation of young people engaged in marginal activities who, as a result, may face limited choices about their job and income situation in the future. This involves more than unemployed young people. It includes those 15 to 19-year-olds who are neither in education or training (to study for a recognised qualification) nor in full-time work.
- In 1996 there were an estimated 187,700 15 to 19-year-olds (almost 15 per cent) engaged in marginal activities at one point of time. This was made up of:
 - 67,800 not studying and in part-time work
 - 78,200 not studying and unemployed
 - 41,700 not studying and not in the labour force

Around 9 per cent of teenagers were engaged in marginal activities over a three year period.

- Young people engaged in marginal activities are more likely to be early school leavers; to have parents who have an occupational background that is unskilled and manual; and to be indigenous Australians. A number of other socio-economic factors are also important. The extreme disadvantage of early school leavers is apparent.
- The over-representation of young people from families with lower socio-economic status in the marginalised group raises the probability of the perpetuation of inter-generational inequality.
- There is a critical absence of information about a very small group (around 3-4 per cent) of 15 to 19-year-olds who are not studying and not in the labour force.

Policy responses should give priority to the situation of indigenous young people; improving training and educational opportunities for disadvantaged young people; and the provision of structured pathways from school to work.

Introduction

Give us a commitment for future work, give us some money to get there, to get that job, give us some kind of training towards that job. Don't leave us floating in the air.¹
(Young man in Crooks et al.)

The community tends to place special emphasis on youth unemployment. Employment has traditionally been a key part of young people's transition from dependence to independence. Youth unemployment is substantially higher than the unemployment rates for other age groups, and teenagers and young adults together represent almost 40 per cent of all unemployed people². There is also a concern about the long-term impact of such widespread unemployment (especially when it is for long periods) on the futures of young people, their personal health and well-being, and on their integration into full community life. This has implications for social policy beyond employment, education and income support for young people.

Our concern about youth unemployment needs to extend to the wider group of young people who appear to be experiencing labour market disadvantage or 'marginalisation'. Unemployed young people are not a static group and there is evidence of considerable movement by some young people between a range of activities that may not improve their labour market position.

Changes in the structure of the labour market, especially the increased incidence of part-time and casual work and the loss of opportunities for full-time work for young people, may mean that many young people who are in work may still face limited choices about their job and income situation in the future:

- the labour market seems to be increasingly segmented into a primary labour market with more secure better-paid jobs for more highly-skilled people and a secondary labour market with lower-skilled workers who are more confined to casual and low-paid employment with little prospect of upward mobility³;
- the casualisation of the labour force has disproportionately affected young people⁴;

¹ Crooks, Mary L., Webb, Marcia & Forster, Jacinda, *The price we pay: Young people, poverty and long-term unemployment in Australia*, National Youth Affairs Research Scheme, National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies, Hobart, 1996, p.50.

² ABS, Labour Force Survey, June 1997, Cat. no. 6203.0

³ Economic Planning and Advisory Commission, *Future labour market issues for Australia*, Commission Paper no. 12, AGPS, Canberra, 1996.

⁴ Flatau, Paul & Simpson, Michael, *Part-time youth employment and training: Evidence from the Australian Youth Survey*, Working paper series no. 137, National Institute of Labour Studies, Adelaide, 1996.

- Sweet describes a particular feature of the youth labour market over the 1990s as ‘the growth in the number of teenagers who are not full-time students but who are not at the same time employed on a full-time basis’, noting that in 1989, one in four of those teenagers who were not full-time students were also not in full-time work and that this had risen to one in two by 1996⁵;
- Sweet comments that this group is best described as engaged in marginal activities ‘many of which are inherently unstable’⁶ with the prospect of participation in full-time work being delayed into their mid-thirties;
- similarly Freeland⁷ argues that 15 to 19 year olds who are not in full-time employment or in full-time education and training can be characterised as having a very substantial risk of ongoing labour market disadvantage; and
- the Committee on Employment Opportunities found that:

Young people who are most at risk of lower incomes and long periods of unemployment include: those unemployed and not participating in education, part-time workers not participating in education, and young people who are neither participating in education nor in the labour market.⁸

and suggested that nearly 17 per cent of all teenagers may be affected.

While most 15 to 19-year-olds who are not in the labour market are either full or part-time students, a small minority are not students and also may be marginalised from the opportunities which education and training offer. This paper therefore focuses on the situation of 15 to 19-year-olds who are neither in education or training (to study for a recognised qualification) nor in full-time work - we have termed their activities as ‘marginal’.

It provides information about the dimensions and circumstances of the group of young people involved in marginal activities as a whole and then examines in more detail the activities which members of this group are involved in: unemployment, part-time work or non-labour market activities. The situation of those young people in insecure or ‘precarious’ full-time employment is not discussed here. While there is a lack of available data regarding the extent and nature of short-term and insecure full-time work among non-student teenagers it can be assumed that many in this group may be at risk of ongoing labour market disadvantage also. In addition some full-time students who are alienated from their schooling experience may also be marginalised.

⁵ Sweet, Richard, How well do our entry level training models fit the labour market of the 1990s?, paper presented to the Tasmanian Education Consortium National Conference on rethinking work – re-inventing education, Hobart, October 10–12, 1996, p.8.

⁶ *ibid.*, p.8.

⁷ Freeland, John, ‘Dislocated transitions: Access and participation for disadvantaged young people’, in Australian Education Council Review Committee, *Young People’s Participation in Post-compulsory Education and Training*, AGPS, Canberra, 1991.

⁸ Committee on Employment Opportunities, *Restoring full employment: A discussion paper*, AGPS, Canberra, 1993, p.41.

The paper therefore underestimates the number of young people engaged in marginal activities.

The paper concludes with a brief discussion of the policy implications with a particular focus on the role of labour market programs and a brief comment on the Youth Allowance.

Data sources

This paper compiles data on the group of young people involved in marginal activities from a number of sources.

Data from the ABS labour force survey provide an overall picture of the group defined as engaged in marginal activities. A number of limitations apply to the ABS labour force survey data and should be taken into account when evaluating the conclusions drawn. ABS surveys are sample-based and there is therefore a degree of uncertainty. This is not a major problem when estimates are based on large numbers of survey respondents. However the smaller the group of respondents, the less likely they are to be reliable⁹.

Another indication of the extent of marginal activity is provided by Department of Social Security (DSS) data showing the number of young people who receive DSS payments. As these are point-in-time data some variation would be expected between the numbers presented here and any estimation of DSS recipients over a year or other period of time. Detailed DSS data for 1990 was not available.

The available data include little information about the socio-economic characteristics of young people who are involved in marginal activities. To ensure that this group is not overlooked in future policy formulation and further disadvantaged as a result, it will be necessary to ensure that appropriate and sufficient data are routinely collected and made widely available.

Sample surveys such as the ABS labour force survey do not reflect the likely movement over time of young people in and out of employment, unemployment and marginal activities. The Australian Youth Survey (AYS) is an important longitudinal data source which overcomes the limitation to some extent and analysis of this data is presented here.

Population estimates of young people in marginal activities

In 1996 there were an estimated 187,700 15 to 19-year-olds who were either:

⁹ In all the tables cell counts which have a relative standard error of greater than 25 per cent are marked with asterisks.

- employed part-time and not in education;
- unemployed and not in education; or
- neither in the labour force nor in education.

This represented almost 15 per cent of the 15 to 19-year-old population.

Table 1: Labour market and education participation* of 15 to 19-year-olds 1996, number and proportion of population†

	In the labour force						Not in the labour force		Total	
	Employed full-time		Employed part-time		Unemployed		No.	%	No.	%
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.				
In education	6	75,700	23	293,300	6	74,100	38	485,300	73	928,400
Not in education	12	155,700	5	67,800	6	78,200	3	41,700	27	343,400
Total	18	231,400	28	361,100	12	152,200	41	527,100	100	1,271,800

* Education participation refers to participation in either full-time or part-time study leading to a recognised educational qualification under the Australian Bureau of Statistics Classification of Qualifications (ABSCQ).

† Estimates have been rounded to nearest hundred. Percentages have been rounded to whole percentages.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour force survey* (unpublished data), May 1996.

Table 2 gives more detailed information about this group for the years 1996, 1995 and 1990 by age grouping, type of activity and gender¹⁰.

¹⁰ Estimates of actual numbers are contained in Table A in the Appendix.

Table 2: Labour market and education participation of 15 to 19-year-olds 1996, 1995 and 1990, proportion of population of age group†

	Males				Females				Persons Total
	15	16-17	18-19	Total	15	16-17	18-19	Total	
1996 Population	132300	258900	260000	651200	125000	244000	251600	620700	1271900
Proportion not in education	5%	20%	48%	28%	5%	14%	48%	26%	27%
Proportion neither in education nor in full-time employment	3%*	11%	22%	14%	4%	9%	28%	16%	15%
Employed part-time	1%*	3%	7%	4%	1%*	5%	12%	7%	5%
Unemployed	2%*	6%	12%	8%	2%*	2%	8%	5%	6%
Not in the labour force	1%*	2%	3%	2%	2%*	2%	8%	4%	3%
1995 Population	127200	258200	262500	648000	120600	244500	250900	616000	1264000
Proportion not in education	4%*	19%	45%	27%	3%*	17%	50%	28%	27%
Proportion neither in education nor in full-time employment	2%*	11%	19%	13%	3%*	12%	30%	17%	15%
Employed part-time	0%*	3%	5%	4%	1%*	5%	11%	7%	5%
Unemployed	1%*	7%	12%	7%	1%*	5%	11%	7%	7%
Not in the labour force	1%*	2%*	2%	2%	1%*	2%*	7%	4%	3%
1990 Population	132700	279700	296400	708800	126000	267800	289700	683700	1392500
Proportion not in education	7%	25%	52%	33%	3%	24%	57%	34%	33%
Proportion neither in education nor in full-time employment	3%	10%	14%	10%	2%*	11%	21%	14%	12%
Employed part-time	1%*	2%	4%	3%	0%*	3%	6%	4%	3%
Unemployed	1%*	6%	8%	6%	1%*	5%	8%	5%	6%
Not in the labour force	1%*	2%	3%	2%	1%*	3	7%	4%	3%

* These estimates have a standard error of 25 per cent or more and hence may be unreliable.

† Estimates of population have been rounded to the nearest hundred. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest per cent.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour force survey*, May, unpublished data from 1996, 1995 and 1990 surveys

Key features shown in Tables 1 and 2 are:

- An increase in marginal activity over the 1990s with the proportion of young people not in education, training or full-time work increasing from 12 per cent in 1990 to 15 per cent in 1995 and 1996. In 1996 marginal activity among young males was 14 per cent, an increase from 10 per cent in 1990. For young females it was 16 per cent in 1996 compared with 14 per cent in 1990.
- The increase in marginal activity over the period was due to a decline in full-time employment amongst this group and a corresponding increase in part-time work and in unemployment. Over half of males in marginal activities in 1996 were unemployed, one-third in part-time work and the remainder not in the labour force. Of young females in marginal activities in 1996, 42 per cent were employed part-time with the remainder fairly evenly split between those who were unemployed and those not in the labour force (or education).
- The increase in marginal activity over the 1990s was not due to lower levels of education and training. Rather the proportion of all 15 to 19-year-olds who were not in education and training declined from 33 per

cent in 1990 to 27 per cent in 1996. However, this decline was not sufficient to make up for the decline in full-time employment over the period.

- The teenagers least likely to be participating in education and training were 18 to 19-year-old females. In 1996 28 per cent were neither in education and training nor in full-time employment. This compares with 22 per cent for 18 to 19-year-old males despite the higher incidence of unemployment of 18 to 19-year-old males compared with females.

Young people in receipt of Department of Social Security payments

Another indication of the extent in marginal activity by 15 to 19-year-olds are the numbers who receive a DSS payment.

Table 3¹¹ shows recipients of DSS payments which are labour market-related for August 1996. Most of these apply to unemployed young people – some of whom may also be engaged in part-time work or education and training. It also shows pension and special benefit payments where the recipient is more likely (but not necessarily) to be outside the labour market. The table also gives separate estimates for those who receive an additional independent homeless rate of payment.

¹¹ Actual numbers are contained in Table B in the Appendix

Table 3: 15 to 19-year-old DSS recipients by gender, percentage of total, August 1996†

	Males	Females	Persons
Total DSS recipients	64,800	65,500	130,300
Proportion of teenagers	10%	11%	10%
Breakdown of DSS recipients			
Labour market payments:	90%	76%	83%
Newstart Allowance	19%	16%	17%
Job Search Allowance	43%	35%	39%
Youth Training Allowance	28%	24%	26%
Sickness Allowance	1%	1%	1%
Other payments:	10%	24%	17%
Sole Parent Pension	0%	16%	8%
Disability Support Pension	10%	7%	8%
Special Benefit	0%	2%	1%
Total DSS payments	100%	100%	100%
Independent homeless rate recipients*	7%	8%	7%

† Population estimates and numbers of DSS recipients have been rounded to the nearest hundred. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest per cent. As DSS data are point-in-time the figures may reflect seasonal variations.

* Independent homeless rate recipients are a subset of all recipients except pensioners

Source: Unpublished DSS data for August 1996, ABS Labour Force survey.

Significant features of this table are:

- In 1996, 10 per cent of teenagers received a DSS payment.
- The great majority (83 per cent) received a labour market-related payment.
- Of those young people receiving a DSS payment, 7 per cent received a higher rate due to homelessness.
- There are a number of differences in the type of payments females and males received. Many more young women received a sole parent pension (16 per cent of all young female DSS recipients) than men (less than 1 per cent). Young men in receipt of DSS payments were more likely to receive labour-market payments than young women.

Table 4¹² shows the number and proportion of young people in receipt of DSS payments for 1996, 1995 and 1990.

¹² Composition of DSS recipients by age is contained in Table C in the Appendix

Table 4: Number and proportion of all 15 to 19-year-olds receiving DSS payments; August 1996, 1995 and 1990*

	Number	Percentage of teenage population
1996 Teenage population	1271800	100
DSS recipients	130300	10
Labour market payment recipients	107700	9
Other DSS payment recipients	22600	2
Independent homeless rate recipients	9600	1
1995 Teenage population	1263900	100
DSS recipients	134700	11
Labour market payment recipients	111800	9
Other DSS payment recipients	22900	2
Independent homeless rate recipients	9400	1
1990 Teenage population	1392300	100
DSS recipients	111000	8
Labour market payment recipients	88100	6
Other DSS payment recipients	22900	2
Independent homeless rate recipients	2800	0

* Estimates of population and numbers of DSS recipients have been rounded to the nearest hundred. Source: Unpublished DSS data; DSS, *Annual Report 1989-90*, AGPS, Canberra, 1990.

- Over the period 1990-96 there was an increase in the number and proportion of young people receiving a DSS payment from 8 per cent in 1990 to over 10 per cent in 1996. This was associated with an increase in the numbers receiving labour market-related payments from 88,110 in 1990 to 111,793 in 1995 with a slight decline to 107,691 in 1996. While this change mirrors increased general levels of unemployment there was an easing of the income test in September 1995 with the implementation of the *Working Nation* changes which may have contributed slightly to higher recipient numbers.
- The proportion of young DSS recipients who were in receipt of a pension or special benefit remained relatively stable over the period.
- There was an increase in the number of young DSS recipients receiving the additional homeless rate of payment from 2,759 to 9,602 or from 0.2 per cent of all teenagers to 0.7 per cent in 1996. This is likely to be associated with an increase in take-up of these higher rates of payment because of raised awareness due to promotion, and expansion and easing of eligibility criteria, rather than an indication of more extensive teenage homelessness.

The background of young people in marginal activities

There is some evidence that young people engaged in marginal activities are more likely to have experienced some socio-economic disadvantage:

- The Committee on Employment Opportunities¹³ suggested that the increased difficulties for young people in obtaining full-time work was experienced more by those with limited education.
- Crooks et al.¹⁴, using work by Cass¹⁵ and McDonald, Brownlee and Greenblat¹⁶ indicated a number of likely socio-economic predictors which are important in understanding the situation of young people engaged in marginal activities. These included non-completion of 12 years of schooling; parents' educational, occupational and labour force status; gender and living arrangements; birthplace; indigenous background; and locality or regional circumstances.
- The South Australia Youth Employment Taskforce, citing evidence from the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme¹⁷ listed similar indicators but also included those living in single households; those living within violent households; those living in rural areas and areas with a dearth of social and economic infrastructure; and state wards and those living in state institutions.

School leaving age

Table 5 shows the much greater likelihood of young people who leave school early being engaged in marginal activities¹⁸. In 1996 33 per cent of 18 to 19-year-old males who left school before Year 12 were engaged in marginal activities in comparison with 18 per cent of those who stayed at school until Year 12. More striking was the fact that over half of 18 to 19 year old females who left school early were engaged in marginal activities compared with 18 per cent of those who stayed until Year 12.

Table 5: 18 to 19-year-old school leavers engaged in marginal and non-marginal activities, May 1996

¹³ Committee on Employment Opportunities, op. cit.

¹⁴ Crooks et al., op. cit.

¹⁵ Cass, B., 'Two worlds for young Australians' paper presented at *Jobs for Young Australians* Conference, University of South Australia, Adelaide, 28-31 August, 1995.

¹⁶ McDonald, P., Brownlee, H. & Greenblat, E., 'Education and training for young people: Determinants of participation', *Family Matters*, no. 38, pp. 32-37, August 1994.

¹⁷ National Youth Affairs Research Scheme, *Young people living on the urban fringe*, National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies, Hobart, 1995.

¹⁸ Estimates of actual numbers are contained in Table D in the Appendix

	Males	Females	Persons
Left school Year 12			
engaged in marginal activities	18%	18%	18%
not engaged in marginal activities	82%	82%	82%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Left school before Year 12			
engaged in marginal activities	33%	58%	44%
not engaged in marginal activities	67%	42%	56%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour force survey*, May 1996, unpublished data.

Socio-economic background and educational achievement

An analysis of the Australian Youth Survey (AYS) data was undertaken by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) for this paper. The AYS, a longitudinal study, surveyed a national sample of 2,128 sixteen-year-olds for the first time in 1991 and 1992. The data presented in Table 6 are based on their situation three years later when the respondents were 19 years of age.

It examines the situation of those young people who appear to have been engaged in marginal activities fairly consistently for the three years: those who, by the age of 19, had not participated in higher education, apprenticeships or training, had been unemployed for more than one-third of their time since leaving school and were unemployed or in part-time work at age 19.

This is a more narrow group than examined so far in this paper at around 9 per cent of the population compared with 15 per cent in Table 1. It gives an indication of the extent of activity which is likely to have severe longer-term consequences for the individual.

Table 6: Characteristics of 19 year-olds in 1994 and 1995 who have been consistently engaged in marginal activities from age 16 years (%)

	Incidence of marginalised activity	Composition of group of young people engaged in marginal activities.
		Gender
Males	8.8	50.5
Females	9.6	49.5
		Maths achievement at age 14
Very low	21.0	38.5
Low	11.6	29.2
Average	6.2	17.9
High	5.5	10.3
Very high	2.3	4.1
		Parents' occupation
Professional and managerial	3.8	7.1
Clerical, intermediate non-manual	5.8	15.5
Skilled manual	8.5	40.7
Unskilled manual	11.9	36.8
		Mother's country of birth
Australia	9.0	69.4
Other English	9.9	11.7
Non-English	9.6	18.9
		Rural or urban
Rural	9.7	38.8
Metropolitan	8.9	61.2
		School type
Government	10.7	89.0
Catholic	4.8	9.6
Non-Catholic private	2.4	1.4
		Year 12 completion or not
Year 12	6.0	49.5
Early leaver	19.5	50.5

Source: ACER analysis of Australian Youth Survey data.

Table 6 indicates that 8.8 per cent of the sample of 19-year-old males and 9.6 per cent of the sample of 19-year-old females were engaged in marginal activities. It shows, for example, that 21 per cent of young people who had very low maths achievement at age 14 were in the marginal category at age 19 whereas only 2.3 per cent with very high maths achievement at age 14 were in the marginal category at age 19.

Young people in the marginal category were more likely to:

- have parents' occupation from an unskilled manual background; and
- be an early school leaver.

They were less likely to:

- have high or very high maths achievement at age 14;
- have parents whose occupation was in the professional or managerial areas;
- have attended a Catholic or non-Catholic private school; and
- have completed Year 12.

Indigenous young people

We do not have comparable information on whether indigenous young people are over-represented among those undertaking marginal activities. Figures from *The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Australia's indigenous youth*¹⁹ indicate that they are highly likely to be.

First, school participation rates for indigenous young people are lower than for all Australian young people: for 16-year-olds 57 per cent compared with 80 per cent, and for 17-year-olds 31 per cent compared with 60 per cent. Only ten per cent of indigenous 15 to 24-year-olds have some form of post-school qualification compared with an estimated 23 per cent for all Australian 15 to 24-year-olds.

Second, indigenous young people have lower rates of labour force participation and higher rates of unemployment. In June 1994 the labour force participation rate for indigenous 15 to 19-year-olds was 47 per cent compared with 55 per cent for all 15 to 19-year-olds. The unemployment rate of indigenous 15 to 19-year-olds was 50 per cent compared with 22 per cent for all Australian 15 to 19-year-olds in 1994.

Third, young indigenous people are more likely to be in receipt of government income support than other 15 to 19-year-olds, with 40 per cent of all indigenous teenagers having government payments as their main source of income in 1994.

Homelessness

Young homeless people constitute another group of young people who might be expected to be particularly confined to marginalised activities. Several

¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Australia's indigenous youth*, Cat. no. 4197.0, 1994.

authors have documented the difficulties homeless students have in continuing in education²⁰.

Homelessness does not equate with leaving home but it is a problem for young people when they leave home prematurely without resources and supports. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission²¹ defined homelessness as a lifestyle which includes transience of shelter, a state of detachment from family and vulnerability to danger, with a conservative estimate of youth homelessness²² at between 20,000 to 25,000. A later estimate in 1991 by MacKenzie and Chamberlain²³ was between 15,000 to 19,000. In a subsequent study MacKenzie and Chamberlain²⁴ estimated the number of homeless school students across Australia in one week in 1994 at 10,000 with between 25,000 to 30,000 homeless school students at some time during the year²⁵.

A number of reviews have concluded that lack of employment opportunities for young people is one of the reasons for youth homelessness²⁶. There is also some evidence from a number of smaller studies that young homeless people experience educational and labour market disadvantage. For example:

- according to the Australian Council of Social Service²⁷ just over one-third of homeless students complete Year 9, 28 per cent complete Year 10 and only 4 per cent complete Years 11 and 12; and
- two studies of small numbers of homeless young people in Melbourne²⁸ found unemployment rates of 80 and 87 per cent. The Hirst study also

²⁰ For example see Tasker Gill, *Moving on: Austudy and the lives of unsupported secondary students*, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Melbourne, 1995.

²¹ Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Our homeless children: Report of the National Inquiry into Homeless Children*, AGPS, Canberra, 1989.

²² Most studies of young homeless people do not distinguish those who are age 15 to 19 years from those aged 24 to 24 years.

²³ MacKenzie, David & Chamberlain, Chris, 'How many homeless youth?', *Youth Studies Australia*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 14-22, 1992.

²⁴ MacKenzie, David & Chamberlain, Chris, 'The national census of homeless school students', *Youth Studies Australia*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 22-28, 1995.

²⁵ DEETYA data show that in 1990, 7144 students aged 15 to 19-years received the Student Homeless Rate of Austudy. By 1995 this number has risen to 12,220, and in 1996 there were 12,866 recipients of Student Homeless Rate of Austudy. The extent of homelessness among students is likely to be greater than these figures suggest despite the increasing number of recipients over the period (Tasker, op. cit.)

²⁶ Charman, Mandy, McClelland, Alison, Montague, Meg & Sully, Vincent, *Strengthening attachments: The report of the Prevention of Youth Homelessness Project*, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Melbourne, forthcoming.

²⁷ Australian Council of Social Service, *The future of work and young people's pathways to adulthood: An issues paper prepared for the Commission for the Future of Work*, Australian Council of Social Service, Sydney, 1996.

found that homeless young people's experience of employment was short-term with the average duration of the longest job being nine months.

Marginal activities

There is little information about the movement over time of young people in and out of marginal activities because of limitations in the nature and way data is collected. The AYS data presented above does suggest both that the group is far from fixed and that a core group is likely to be consistently engaged in marginal activities for some time. There may be considerable movement between the activities presented below.

Unemployment

A number of studies have documented the extent of teenage unemployment and its association with various socio-economic factors. Some of the main findings from these studies include the following.

First, over the past two decades teenagers have had consistently higher rates of unemployment than the national average²⁹ but the rate of increase in the number of unemployed teenagers has been lower than that for all unemployed people³⁰. Teenagers did not necessarily fare worse than adult Australians during the recent recession³¹.

Second, 15 to 19-year-olds move in and out of unemployment more than adult Australians³² and they have shorter durations of unemployment; in June 1997 an average of 24.1 weeks³³. Longer duration of unemployment is a key factor reducing the probability of exiting from unemployment for

²⁸ Hirst, C., *Forced exit: A profile of the young and homeless in inner urban Melbourne*, Salvation Army, Melbourne, 1989; Chamberlain, C., MacKenzie, D. & Brown, H., *Homeless in the city: An evaluation of the first year of the Information Deli*, Management Committee of the Information Deli, Department of Community Services Victoria, Department of Labour (Youth Affairs Division) and Buckland Foundation, Melbourne, 1991.

²⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Overview of the youth labour market', in *Jobs for young Australians: A report of the young Australians – Making the future work Project*, eds John Spierings & John Spoehr, volume 2, Social Justice Research Foundation, Adelaide, 1996; Hardin, Alexis & Kapuscinski, Cezary A., *Young Australians in unemployment: Despair by any other name*, Discussion paper no. 359, Centre for Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, Canberra, 1997.

³⁰ Hardin, Alexis & Kapuscinski, op. cit.

³¹ Wooden, Mark, 'The youth labour market: Characteristics and trends', *Australian Bulletin of Labour*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 137-160, 1996b.

³² Economic Planning and Advisory Commission, op. cit.

³³ Australian Bureau of Statistics *Labour Force Survey*, Cat. no. 6203.0, June 1997.

teenagers³⁴. Other factors which are associated with a lower probability of leaving unemployment include lower educational levels, disability, locality, marital status and type of accommodation³⁵. Non-student unemployed young people are more likely to experience long-term unemployment than their student peers³⁶.

Third, in terms of the backgrounds of unemployed young people, they are more likely to have come from families with a history of unemployment; from families with low income levels and from sole parent families. Young people in insecure and unstable housing, with low levels of education or with a disability are also more likely to experience unemployment as are young people from indigenous backgrounds and those who have recently arrived from non-English speaking countries status. Higher rates of youth unemployment occur in areas outside capital cities, apart from South Australia³⁷.

Table 7 shows that in May 1996 there were 152,200 unemployed young people aged 15 to 19 years with an unemployment rate of 20 per cent. Those young people who were not studying had an unemployment rate of 26 per cent while only 17 per cent of those engaged in study were unemployed.

³⁴ Hardin, Alexis & Kapuscinski, Cezary A., *Young Australians in unemployment: Despair by any other name*, Discussion paper no. 359, Centre for Economic Policy Research, ANU, Canberra, 1997.

³⁵ *ibid.*; Harris, Mark N., 'Modelling the probability of youth unemployment in Australia', *The Economic Record*, vol. 72, no. 217, pp. 118-129, June 1996.

³⁶ Flatau & Simpson, *op. cit.*

³⁷ Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, *Wanted: Our future – Report into the implications of sustained high levels of unemployment among young people (15 to 24-years-old)*, Australian Parliament, Canberra, 1992; Crooks et al., *op. cit.*; Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour force survey*, 1996; Economic Planning and Advisory Commission, *op. cit.*

Table 7: Unemployment among 15 to 19-year-old students and non-students, May 1996, numbers and rates

	Males			Females			Persons
	15-17	18-19	Total	15-17	18-19	Total	Total
In education							
in the labour force	122,800	86,600	209,400	152,100	81,500	233,600	443,100
unemployed	23,500	9,000	32,500	28,000	13,600	41,600	74,000
unemployment rate	19%	10%	16%	18%	17%	18%	17%
Not in education							
in the labour force	49,800	116,200	166,000	33,400	102,300	135,700	301,700
unemployed	16,900	31,900	48,800	8,600	20,800	29,300	78,200
unemployment rate	34%	27%	29%	26%	20%	22%	26%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour force survey* May 1996, unpublished data.

Table 8 presents more details of DSS unemployment allowance recipients³⁸. Of all teenagers receiving a labour market payment, 93.8 per cent are reliant on it for durations of up to one year. While receiving labour market payments, few young people earn additional income from working. Older teenagers, particularly females, are more likely than younger teenagers to earn additional income while receiving a labour market payment.

It also suggests that indigenous Australians are probably noticeably over-represented among the youngest age group and that, people from non-English speaking backgrounds are not. However the absence of population data limits this finding.

³⁸ Actual numbers for all 15 to 19-year old DSS recipients are given in Table F in the Appendix

Table 8: Selected characteristics of 15 to 19-year-old DSS labour market payment recipients, 1996, number and proportion

	Males			Females			Total Persons
	15	16-17	18-19	15	16-17	18-19	
Total DSS recipients	628	20848	43312	1147	20277	44066	130278
Labour market payment recipients	476	18006	39653	660	15774	33122	107691
Proportion of total DSS recipients	76%	86%	92%	58%	78%	75%	83%
Duration of payment up to one year	476	16388	38017	660	13853	31593	100987
Proportion of lab. market payment recipients	100%	91%	96%	100%	88%	95%	94%
No earned income	459	16557	35484	621	13681	26630	93432
Proportion of lab. market payment recipients	96%	92%	90%	94%	87%	80%	87%
Birthplace							
Australia – indigenous	43	967	1487	41	882	1078	4498
Proportion of lab. market payment recipients	9%	5%	4%	6%	6%	3%	4%
Australia – other	408	15826	34318	596	13923	28880	93951
Proportion of lab. market payment recipients	86%	88%	87%	90%	88%	87%	87%
Main English speaking countries	12	562	1556	15	536	1352	4033
Proportion of lab. market payment recipients	2%	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%	4%
Non-English speaking countries	13	651	2292	8	433	1812	5209
Proportion of lab. market payment recipients	3%	4%	6%	1%	3%	6%	5%

Source: Unpublished DSS data

Precarious forms of work

Obtaining work experience has been long recognised as important in moving from unemployment to secure employment for young people. However, this may not be an automatic stepping stone for all young people.

Using data from the Australian Youth Survey for the three-year period 1989 to 1991, Flatau and Simpson³⁹ found that a lack of upward mobility may particularly apply to non-student part-time (and possibly some full-time) employees. Some of the significant findings from their analysis were:

- Most part-time workers were employed casually and 60 to 75 per cent of all part-time work for non-students was casual. A significant minority of non-student full-time workers were also casually employed.
- Around 40 per cent of part-time workers were under-employed.
- The persistence of part-time employment for non-student part-time young workers. While 21.9 per cent of under-employed part-time non-student employees in 1989 moved into full-time jobs in 1990 and 40 per cent moved into full-time jobs at some time over the three years, the majority – 60 per cent – did not obtain full-time work over the three year period.

³⁹ Flatau & Simpson, op. cit.

One important reason for concern that there may not be upwards mobility for a significant number of teenage workers comes from the additional findings of Flatau and Simpson that there was a low incidence of training for non-student teenager workers, both full and part-time. Where non-student workers did obtain training it was more likely to be on-the-job training, less relevant for future employment elsewhere.

Similar conclusions were reached by Wooden⁴⁰ when he examined data from the 1993 Survey of Training and Education. He found that both casual and part-time employment were clearly associated with low levels of training, both work-related and vocational. Miller⁴¹ found that the small number of young people in the late 1980s who had persistent low-wage employment were characterised by a 'lack of human capital' – they were early school leavers.

Table 2 provides an estimate of the number of non-student 15 to 19-year-olds employed part-time in May 1996 of 67,800, an increase from 45,700 in 1990. Young women greatly out-number young men with an estimated 41,500 young women in part-time work and not studying in May 1996 compared with 26,300 young men. This group made up 7 per cent of all 15 to 19-year-old females and 12 per cent of 18 to 19-year-old females in comparison with 4 per cent of 15 to 19-year old males and 7 per cent of 18 to 19-year-old males.

Young people outside the labour force

Young people who are outside the labour force and not studying may represent the most marginalised group. They have been given little attention.

Some are likely to be teenage sole parents, others have a significant disability, some are in institutions or may be helping other family members. The breakdown of this group is not known.

Hardin and Kapuscinski⁴² examined the Australian Youth Survey data-set for the period 1985 to 1991 and found that the proportion of 19-year-olds in the group who were not in the labour market and not studying declined from 4.2 per cent to 3.3 per cent over the period. Young women were more likely to exit from unemployment to not being in the labour force than young men. ABS estimates (Table 2) show that in 1996 there were 41,700 young people aged 15 to 19 not in the labour market or studying, representing 2 per cent of males and 4 per cent of females, these proportions being similar to the 1990

⁴⁰ Wooden, Mark, *The training experience of part-time and casual youth workers: Evidence from the 1993 survey of training and education*, National Institute of Labour Studies, Flinders University of South Australia, Adelaide, 1996a.

⁴¹ Miller, Paul W., 'Low-wage youth employment: A permanent or transitory state?', *Economic Record*, vol. 65, no. 189, pp. 126–135, June 1989.

⁴² Hardin & Kapuscinski, op. cit

estimates. Women aged 18 to 19 years are most likely to be neither studying nor in the labour force (8 per cent in 1996 compared with 3 per cent of the male group).

This labour force withdrawal by and alienation of some young women was highlighted by Probert with Macdonald⁴³ after their focus group discussions with a people from a range of backgrounds. They found that a group of young mothers with low education and little labour market experience saw the world of work as hostile and had no plans to re-enter paid employment. Vella⁴⁴ discussed the role of the continuing alienation and lack of confidence of some women about work, concluding that this may have influenced their educational aspirations and experiences and their future labour market earnings. Bell, Rimmer and Rimmer⁴⁵ who, like Vella, examined the Australian Longitudinal Survey over the period 1985 to 1988 found there was a limited attachment to the labour market of some young women caring for children and highlighted that group as one of the more vulnerable to long-term poverty in the future.

Many young DSS sole parent and disability pensioners may be expected to be outside the labour market and not studying although we cannot assume that they all will be in this situation. One indication that few young pensioners are engaged in labour market activity is that in 1996, 78 per cent reported no earned income⁴⁶.

While around 25,000 young people received non-labour market-related DSS payments in 1996 this is still considerably less than the 40,000 ABS survey estimate of young people outside the labour market. While the difference may, in part, be due to under-representation of those involved in marginal activities in the ABS surveys⁴⁷, and the reliance of many young people on other family members, it could also indicate a considerable group of young people cut off from income and other forms of support.

⁴³ Probert, Belinda with Macdonald, Fiona, *The work generation: Work and identity in the 90s*, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Melbourne, 1996.

⁴⁴ Vella, Francis, 'The relationship between gender roles and female labour market performance', in *Youth in the eighties: Papers from the Australian Longitudinal Survey Research Project*, eds R.G. Gregory and T. Karmel, Department of Education Employment and Training & Centre for Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, Canberra, 1992.

⁴⁵ Bell, David N.F., Rimmer, Russell J. & Rimmer, Sheila M., 'Poverty among young Australians', *The Australian Economic Review*, third quarter, pp. 5-18, 1992.

⁴⁶ See Table E in Appendix

⁴⁷ The representativeness of the ABS sample as a whole does not imply representativeness of all sub-groups. The ABS estimates are likely to under-represent more marginal groups such as homeless persons.

Some of the young people outside the labour market may be in institutions, although some may still be involved in some form of education and training and it cannot be assumed that all would be outside the labour market.

Table 9 presents 1996 census data for young people aged 15 to 19 years who are in certain institutions.

Table 9: Young people in institutions*, 1996

	Males				Females				Inst'n share of total
	15-17	18-19	Total no.	% of total	15-17	18-19	Total no.	% of total	
Psychiatric hospitals or institutions	31	68	99	56%	40	38	78	44%	7%
Hostels for the disabled	115	110	225	58%	76	87	163	42%	15%
Hostels for homeless, refuges	237	133	370	56%	196	89	285	44%	25%
Child-care institutions	64	3	67	77%	17	3	20	23%	3%
Other welfare institutions	77	51	128	59%	61	27	88	41%	8%
Prisons, adult corrective institutions	33	561	594	93%	6	38	44	7%	25%
Children's corrective institutions	355	35	390	92%	30	3	33	8%	16%
<i>Total in corrective institutions</i>	388	596	984	93%	36	41	77	7%	41%
Total	912	961	1,873	72%	426	285	711	28%	100%

* Includes only those who responded on the census that they were guests, inmates or other residents.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 1997, unpublished data from the 1996 Census.

In 1996 there were 2,584 young people aged 15 to 19 years who responded that they were guests, inmates or other residents of the identified institutions on Census night. Young males were over-represented in all types of institutions, especially in child-care institutions, prisons and children's corrective institutions.

Corrective institutions were responsible for the largest number of young people in institutions (41 per cent) followed by hostels for the homeless, refuges category and then by hostels for the disabled.

Considerably more young males aged 15 to 17 years were in the hostels for homeless and refugees category than were young males who were aged 18 to 19 years, however, the reverse was the case for young males in corrective institutions and prisons. Young females showed similar age differentials.

Additional data about young people in corrective institutions and prisons are also collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Criminology with 1995 being the most recent year for which full data are available.

In 1995 there were 1,724 young people aged 15 to 19 years in juvenile corrective institutions and prisons, a small decline since 1990 when there were 1,874. The largest age grouping was those aged 18 years and over (1,084 young people in 1995). Young men have much higher rates of incarceration than young women.⁴⁸

The over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in corrective institutions and prisons is well known. In June 1996 indigenous young people made up 40 per cent of all 15-year-olds in juvenile corrective institutions; 41 per cent of all 16-year-olds; 26 per cent of all 17-year-olds; and 18 per cent of all 18-year-olds⁴⁹.

The level of over-representation of indigenous young people in juvenile corrective institutions is illustrated by the fact that indigenous 15 to 16-year-olds are 26.7 times more likely to be in juvenile corrective institutions than non-indigenous 15 to 16-year-olds. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 17-year-olds are 13.9 times more likely to be in a juvenile corrective institution⁵⁰.

Conclusion and discussion

Some of the main findings of this paper are:

- There is a significant minority of young people aged 15 to 19 years engaged in marginal activities and the available longitudinal information from the Australian Youth Survey indicates that around 9 per cent may be engaged in such marginal activities for a considerable time, translating into a large number of young people whose future may be very constrained.

⁴⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Prisoners in Australia*, 1995, Australian Institute of Criminology, *Persons in juvenile corrective institutions*, various issues, and Australian Institute of Criminology *Australian prisoners*, various issues.

⁴⁹ Australian Institute of Criminology, *Persons in juvenile corrective institutions*, Australian Institute of Criminology, June 1996, p. 4.

⁵⁰ *ibid*, p. 6.

- It is a mistake to see marginalisation as only involving unemployment and to see unemployed and employed young people as two distinct groups.
- Young people with lower levels of education, especially early school leavers, are extremely disadvantaged.
- There is a critical absence of information about that very small group (around 3 to 4 per cent) of 15 to 19-year-olds who are not studying and not in the labour force.
- The over-representation from families with lower socio-economic status in the marginalised group raises the probability of the perpetuation of inter-generational inequality.

Some of the implications of these findings are:

- The need to minimise early school leaving but at the same time to take early action to ensure that early school leavers have more structured employment and training opportunities.
- This is also related to the importance of school to work transition programs and early intervention in the lives of young unemployed people.
- The need to improve training opportunities for young people in part-time and casual employment which will require an increased understanding of the extent and nature of casual employment itself.
- The need to have a regional focus on the stimulation of employment opportunities and the delivery of labour-market programs. The experience of marginalisation varies according to locality.
- The need to better understand the situation of those 20-40,000 who are not in the labour market and not studying.

Many of these issues relate to changes in the areas of education and training which are discussed in more detail elsewhere in this publication.

Policy responses

In many ways, the profile of this group is predictable given high overall levels of unemployment and Australia's failure to generate sufficient full-time jobs. The overriding imperative is therefore that economic development produce more full-time jobs. However, the problem for many young people is not just that they cannot get a job but that the jobs they do acquire are not taking them very far. This raises a question about the value of policies which attempt to solve youth marginalisation by cutting youth wages. For this reason improvements to access to education and training must continue to be a priority. In particular:

- The extreme labour market and educational disadvantage of young indigenous Australians is disturbing and addressing this should be the highest priority.
- A number of studies have pointed to the important role that school-based early intervention programs can play in assisting young homeless people to complete their education (through in turn reducing their educational and labour market disadvantage as well as in preventing them from moving into a full homeless career)⁵¹. There should be a greater commitment, more Commonwealth funding and a nation-wide program for school-based early intervention activities.

Income support

The most recent change announced by the Government is the introduction of the Common Youth Allowance in July 1998. While there are benefits in these changes, in that they simplify payments for young people and increase them for young homeless people and some students, there are a number of problems with the Youth Allowance. These include loss of income support for young people aged 16 to 17 years who are not in full-time education and training (with some exceptions) and lower levels of payments for 18 to 19-year-olds who are in families on moderate levels of income (around \$30,000 per annum for example).

The Allowance is meant to encourage 16 to 17-year-olds to see that their long-term futures are reliant on their continuing in full-time education and training. However there needs to be a greater range of opportunities to meet the diverse needs of young people, especially those who are very disadvantaged. Therefore the Allowance needs to be accompanied by a greater capacity of schools and training systems to cater for the needs of young people.

Employment assistance

Labour market programs have been the main form of assistance available to unemployed people. They perform important equity and labour supply objectives.

The Brotherhood's own service delivery experience (alongside its research) has identified a number of features of labour market programs which we consider are important for enhancing young people's employment prospects and self-esteem⁵². In summary, these include providing choice, supervision,

⁵¹ MacKenzie & Chamberlain 1995, op. cit.; Charman et al., op. cit.; House of Representatives Standing Committee on Community Affairs, *A report on aspects of youth homelessness*, AGPS, Canberra, 1995.

⁵² MacDonald, H 1997, 'Assisting young unemployed people: directions for employment services', Paper presented at the 4th National Conference on Unemployment - *Economic Promise and Political Will*, University of South Australia, 18-20 June 1997.

links to ongoing job opportunities, building upon existing skills and aspirations, accredited and recognised training, adequate income, post-placement assistance and being attuned to the needs of individuals.

In 1996 the Federal Government announced significant restructuring of employment and training for unemployed people and for young people more generally. It was accompanied by a substantial reduction in labour market program expenditure and therefore a large drop in the number of young people for whom assistance could be provided in any one year – a reduction of over 120,000 places. It also removed the Job Compact which provided an offer of a job or work experience place for people unemployed 18 months or longer.

Positive features of the recent changes include the introduction of part-time training arrangements; the introduction of pre-apprenticeship and pre-traineeship accredited training; the incorporation of competency-based training; and a focus on career education, work experience and greater links with industry and employers at school level.

However, there are some risks which include:

- The possible overlooking of very disadvantaged young people through the broadening of eligibility for traineeships and greater control of training arrangements by employers and group training companies.
- A lack of applicability to many young women.
- A lack of integrated assistance to young people who experience multiple barriers to employment.
- Concerns about the adequacy of payment particularly for part-time participants.
- The extent of choice that job seekers will have in terms of level and types of assistance available to them and type of provider.
- The capacity of community sector agencies (especially smaller community-based organisations) to continue to provide a service in the absence of adequate up-front funding. Community-based agencies have been an important avenue of assistance for very disadvantaged job seekers.

A past and ongoing problem is how labour market program outcomes are assessed and paid. If payment is increasingly to be based on a combination of employment placement and the reduction or elimination of income support, this may not encourage labour market programs to contribute sufficiently to the improvement of the long-term futures of young people in marginal activity. As this paper has shown, such young people may not find any job a sufficient pathway to long-term employment security.

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Appendix

Table A: Labour market and education status of 15 to 19-year-olds 1996, 1995 and 1990, number

	Males				Females				Persons
	15	16-17	18-19	Total	15	16-17	18-19	Total	Total
1996 Population	132251	258917	260008	651176	125012	244063	251593	620668	1271844
Number not in education	6148	50844	123760	180752	5928	35217	121537	162682	343434
Number not in education & not in full-time employment	4109*	28196	57602	89907	5361	22799	69638	97798	187705
Employed part-time	740*	7484	18107	26331	734*	11079	29643	41456	67787
Unemployed	2335*	14562	31939	48836	2757*	5805	20781	29343	78179
Not in the labour force	1034*	6150	7557	14741	1871*	5916	19214	27001	41742
1995 Population†	127200	258200	262500	648000	120600	244500	250900	616000	1264000
Number not in education	4729	49719	117021	171469	3451*	41859	126144	171454	342923
Number not in education & not in full-time employment	2353*	29503	50585	82441	3172*	28024	74733	105929	188370
Employed part-time	191*	8343	14147	22681	713*	11826	27888	40427	63108
Unemployed	620*	16776	30207	47603	1580*	11317	28382	41279	88882
Not in the labour force	1543*	4385	6230	12158	878*	4881	18462	24221	36379
1990 Population†	132700	279700	296400	708800	126000	267800	289700	683700	1392500
Number not in education	8693	69270	153518	231481	4034	64004	164462	232500	463981
Number not in education & not in full-time employment	4053	26943	41367	72363	2307*	29426	62033	93766	166129
Employed part-time	1572*	5598	10693	17863	297*	9036	18509	27842	45705
Unemployed	1738*	17221	22409	41368	911*	13244	22957	37112	78480
Not in the labour force	742*	4125	8265	13132	1098*	7146	20568	28812	41944

* These estimates have relative standard errors of 25 per cent or more and have a high risk of significant differences existing between the survey estimate and the true value.

† Numbers have been rounded to the nearest hundred (as provided by the ABS).

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour force survey*, May, unpublished data from 1996, 1995 and 1990 surveys

Table B: 15 to 19-year-old DSS recipients by gender, Australia 1996

	Males	Females	Persons
Total DSS recipients	64,764	65,542	130,306
Breakdown of DSS recipients			
Labour market payments:	58,135	49,556	107,691
Newstart Allowance	11,958	10,391	22,349
Job Search Allowance	27,684	22,928	50,612
Youth Training Allowance	17,853	15,773	33,626
Sickness Allowance	640	464	1,104
Other payments:	6,629	15,986	22,615
Sole Parent Pension	36	10,322	10,358
Disability Support Pension	6,365	4,609	10,974
Special Benefit	228	1,055	1,283
Independent homeless rate recipients*	4,399	5,203	9,602

* Independent homeless rate recipients are a subset of all recipients except pensioners

Source: Unpublished DSS data

Table C: Number of 15 to 19-year-olds receiving DSS payments; 1996, 1995 and 1990

	Males			Females			Total Persons
	15	16-17	18-19	15	16-17	18-19	
1996 Teenage population	132251	258917	260008	125012	244063	251593	1271844
DSS recipients	628	20848	43312	1147	20277	44066	130278
Labour market payments recipients	476	18006	39653	660	15770	33122	107691
Other DSS payments recipients	152	2842	3659	487	4503	10944	22587
Independent homeless rate recipients	474	3922	3	696	4504	3	9602
1995 Teenage population	127200	258200	262500	120600	244500	250900	1263900
DSS recipients	626	21499	43500	1247	21591	46193	134656
Labour market payments recipients	335	18773	39947	481	17000	35257	111793
Other DSS payments recipients	291	2726	3553	766	4591	10936	22863
Independent homeless rate recipients	522	3681	94	797	4234	95	9423
1990 Teenage population	132700	279700	296400	126000	267800	289700	1392300
DSS recipients	Detailed data not available						110988
Labour market payments recipients							88110
Other DSS payments recipients							22878
Independent homeless rate recipients							2759

Source: Unpublished DSS data; ABS population estimates; DSS, *Annual Report 1989-90*, AGPS, Canberra, 1990.

Table D: 18 to 19-year-old school leavers engaged in marginal and non-marginal activities, May 1996

	Males	Females	Persons
Left school Year 12			
engaged in marginal activities	27200	29500	56701
not engaged in marginal activities	122900	138400	261249
Total	150100	167900	317950
Left school before Year 12			
engaged in marginal activities	30400	40100	70491
not engaged in marginal activities	62400	28500	90913
Total	92800	68600	161404

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour force survey*, May 1996, unpublished data.

* Estimates have been rounded to the nearest hundred.

Table E: Selected characteristics of DSS recipients by age and gender, Australia 1996

	Males			Females			Total Persons
	15	16-17	18-19	15	16-17	18-19	
Population estimate	132251	258917	260008	125012	244063	251593	1271844
Total DSS recipients	628	20848	43312	1147	20277	44066	130278
Labour market payments	476	18006	39653	660	15774	33122	107691
Duration of payment up to one year	476	16388	38017	660	13853	31593	100987
No earned income	459	16557	35484	621	13681	26630	93432
<i>Born in Australia:</i>							
Indigenous	43	967	1487	41	882	1078	4498
Other	408	15862	34318	596	13923	28880	93951
<i>Born overseas:</i>							
Main English speaking countries	12	562	1556	15	536	1352	4033
Non-English speaking countries	13	651	2292	8	433	1812	5209
Other payments	152	2842	3659	487	4503	10944	22587
Duration of payment up to one year	146	1660	616	445	3045	5354	11266
No earned income	150	2113	2380	465	3712	8840	17660
<i>Born in Australia:</i>							
Indigenous	7	55	90	92	421	918	1583
Other	132	2645	3351	371	3779	9150	19428
<i>Born overseas:</i>							
Main English speaking countries	4	65	96	9	141	447	762
Non-English speaking countries	9	77	125	15	162	426	814
Ind. homeless rate recipients	474	3922	3	696	4504	3	9602
Duration of payment up to one year	471	3275	1	685	3654	1	8087
No earned income	461	3734	3	661	4068	3	8930
<i>Born in Australia:</i>							
Indigenous	39	229	0	50	258	0	576
Other	408	3428	3	620	3974	3	8436
<i>Born overseas:</i>							
Main English speaking countries	11	132	0	17	151	0	311
Non-English speaking countries	16	133	0	9	121	0	279

Source: Unpublished DSS data