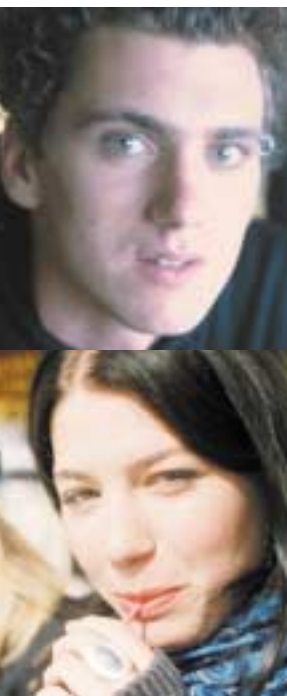


# Creating the Space for Dialogue:

A guide to developing a local youth  
shopping centre protocol

**NSW Shopping Centre  
Protocol Project**





A project team (Clancey, Doran and Robertson) from the University of Western Sydney developed this Guide with the assistance of a Steering Committee. Representatives from the following agencies formed this Steering Committee:

- NSW Attorney General's Crime Prevention Division (which also provided funding for the project)
- Youth Action & Policy Association
- Youth Justice Coalition
- Shopping Centre Council of Australia
- NSW Commission for Children and Young People
- NSW Police

The project was initiated by the Steering Committee due to the increasing number of young people banned and subsequently charged with trespass from shopping centres in NSW in recent years. Growing evidence and experience suggested that alternative methods could be successfully adopted in working with

young people. The Brisbane Myer Centre Protocol is an example of such an approach, in which clear guidelines were developed to ensure there was an agreed, mutual understanding of appropriate standards of behaviour expected of both young people and security staff and that consistent responses were adopted in response to breaches of those standards. The Brisbane Protocol was agreed and developed for a specific centre, whereas this Guide establishes principles and steps for developing a local protocol, recognising the different needs and characteristics of communities and shopping centres across NSW. The Guide provides a simple explanation of how a local protocol can be developed.

More detailed information is contained in the complementary report (*Creating the Space for Dialogue: The Report*), which will further help those individuals seeking to develop a local protocol and to improve relationships between young people, security personnel and shopping centre management.

Many individuals and groups contributed to the development of this Guide and the associated report. While the individuals are too numerous to thank, the following require specific acknowledgement:

Anna Booth and Jo Gannon – Shopping Centre Council of Australia

Chris Grant – Youth Justice Coalition

Kristy Delaney – Youth Action & Policy Association

Dean Hart, Rebecca Pinkstone and Patrick Shepherdson – NSW Attorney General's Crime Prevention Division

David Burfoot – NSW Commission for Children and Young People

Victor Gaspar – Jones Lang LaSalle

Bill Kosky – Consultant, MCS Property

Richard Collier – Stockland

Ron Glasel – Centro Properties Group (Roselands)

Michael Lane – Deutsche Asset Management (DB Real Estate)

Lillian Fadel – Westfield Shopping Centre Management (WSCM)

Warwick Petschack – AMP Henderson Global Investors

David Smith – Westpoint Shopping Centre, QIC

Phil Noller – Lend Lease Retail

David Ashton – FPD Savills/Byvan



Attorney General's  
department of nsw



YJC

SHOPPING CENTRE  
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA



Australian  
Centre for Security Research



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## WHAT IS A PROTOCOL?

A Protocol, in this instance, is an agreement between key people involved in managing, maintaining security, accessing or using a shopping centre. This agreement should publicly identify agreed behavioural standards and responses to unacceptable behaviour, how problems can be resolved and ways that people can work together to make a shopping centre safe and accessible. It should promote trust, transparency and imply a willingness to listen to the views of all parties. It is not legally binding, but is developed in a spirit of co-operation and goodwill.

## WHY HAVE A PROTOCOL?

Conflict often arises when there are unclear expectations as to appropriate behaviour or inconsistent rules. Young people (12 to 25 years) will often be frustrated or angry when they are banned from a shopping centre for behaviour that was previously accepted. There are times when young people feel targeted because of their age, dress or because of the behaviour of their peers or friends. Shopping centre managers and security personnel can become frustrated when young people behave in ways that cause concern for other shoppers. Making an agreement about what is acceptable behaviour by both young people and security guards and what the consequences will be for unacceptable behaviour can help reduce conflict.

The goal of a Protocol is to ensure that the centre is perceived as safe and accessible by the whole community. It aims to reduce inappropriate behaviours, rather than punish or marginalise individuals.

When a Protocol is developed and agreed upon by all key stakeholders and consistently applied, over time security officers, centre managers, young people and youth workers will come to understand what is expected of each other and what will be accepted in a shopping centre. When one of these people leave or move on, there will often be no agreement or record of what has been working. Developing a Protocol to document and record these good practices will help to reduce problems when key people are replaced.

Furthermore, engaging young people can be beneficial.

They are significant consumers and can influence spending patterns of other family members and peers. Building loyalty with young people can have long term benefits. There is also some evidence to suggest that where young people feel more included and accepted in their local shopping centre they will be less likely to cause damage or trouble in the centre. Security, repairs and maintenance costs can be reduced through developing positive relationships with young people.

## IS A PROTOCOL NEEDED AT MY SHOPPING CENTRE?

Many shopping centres are safe, friendly places, where all people are accepted and treated as valued customers. In these centres, a Protocol can be beneficial in developing an agreement that will last beyond people moving or changing. A Protocol will also be helpful if problems do arise.

In some shopping centres, some young people feel unwelcome, are watched by security officers and are banned from the centre for minor misbehaviour. There have been cases where young people have been banned for life from a shopping centre. Security officers might have been abused by young people or even physically assaulted. The tension between security officers and young people is unwanted by each group and is bad for the shopping centre business – people won't come to the centre if they think that there will be trouble.

One way of deciding if a Protocol is required it is to conduct the self-assessment (Appendix A). This will help identify if a Protocol is needed and how things can be improved.

A Protocol can help to bring people together to work out ways to reduce conflict and to find solutions to problems. Centre managers, security officers, young people, youth workers, local police, retailers and local council staff might be involved in discussions and meetings to look at the problems and to develop solutions. Talking will promote understanding of how different groups are affected. Talking will also help generate solutions to problems. Writing down the solutions will mean that all groups agree to work together and understand what is expected of them.

## HAVE OTHER SHOPPING CENTRES DEVELOPED PROTOCOLS?

Yes. The Brisbane Myer Centre developed a Protocol in 1999 following an incident between security and a young person (information about this Protocol can be located via <http://www.yspace.net/>). This incident revealed that many security procedures were not well documented and practices often varied. In developing the Protocol, key groups were able to develop the space for exchange and dialogue, definitions of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour were developed, consequences for inappropriate behaviour were constructed and procedures to appeal decisions by centre management and security were designed. The clarity of these issues, the involvement of young people in these discussions and the ongoing relationships developed between key stakeholders have all been positive outcomes of this process. The Protocol is also provided to new staff and helps to inform new staff of what is expected of them.

A local Protocol has recently been developed between the local youth centre, Shellharbour Council and Centre Management and Security of Shellharbour Square. The Protocol was developed following a forum to explore the conflict and tension between security and young people. It was recommended at the forum that a Protocol be developed to outline what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour of young people and security. The relationships made at the forum and in the development of the Protocol have resulted in problems being quickly resolved. The Protocol enshrines these arrangements and makes it clear for everyone what can be expected under certain circumstances.

## WHY ARE YOUNG PEOPLE THE FOCUS?

Young people are most frequently perceived as the group causing trouble at shopping centres or being targeted by security. Young people are significant consumers and users of shopping centres. The absence of alternative entertainment venues in some areas and the attraction of entertainment complexes (picture theatres, games arcades, etc.), low-cost recreation, a meeting place and youth-specific shops are some of the reasons why young people go to shopping centres. Now that large shopping centres have replaced corner stores or smaller strip shops, large groups of young people will often go to the local shopping centre. Good public

transport to shopping centres often makes this easy for young people who are not yet old enough to get a driver's license. Parents often encourage and support young people to go to shopping centres independently as it is perceived by them to be a safe and acceptable place to socialise and meet friends.

While young people are attracted to shopping centres and are a significant market for shops, their presence in groups often creates unease amongst other shoppers. Loud, energetic groups of young people might not be aware of the concerns of an elderly shopper who fears getting hurt. At times, it is often not what young people do that concerns other shoppers, but what they think they will do. In trying to protect other shoppers or respond to their concerns, security officers will often focus on young people. This can result in less tolerance of young people and their behaviour, resulting in young people being banned from the shopping centre or being charged with trespass if they do not obey the ban.

People other than young people are banned from shopping centres, often for illegal behaviour like stealing from shops. While this is true, young people are more frequently banned than other age groups, often for minor misbehaviour, such as smoking in the centre or disobeying directions from security to move on or to break up a group.

The principles of the Protocol can apply to all age groups. Young people are the focus, however, because they are most often affected by or involved in difficulties in shopping centres.

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPING THE PROTOCOL?

A number of people can be responsible for developing the Protocol. It will be important to ensure that the right people are involved. It is also important that one individual takes responsibility for getting people together and for keeping the process on track. People who might be best to lead the development of a Protocol include:

- Shopping Centre Manager
- Local Youth Worker
- Local Council – Youth Development Officer or Community Development Staff

Any of these people could lead the development of the Protocol. They will not necessarily do all of the work, but they will be required to organise meetings, keep records of discussions and allocate tasks to those involved.

Inviting all interested and relevant people to participate in the development of the Protocol will be important. Many people will have something to contribute and can help. Some people will choose not to be involved, but it is important that they are invited to participate. Inviting all interested parties (or key stakeholders) to participate in the development of the Protocol gives each group a sense of ownership of the agreement. The more one feels a sense of ownership, the more likely they will be to stick to the agreement or deal with problems constructively. The following are key people to invite:

- Security Supervisor (and officers)
- Shopping Centre Manager (and Marketing Manager or Operations Manager)
- Young people (or Youth Advisory Committee where they exist)
- Youth workers
- Police (particularly the Youth Liaison Officer)
- Local Council
- Retailers
- Facility management personnel
- Schools

Other interested parties include cleaners, parking attendants, managers of transport interchanges and bus companies, taxi companies operating adjacent to the centre, local neighbourhood groups, senior citizen organisations, shoppers, etc.

Choosing who to invite and how they can participate will depend on local issues and circumstances. People who work with young Indigenous people and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds should be included if young people from these backgrounds use the shopping centre.

## **WHEN SHOULD WE DEVELOP A PROTOCOL?**

There is no set time when a Protocol should be developed. A Protocol might be developed:

- As part of development or re-development of a shopping centre



- In response to specific problems between young people, centre management and security
- To consolidate or confirm positive practices

Each of these times presents opportunities to develop a Protocol.

## **WHAT RESOURCES WILL BE REQUIRED?**

Developing a Protocol does not require many resources. A Protocol could be developed without any funding. The key ingredient is the commitment of the key stakeholders to work together. Attending meetings, talking with people represented and completing tasks are the major requirements of people involved in developing a Protocol.

Small costs might be incurred for conducting meetings and for printing the Protocol. Developing colourful versions of the Protocol or pamphlets describing appropriate / inappropriate behaviour in centres and possible consequences can be developed if funding is available. If no funding is available, a Protocol can still be developed.

## **WHAT IS REQUIRED TO DEVELOP A PROTOCOL?**

Developing a Protocol will be different in different areas. Some shopping centres will have well-defined procedures and will have developed successful ways of working with young people. Fewer steps might be required in developing a Protocol for these centres than other centres where there are many problems and / or few standard procedures.

Where Protocols have been developed, it has been found that the process can take up to 12 months (or longer in some cases – see Appendix B). The process

of bringing together different groups, identifying what things are good or less good in the way young people are treated and the way they behave in the shopping centre and developing agreed solutions to any problems will take time. Learning to understand the views of people with different perspectives and finding common ground will be important parts of developing a Protocol. This will take time and commitment to overcome any obstacles that arise.

The outcome of developing a Protocol should not be seen as the ultimate goal. Rather, building relationships and developing mutual and shared understandings, which allow existing issues to be tackled and future issues to be resolved, is the ultimate goal. Simply agreeing to a Protocol is not necessarily a guarantee that these processes have been adopted.

The following steps are designed to help in the development of a local Protocol. Not every step necessarily has to be followed and others can be added. People involved will have to decide how best to develop a Protocol based on their needs, experiences and working relationships.

## Principles of a Protocol

There are a number of principles which underpin the development of a Protocol. There must be mutual acceptance of these principles by the key stakeholders or the parties committed to the Protocol, prior to the development of a Protocol.

Key principles include:

- Shopping centres form an important part of the broader community in which they are located.
- Most youth / shopping centre issues are best characterised and treated as community issues and will generally be best addressed through a community based approach.
- Shopping centres are often the venue at which underlying community and social problems emerge or are played out. If actions are taken to merely exclude / quarantine problems from a particular shopping centre, the problem simply emerges at another location, such as other community facilities or other shopping centres. A more comprehensive approach to dealing with the underlying causes is required.
- Young people have the right to access shopping centres and to enjoy the use of these spaces

free of harassment or discrimination.

- Shopping centre managers, security personnel, retailers and shoppers have the right to expect that all users of shopping centres will behave appropriately while utilising these facilities / spaces.
- Those people who do behave inappropriately should be treated in a fair and consistent manner. Lawful consequences for inappropriate behaviour should be applied equally, irrespective of age, ethnicity, gender or other personal characteristics.
- In developing a Protocol, all parties should strive to reduce incidents and unacceptable behaviour and find alternatives to exclusionary practices.
- Cooperation, collaboration and communication are central to the development of a protocol. All parties must be committed to recognising different perspectives and positions, working through differences, maintaining dialogue and negotiating final outcomes.
- All critical stakeholders should participate (or be invited to participate) in the development of the Protocol. Ownership and commitment to the outcome will be fostered by wide participation.
- All parties should be willing to consider alternative strategies to existing procedures.
- Decisions about banning or excluding young people should be transparent (open to review) and consistent.

## SUGGESTED PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING A LOCAL PROTOCOL

### Getting started

Discussions between the key stakeholders will determine if there is commitment to developing a local Protocol. A Centre Manager, Youth Development Officer (Local Council) or a local youth worker are the most likely drivers. Telephone contact and a short meeting of these individuals will commence the process.

### Getting together

Once it has been determined that there is willingness of the key parties to participate in reviewing relationships between young people and the shopping centre, a meeting should be conducted. Representatives of all interested parties should be invited to attend the meeting. Interested parties and individuals will be those listed in the Who is responsible for developing the Protocol? section (page 4).

In organising the first meeting, consider the venue and time. Try to select a venue and time that will enable key stakeholders to attend. To facilitate young people's participation, meeting times should be out of school hours and young people should be well briefed about what will happen at the meeting and their role.

Send a letter inviting people to attend. Explain that the meeting is a preliminary opportunity to consider issues related to young people and the shopping centre. The meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss and share experiences. Advertise the meeting in relevant local media if wide attendance is sought.

### **Coming together – the first meeting**

The first meeting will provide an opportunity to get to know each other, to discuss the purpose of the meeting, to discuss and share experiences and to consider the process and expectations of interested parties. The key objectives of this meeting are simply to get to know each other, gain an insight into their experiences and perspectives and to establish if other people should be invited to attend the next meeting. It is not a problem-solving meeting.

A chairperson should also be selected. The chairperson assumes the important role of keeping meetings on track, allocating tasks, managing differences of opinion and keeping members focused. Ideally, the chairperson will be someone who can model good communication, problem solving, negotiation and time management skills. Selecting a good chairperson will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the group and increase the likelihood of meeting objectives set by the group.

### **Painting the picture – finding out what is happening**

Each area will have different experiences, difficulties and strengths to work with. Finding out what is happening in the local area will be important. Often there will be anecdotal evidence or myths about the treatment of young people by security guards and the behaviour of young people in shopping centres. Gathering evidence and information to inform what needs to happen is important. Between the first meeting and the second meeting, all key stakeholders should be allocated tasks. They will be responsible for finding out from the groups they represent, manage or have contact with, what they believe to be the problems or issues in young people's access to and use of the shopping centre.



### **City X Young People and Shopping Centre Meeting Agenda**

1. Purpose of meeting – discuss Protocol and desire to review local procedures
2. Introductions – each participant to introduce themselves and their role
3. Brief overview of general issues related to young people and shopping centres (not specific to City X) – young people are significant users of public spaces and shopping centres, they are disproportionately affected by exclusionary practices, disproportionately involved in trouble, generate fear in other shoppers, there are often few documented procedures and management practices. Shopping centres have a vital role in the social development of many young people today and have a responsibility to parents who put their trust in centres to be safe places. Involvement of shopping centres in developing a Protocol can demonstrate commitment and willingness to contribute to the community and local children and young people
4. People's experiences – establish rules for discussion and then allow each group / individual equal time to discuss their perspective / experiences (positive and negative) in relation to young people and the shopping centre
5. Purpose of group – discuss establishing a committee to work on these issues. Ask for members to volunteer and discuss expectations of members (consult with constituents, complete allocated tasks) and expected meeting frequency and duration (e.g. one meeting every two months for the next 12 months and then review)
6. Next meeting – propose date and allocate tasks (distribute checklist for each group of tasks to be completed prior to the next meeting)

The following are checklists for each of the stakeholders. Primary stakeholders are the crucial participants, while the involvement and relevance of secondary stakeholders will depend on local circumstances.

## Primary Stakeholders

| Centre Management / Security                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Youth Workers / Young People                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Survey perspectives of retailers and security personnel</li> <li>● Determine whether there are clear: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ rules or conditions of entry</li> <li>○ definitions of inappropriate behaviour</li> <li>○ consequences of inappropriate behaviour</li> <li>○ expectations of security in dealing with young people</li> <li>○ review or grievance procedures for disputes</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Review incident logs and document number and nature of incidents involving young people</li> <li>● Identify positive practices and strategies employed to engage young people (i.e. Community Days, art exhibitions, youth work outreach in the shopping centre, etc.)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consult young people and local youth workers about contact and relationships between young people and the shopping centre</li> <li>● Develop anonymous case studies of examples of exclusionary or unhelpful practices</li> <li>● Identify good security and management practices toward young people</li> <li>● In conjunction with young people, develop definitions of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and effective or fair consequences for inappropriate behaviour</li> </ul> |
| Local Council                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Police                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consult with the Youth Advisory Committee on the views of young people toward the shopping centre</li> <li>● At the local youth service inter-agency meeting discuss how young people and shopping centres can work together. Collate the views of the workers</li> <li>● Research any covenants associated with the development of the shopping centre (if applicable)</li> <li>● Identify whether any development applications have been submitted to council for extension or refurbishment of the centre</li> <li>● Document referral information for young people in crisis</li> <li>● Consider including a Protocol in crime prevention plans</li> </ul>                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish the number of trespass charges against young people for returning to the shopping centre when excluded and the nature of these incidents (if such information exists)</li> <li>● Document reports regarding crime and anti-social behaviour of young people in and around the shopping centre</li> <li>● Review local crime prevention plan</li> </ul>                                                                                                                            |



## Secondary Stakeholders

| Schools                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Government Agencies (e.g. Centrelink)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consult students about access to the shopping centre and any problems emerging</li> <li>● Review truancy prevention measures</li> <li>● Review information given to students about appropriate behaviour in shopping centres and the wider community</li> </ul>                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review access arrangements to government services in centres if young people are banned</li> <li>● Identify any problems in relation to behaviour of young people in facilities</li> <li>● Review relationship of security and the service</li> </ul> |
| Transport Providers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Culturally Specific Services                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review impact of banning on access to transport, particularly where bus (or train) stations are close to or within shopping centre boundaries</li> <li>● Consider whether transport timetables before and after school potentially exacerbate conflict between young people and other users of the space (where shopping centres host interchanges)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify specific issues for Indigenous young people or young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds</li> </ul>                                                                                                                |

Consideration should be given to how best certain individuals or groups can be involved or consulted. Building involvement in the process will generate ownership of the process and the Protocol. Working out how best to get and keep people involved will be important.

One way to tackle this problem is to establish a core working committee and encourage each member of the working committee to develop arrangements to consult and inform their colleagues / staff. For example, young people should be represented on the working committee. Two or three young people might be nominated to participate and it will be their responsibility (with appropriate assistance) to consult other young people in the area who are most likely to

be affected by the Protocol. These arrangements reduce the need to involve large numbers of people directly and ensure all interested parties have the opportunity to contribute and to be informed.

## CONSULTING YOUNG PEOPLE

Encouraging involvement of and ownership by young people is critical. Developing a sense of ownership of the process, the outcome and ultimately of the shopping centre itself has beneficial outcomes. If, for example, young people feel, and are part of the process of defining what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in the centre, then they are more likely to abide by these arrangements.

There are many ways that young people can be engaged in the process. Some of these include:

- Representation of the local Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) on the working committee. In this case, the local YAC should take responsibility for consulting with and involving young people.
- Establishment of a small group of young people who frequently use the centre (and have significant contact with security personnel) to contribute
- Conduct a survey of young people more broadly in the community about their experiences in using the shopping centre
- Involvement of local Student Representative Councils, schools and other organised groups are a way of engaging and involving young people
- Informal methods of consultation can also be effective – spend time asking young people in the shopping centre about their views

While the above suggestions provide ways of engaging young people, consideration must also be given to how they participate. Structuring of meetings and support of young people to contribute, explanation of process and procedures, the time meetings are held, etc. are all issues requiring attention to facilitate involvement and meaningful participation.

Consideration should also be given to rewarding participation of young people. This can be as simple as suitable catering for a meeting or free record vouchers, for example. Detailed advice about the participation of young people in decision making and projects like developing a Protocol can be found in Taking Participation Seriously (<http://kids.nsw.gov.au/publications/taking.html>), a guide to involving young people in making decisions which affect their lives produced by the NSW Commission for Children and Young People.

## **The Second Meeting – laying it on the table**

Once information has been collated from various sources, a second meeting should be conducted. This meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss the findings of the consultations and research phase. The different perspectives of the stakeholders and the key issues for each group should be discussed and recorded.

Providing opportunities for all interested parties to have their say will help to explore the range of issues and the existing positive approaches or strategies.

Once all of the issues have been identified, it will be necessary to identify those issues to be addressed through the development of the Protocol and those that will require attention outside of the Protocol. Tasks will be allocated and time frames established, especially in relation to drafting a Protocol.

It is often best to select only a small number of issues to tackle. Three or four key issues should be identified. This will help to maintain focus and will help to ensure that success is possible. It is at this point that the identification of multiple issues may result in participants feeling overwhelmed. Here, prioritising is important.

For now, categorising issues according to a) degree of urgency and b) anticipated completion timeframes may help to identify issues that are relatively simple to address and those that require longer term commitment. In choosing issues to be addressed, try to include one or two that can be quickly and successfully tackled – having success early on with one issue will help to keep people on track, motivated and more likely to maintain commitment to the bigger, more difficult issues.

The table on page 11, is only an example of the type of issues and responses that might be adopted. Again, it should be stressed that each community may identify different issues and / or different ways of responding to the issue.

Central to the response should be the principles outlined in Principles of a Protocol (page 6). Each of these issues would require a plan outlining the steps required to develop an appropriate response. For example, in conducting a meeting between centre management, young people and security personnel to discuss appropriate / inappropriate behaviour and to develop consequences, it might be necessary to consider holding separate meetings first to brief each group, it may be necessary to provide preliminary information based on previous consultations and it might be beneficial to provide copies of procedures adopted in other locations. Holding the meeting will only be one step in achieving this outcome.



An example of the types of issues and approaches to be adopted at the second meeting could include:

| Issue                                                                                                                                    | Response                                                                                                             | Responsibility                                                                 | Completion Date                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lack of clear guidelines about what is appropriate or inappropriate behaviour in the centre and consequences for inappropriate behaviour | To be included in the Protocol. Meeting of young people, security and centre management to discuss and develop       | Youth worker to co-ordinate and facilitate meeting                             | Prior to next meeting of working committee                       |
| Continued conflict between a small group of young people and security                                                                    | Develop a model for conflict management with the assistance of the local Community Justice Centre mediator           | Security supervisor, centre manager and youth worker to meet with CJC mediator | Within six months                                                |
| Large groups congregating on Thursday nights with little or no appropriate activities                                                    | Identify appropriate places within the centre and programs external to the centre where young people can be referred | Youth worker, security supervisor and centre manager                           | Within 12 months                                                 |
| Lack of documented agreed procedures for inclusive management of young people                                                            | Develop a Protocol formalising arrangements                                                                          | Youth worker / local council to develop draft and reviewed by all              | Within 12 months                                                 |
| Need to train security personnel on communicating with young people                                                                      | Local youth workers to develop a short course on key communication strategies                                        | Youth worker and local council                                                 | Within next six months – five hour training course to be piloted |



## Getting busy – the third meeting

Once the issues have been identified and prioritised and tasks allocated, it will be important to come back together to monitor progress. It will be expected that people will work between meetings on tasks allocated to them. For example, at this meeting the security manager and a youth worker might discuss the progress that they have made in developing and providing training to security personnel. Dates might have been selected and training materials developed.

Maintaining regular contact will be important. A timeline in Appendix B shows when meetings should be held and the purpose of the meetings. This is just a guide and will vary depending on local circumstances.

## Drafting the Protocol – what should it look like?

The process of identifying what the key issues are and how best to respond in the local context means that

each Protocol will be slightly different. While the content may differ, key features are likely to be similar across locations. The template of the headings and key components of a Protocol is displayed on the following page (*for a fuller description of what might be included in each section, see Appendix C*).

Throughout the development of the Protocol, consideration should be given to what measures will be adopted to determine if the Protocol has been successful. Identifying how success will be determined will ensure that the appropriate information is collected.

Additional elements might also include description of good security or the indicators of good security procedures, description of centre rules or conditions of entry and procedures adopted to enable access to utilities and government agencies if banning or exclusion occurs as a consequence of inappropriate behaviour.

The drafting of the Protocol will take time. Agreement of the wording and the specific provisions will require negotiation and consultation. As each draft is developed, opportunity should be provided for young people, security personnel, centre management, youth workers, retailers and others to comment. Getting total consensus will be difficult, but is possible. It is likely that five or more drafts will be required before all parties are satisfied and prepared to endorse the Protocol.

## Kicking off – implementation of the Protocol

Once an agreement is reached and the Protocol is endorsed, it will be necessary to establish procedures to support implementation. Security personnel and young people need to be informed about behaviour standards and consequences for inappropriate or criminal behaviour. Copies of the Protocol should be made available to centre management and security personnel and to young people through youth agencies and the local council. Copies could be displayed in the centre on notice boards, advertised through any centre publications and key sections placed on shopping centre guides (where they exist).

It will be necessary for members of the working committee to continue to meet periodically to assess

# Shopping Centre Protocol Template

## **Introduction**

Brief explanation of the background to the development of the Protocol, the agencies and individuals contributing to the development of the Protocol and what the Protocol seeks to achieve.

## **Purpose**

Explanation of the purpose and objectives of the Protocol.

## **Principles**

Guiding principles for the development and operation of the Protocol should be identified. These principles can be helpful where disputes arise about implementation, as the principles will provide a reference point for determining if the spirit of the Protocol has in fact been complied with or followed.

## **Behaviour Standards**

Description of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Rules or conditions of entry should be specified. Distinction should be made between appropriate, inappropriate and criminal behaviour (or similar categories).

## **Consequences**

Consequences for inappropriate or criminal behaviour should be specified. Providing upper limits for consequences for particular behaviour will help to promote greater consistency in responses, where required. Discretion and flexibility will be retained, depending on individual circumstances.

## **Review of Consequences**

Consequences of inappropriate behaviour might seem unfair or unjust. Procedures should be established to review such consequences.

## **Grievance Procedures / Complaint**

Grievance or complaint procedures should be outlined. Identifying how a complaint or grievance can be raised will not promote complaints. Complaints and grievances are important avenues to receive feedback about the performance of security and operation of a shopping centre.

## **Protocol Review**

Grounds for reviewing the operation or timing of a review should be identified.

## **Contact Numbers**

A list of local support agencies and contacts should be provided.

compliance with the Protocol and to identify and resolve emerging problems. Quarterly meetings will generally suffice. The relationships established through the development of the Protocol will enable informal dialogue between meetings should it be necessary.

## **HOW WILL WE KNOW IF THE PROTOCOL HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL?**

After 12 months or more, it will be beneficial to check to see if the Protocol has been successful in improving relationships between security personnel, centre management and young people. Given the work required to develop the Protocol, it will be important to review whether it has met its objectives.

There will be a number of ways of determining if the Protocol has been successful. Some of these include:

- Surveying key stakeholders about their views of how relationships have improved (or otherwise), levels of knowledge of the Protocol, willingness to respond to problems as they emerge and their understanding of the views of other stakeholders. These results could be coupled with the results from the previous data collected from these groups;
- Reviewing the number of incidents in the 12 months prior to the implementation of the Protocol and 12 months after implementation;
- Ascertaining whether young people have a clear understanding of what constitutes inappropriate behaviour and the consequences of such behaviour;
- Ascertaining whether security personnel have a clear understanding of what constitutes inappropriate behaviour and the consequences of such behaviour;
- Determining if relationships established or strengthened through the development of the Protocol have continued or deteriorated (it is important to acknowledge problems if and when they emerge); and
- Reviewing how emerging issues have been dealt with pre and post the Protocol.

Reviewing the success of the Protocol will help to determine if further work is required on aspects of the Protocol or on the inclusive management of young people. Some form of review should be conducted annually, as a way of ensuring that the Protocol remains

relevant, to make necessary changes and to sustain the commitment to the principles and provisions.

## **WHAT IF WE EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES DEVELOPING A PROTOCOL?**

If you experience difficulties in developing a Protocol, then it is possible to get assistance. The Youth Action & Policy Association (YAPA) is the peak youth body in NSW. YAPA can provide advice about development of the Protocol and would like to hear if problems arise, as a way of monitoring the usefulness of this Guide.

### **YAPA contact details:**

**Surry Hills Office**

**Phone: 02 9281 2344**

**(Toll Free 1800 637 323 Country NSW)**

**Fax: 02 9211 2037**

**Website: [www.yapa.org.au](http://www.yapa.org.au)**

The Shopping Centre Council of Australia (SCCA) might also be able provide some assistance. The SCCA have a small number of staff who can provide advice and guidance on the number of issues associated with the management of shopping centres. Jo Gannon from the SCCA will also accept electronic versions (in Word) of Protocols. A database of developed Protocols will be compiled, providing a resource to interested parties. Protocols identified as confidential will not be made available. Please forward developed Protocols to Jo Gannon via email ([JGannon@nat.propertyoz.com.au](mailto:JGannon@nat.propertyoz.com.au)).

SCCA contact details:

**Phone : 02 9336 6902**

**Fax: 02 9336 6976**

**Website: [www.propertyoz.com/scca](http://www.propertyoz.com/scca)**

A useful reference point is the Y-Space website. This website is a clearinghouse of articles and documents on public space. The information contained in the various reports can be a helpful reference.

Website: <http://www.yspace.net/>

The report (*Creating the Space for Dialogue: The Report*) supporting this Guide should be consulted if problems arise. There is greater detail provided and a copy of a complete Protocol has been included.



## APPENDIX A

### Inclusive Management Self-Assessment Checklist

Providing a safe, enjoyable shopping experience for all customers is challenging. Competing demands, needs and perspectives will often make this difficult. Most people coming to shopping centres will have very positive experiences. However, for a small number of young people, going to a shopping centre can be less than positive. Either because they choose to behave inappropriately or because they are perceived as being problematic by security and centre management, some young people will be moved-on, banned or even charged with trespass for breaching a banning notice.

The following self-assessment checklist has been developed to help shopping centre management, security personnel, young people, youth workers and other groups coming together to review practices associated with young people accessing shopping centres and to identify what to strive for in terms of working relationships, procedures and protocols.

The checklist has been broken into sections. Tally the score after answering each of the questions. At the end of the checklist, there is a score rating that will determine how inclusive management practices are at the centre.

#### Conditions of Entry / Rules

- 0 There are no clearly displayed rules or conditions of entry
- 1 Rules and conditions of entry exist, but are only visible in some areas
- 2 Rules and conditions of entry are clearly displayed on all entry points
- 3 Rules and conditions of entry were developed in conjunction with young people, are visibly displayed at all entry points and on centre publications and have been distributed to relevant local youth facilities to educate young people about acceptable behaviours in the centre

### Consequences for Inappropriate Behaviour

- 0 Consequences for inappropriate behaviour is at the discretion of security personnel
- 1 There are some basic guidelines on the consequences for inappropriate behaviour
- 2 Clear guidelines outlining consequences for inappropriate behaviour exist
- 3 Clear guidelines for consequences of inappropriate behaviour were developed in conjunction with young people and are used in regular training with security personnel

#### Design

- 0 The needs of young people were not considered or of little consideration in the design of the centre
- 1 A specific area has been dedicated to young people and young people are encouraged to use these facilities / area
- 2 Young people contributed to the design of the centre and have been provided with recreational facilities and places to congregate
- 3 As well as providing appropriate youth space and facilities, a youth facility has been provided in the centre for a youth worker(s)

### Relationship with and Understanding of Local Youth Services

- 0 There is little or no understanding of the role of local youth services / workers
- 1 There is some dialogue between the local youth services / workers and centre management / security
- 2 Regular meetings are conducted between the local youth services / workers and centre management / security
- 3 There are solid working relationships between local youth services / workers and centre management / security, young people are referred to relevant agencies as appropriate and local youth workers assist in centre activities relevant to young people

## Training of Security Personnel

- 0 No specific training has been provided for security personnel on communicating with young people, cross cultural awareness or conflict resolution
- 1 Security personnel have attended a basic orientation to the centre which includes a brief overview of the demographics of the centre
- 2 A short training program has been provided to all security personnel on youth issues
- 3 Regular training is provided on youth issues, cross cultural awareness and conflict resolution

## Youth Participation

- 0 Young people have no input into decisions regarding the operation of the centre
- 1 Young people are consulted informally about centre issues
- 2 Young people on local committees / schools / etc. are invited to contribute to decisions most likely to affect young people, such as re-development of the centre, review of centre rules and consequences of inappropriate behaviour
- 3 The centre operates a youth advisory committee and provides opportunities for young people to participate in decision making and to learn about the operation of a centre

## Community 'Ownership'

- 0 There are few or no opportunities for the community to participate in activities within the centre
- 1 The centre contributes to the local community through donations and charity events
- 2 The centre provides opportunities for young people and community members to hold exhibitions and to utilise the space of the centre performances
- 3 The centre is active in local community events, supports local community activities and frequently provides opportunities for local groups to display art work, perform or hold events in the centre



Score Rating:

*0-7 There is work to be done.*

*8-15 Room for improvement, but going ok.*

*16-21 Excellent, working well.*



## APPENDIX B – PROTOCOL DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

### Getting Started

Informal discussion between:

- Centre Manager
- Youth Worker
- Local Council

Decision is made to hold a meeting  
Stakeholders identified and contact made

### Coming Together

(1st meeting)

Meeting held to:

- Appoint chairperson
- Discuss process and goals
- Raise issues
- Clarification of concerns/perspectives
- Identify gaps in membership
- Plan next meeting and allocate tasks – checklist

### Laying it on the table

(2nd meeting)

Meeting to:

- Get feedback from all stakeholders on issues emerging from research
- Issues identified and prioritised
- Small number of issues selected for attention
- Identify process for completion – who is responsible, timeframe, etc.

### Getting busy

(3rd meeting)

Meeting will:

- Get feedback from all stakeholders on progress on key tasks/issues
- Review plans and progress
- Decisions made regarding tasks
- Timeframes revised and re-established
- Methods of maintaining involvement of key groups discussed and planned
- Next meeting determined

→ 1 month

→ 3 months

→ 5 months



### **Kicking Off**

(4th meeting)

Meeting will:

- Review and ratify Protocol
- Review training
- Finalise other projects
- Discuss and plan implementation

### **Into Action**

(5th meeting)

Meeting to:

- Monitor progress of Protocol implementation
- Make adjustments as required
- Consider further promotion, training and education issues re the Protocol
- Review other associated projects
- Organise ongoing meetings

### **Checking In**

(6th meeting)

Meetings will:

- Monitor progress
- Plan for evaluation
- Maintain relationships
- Identify, discuss and resolve emerging issues
- Identify new projects requiring attention and allocate tasks
- Plan for feedback to key groups being represented

### **Have we been successful?**

(8th meeting)

Meeting will:

- Determine if Protocol has been successful
- Review outcomes and implementation
- Identify gaps or areas requiring attention
- Review and modify Protocol based on findings
- Develop a strategy to communicate and share successes
- Future plans for quarterly meetings

→ 7-9 months → 12 months → 15 months → 18 months → 24 months

## APPENDIX C SAMPLE PROTOCOL

### Introduction

A brief introduction should discuss the reasons for developing a Protocol, the parties involved and the processes adopted.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Protocol should be clearly explained at the beginning. The reasons and local issues influencing the Protocol should be outlined and the objectives of developing a Protocol should be articulated.

### Principles

The principles of the Protocol will reflect the commitment of the parties and the underlying foundations of the Protocol. Developing the principles will require negotiation between the members of the working committee. The process of developing agreed principles will help to resolve differences and to gain an understanding of what key members are prepared to negotiate and support.

Principles will generally include reference to young people's rights to access to shopping centres and their responsibilities to behave in an appropriate manner; the

| Behaviour              | Description of Behaviour                                                                                                                                                                                 | Initial Consequence | Continued Behaviour | Upper Consequence Limit |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Minor matter</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● no real victim</li> <li>● swearing,</li> <li>● smoking inside</li> <li>● ball games</li> <li>● running</li> <li>● inappropriate riding of escalators</li> </ul> |                     |                     |                         |
| <b>General Matter</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● drunkenness or alcohol consumed in centre</li> <li>● swearing in public</li> <li>● interfering with other patrons</li> </ul>                                    |                     |                     |                         |
| <b>Serious Matter</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● intimidation,</li> <li>● threatening behaviour towards people or groups</li> <li>● abusive language directed at person</li> </ul>                               |                     |                     |                         |
| <b>Criminal Matter</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● actual offence has taken place</li> <li>● shoplifting, assault, etc</li> </ul>                                                                                  |                     |                     |                         |

right of young people to be treated like other patrons and the responsibility of security personnel to treat young people fairly; the benefits of consultation and working together to address problems; the benefits of engaging young people in decision making processes to build ownership; and reviewing and monitoring progress. The nature of the principles will reflect local conditions and arrangements.

## Behaviour Standards

Identifying and differentiating between acceptable or unacceptable behaviour (for both young people and security personnel) will reduce confusion about behaviour standards and expectations. Having a clear understanding of what behaviours will be accepted in the centre will help both security and young people.

Deciding what constitutes acceptable or appropriate behaviour should be done in conjunction with young people. By encouraging them to participate in the development of centre rules and the delineation between different levels of unacceptable behaviour, they will be more inclined to abide by the rules and to encourage others to accept the rules. Periodically engaging young people to review these rules will help to maintain their relevance and the ownership that young people will feel toward the rules.

The table on the left, adopts a set of definitions for different levels of inappropriate behaviour. These definitions can be expanded as required.

## Consequences

Problems can arise when it appears that arbitrary or different consequences are applied for similar behaviours. Clearly outlining the consequences of certain types of behaviour will help to reduce the perception and reality of inconsistent consequences.



Where possible, natural consequences for inappropriate behaviour should be used. Natural consequences could include:

- Picking up litter if littering is the problem
- Apologising to another shopper if the problem is minor conflict between shoppers
- Removing marking pen, if the problem is minor graffiti
- Fixing knocked over furniture if this is the cause of the problem

The table on page 20 has been provided as a guide to what should be developed locally and included in a Protocol. The consequences for particular behaviours have been identified and described, although limits have not been imposed here, as this **must be the responsibility of local groups**.

Hierarchy of possible consequences include:

**Warning** – verbal warning issued by security officer on the spot. No records taken, but if behaviour persists then a caution could be issued.

**Caution** – young person is taken to the security supervisor, centre or operations manager. The young person will be asked to explain their behaviour and will be cautioned against future, similar behaviour. Good practice will dictate that parents / carers are invited to attend any discussions with a young person where behaviour is discussed or consequences imposed.

**Borderline** – the centre manager, in the presence of a parent or guardian, interviews young person. They are invited to explain their behaviour and to show cause why they should not be excluded from using the centre for a specified period. They will be informed that any future inappropriate behaviour will result in banning. Written information about being on the borderline is issued to the young person and parents (or support person). Referral to an appropriate agency / service or program might be appropriate at this stage if there are reasons for continued inappropriate behaviour. Other support agencies or services might be able to assist the young person.

**Ban<sup>1</sup>** – exclusion from use of the centre is the last resort and should only be used when the safety of patrons and staff are jeopardised by the behaviour of the young person or where serious criminal offences have taken place. Banning a young person will have repercussions on their ability to socialise with peers, access or gain employment in the centre and to utilise services available within the centre. As such, alternative to bans are strongly encouraged and are preferred over bans.

Banning should be used sparingly (if at all) and consideration must be given to arrangements to enable the young person to access employment or services and utilities within the centre and transport. Short term banning periods can be effective and are more likely to be complied with than extended periods. For example, banning a young person for the remainder of the day or for the remainder of the week will often be as effective as banning them for extended periods. Bans should also be reviewed and reduced if it is later discovered that a ban should not have been issued or because of compliance with the notice for an extended period or because circumstances of the individual have changed necessitating their access to the centre.

## Review of Consequences

On occasion, it might be appropriate to review the consequences of inappropriate behaviour by a young person in the shopping centre. More information might be uncovered that suggests the original consequence was too severe or the behaviour of the young person might demonstrate that the consequence should be modified or reduced.

Review conditions might be included in the Protocol which requires the young person to approach centre management with sound reasons for requesting that the consequences of the behaviour be reviewed.

1 There have been successful challenges to banning notices. Good practice would dictate that the development of consequences, especially those involving exclusion of a young person from the centre, first be considered by appropriate legally qualified personnel. In conjunction with key stakeholders, it might be beneficial to develop a table of consequences to inappropriate behaviour and to have the consequences checked by legal experts. Having banning notices challenged in court will be time consuming and stressful and should be avoided by taking the necessary precautionary steps at the outset.

## Grievance Procedures / Complaint

Grievance or complaint procedures provide avenues for problems to be resolved. Articulating grievance procedures will help young people to take appropriate action to complaints, rather than resorting to responses that might be unhelpful.

Grievance or complaint procedures should be defined and transparent. For example, if a young person has a grievance with a security officer, the procedure might be to inform the centre manager of the complaint, to complete a standard complaint form (with the assistance of a youth worker if required) and to have the matter dealt with by the centre manager. Separate meetings might be held with the young person (and support person) and the security officer to determine nature and validity of the complaint. A meeting of the security officer and the young person (and support person) might then be conducted to resolve the issue. Both parties should be encouraged to consider solutions prior to attending the meeting. All concerned should understand the outcome.

Community Justice Centres (CJCs) might be able to assist in mediating disputes between young people and security personnel, for example. Where disputes or conflict arise, CJCs could be contacted to determine if they are willing and able to mediate the dispute. For CJCs to be involved, parties must be willing to participate, must be prepared to accept the outcome and must have the ability to contribute and negotiate an outcome without having to seek approval from a secondary source (i.e. supervisor or centre manager).

Delineation between complaints or grievances about customer service issues and behaviours that could result in criminal sanctions should be provided. A young person (or other patrons) who feels harassed or intimidated or who has been verbally abused by a security officer should raise these matters with centre management; allegations of false imprisonment or assault by security personnel should be referred to local police and the Security Industry Registry. Centre management may be advised as a matter of courtesy, but unlawful behaviour of security personnel should be reported to appropriate regulatory agencies.



## **Development Activities**

This section provides an opportunity to identify and articulate long-term strategies consistent with the spirit of the Protocol. Development activities might include: establishing youth-related Key Performance Indicators for inclusion in the security tender when it is next up for review, planning an annual youth conference or event in the centre or conducting information session for retailers on youth-related issues. These are but some of the development activities that might be documented in the Protocol.

## **Distribution, Education and Training**

The development of a Protocol will only be partially beneficial if no one is made aware of the document and what it means. Distributing copies and educating security personnel, young people, youth workers, retailers and the wider community about the Protocol and acceptable behaviours in the centre will increase understanding of and commitment to the document.

The Protocol can also then be used in future security tender specifications. Understanding of and adherence to the Protocol could become Key Performance Indicators in future security contracts and form the basis of ongoing training for security providers.

## **Protocol Review**

At the commencement of the Protocol, a review period should be specified. A period of between six and 12 months should be identified, enabling a suitable duration for the Protocol to be implemented and initial problems identified and overcome.

Identifying what measures will be used to determine success prior to finalisation and implementation is necessary to enable this information to be collected along the way. For example, a process might have to be established to collect records of major incidents between young people and security. These records can then be reviewed to determine if there is a reduction in the number of such events, a reduction in the severity of these incidents and to determine if they were managed appropriately.

## **Contact Numbers**

This section should contain details of local service providers. These agencies might be in a position to provide support to young people (such as the local youth centre, youth drop in or legal advice line) and might also be useful for centre information outlets / services, security personnel and centre management as potential referral sources. For example, security personnel might be able to assist a young person who they suspect of being homeless, by contacting one of the listed agencies or by providing these details to the young person.

Many local councils will have a directory of local services or wallet-sized cards with details of the key agencies in the local area. Providing access to the directory or by having stocks of these cards, could help security adopt a less confrontational role and help young people to access appropriate services.



