

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

Resource Manual and Self-Paced Learning Package

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The Youth Action and Policy Association

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Preface

A common scenario:

Tony is a security officer at Southmall Shopping Centre. He is new at the centre, having previously worked security at an industrial complex on night patrols. On one of his first Thursday nights in the centre, he is confronted by many groups of young people. Some are in the food court, some at the front entrance, while smaller groups are moving around throughout the centre.

Two young people exchange words in the food court. A call comes over the radio for Tony to attend the food court to respond to a disagreement. Tony races to the food court. On approaching the group of young people, Tony chooses the two main offenders and tells them to leave the centre. One young person turns to leave, but the other steps closer. Tony puts his hand on his shoulder and says, "I've told you to leave – now get out or else!" The young person pushes Tony's hand from his shoulder and says, "Don't touch me". His friends move closer and encourage a fight. The young person stands his ground challenging Tony to throw him out.

Tony is later contacted by police regarding allegations of assaulting a young person.

Situations such as this are not uncommon. A minor disagreement or minor misbehaviour of young people results in an outcome that is unhelpful for the young people and the security officer. Tony had many options in dealing with this disagreement. How else could Tony have dealt with this problem? What skills could Tony have used to defuse

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the situation, maintain order in the food court and dealt with the inappropriate behaviour?

We believe that for Tony to effectively respond, he should:

- Know and understand how to apply relevant legislation, policies and rules
- Observe what is happening on approaching the situation
- Build rapport (or relationships) with young people before problems arise to help in times of conflict
- Communicate effectively with young people
- Understand young people and their relationship with shopping centres
- Work effectively with other security officers (and other people who can help calm a situation)
- Maintain appropriate records of such incidents
- Reflect on how he approached and managed the situation

Throughout this package, we hope to get you to think about better ways of handling situations like the one described. You will already have some skills, knowledge and experience in dealing with some of these situations. We hope to add to this knowledge and to help you plan for such occurrences. Better outcomes in managing these situations will benefit you, the company you work for and the shopping centre which contracts your security company.

Each section will deal with one of the separate issues identified above. Working through the package will help you develop better strategies for dealing with the scenario in which Tony may have got himself in trouble. Breaking the package into sections might be the best way to tackle the package. The size might seem daunting, but when it is broken into sections, it will be more easily managed.

While the package has been written as a self-paced package, it has also been developed with security supervisors and youth workers in mind. Supervisors and

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youth workers might from time to time be involved in delivering training to security officers. The information provided can be used in such training. Reproducing any part of the package is encouraged, as long as the authors are acknowledged and properly cited.

The information in this package in no way guarantees improved practice or should replace proper legal advice. The information is accurate at the time of writing, but changes to laws can and do occur frequently. As such, appropriate legal advice should be sought in relation to specific legalities arising from security work in shopping centres. Furthermore, the information is a guide only. The authors accept no responsibility for consequences of use of the information.

We hope that you find the package beneficial. If you follow the directions in the package, complete the exercises, reflect on your practices and discuss the questions with your colleagues, we believe that you will learn even more ways of managing interactions with young people.

Regards,

Garner Clancey
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March 2004

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Introduction

What is a self-paced learning package?

A self-paced learning package contains all of the necessary information to help you learn more about the topic (in this case the topic is young people). By reading and working your way through the package, you can take your own time and go back to sections if problems arise in your work place that relate to the information provided. You do not necessarily have to attend face-to-face training, but it may be provided (and is highly recommended as a way of enhancing skills and reinforcing messages contained within the package).

Why a self-paced learning package?

It is often difficult to get security personnel released from work to attend training. While training is necessary, it can be expensive. A self-paced learning package like this one can be completed in your own time, during quiet shifts or discussed as part of regular meetings.

There are very many security companies operating in shopping centres in New South Wales. Some companies are very small, while others are quite large. The bigger

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companies often have more resources for training, which means only some security personnel working in shopping centres get to go to such training. By providing information in a self-paced learning package, we can be confident that many more people get to access this information.

What are the benefits of a self-paced learning package?

A self-paced learning package is cheaper than face-to-face training, can be used by all security companies and can be completed by staff around roster periods. A self-paced learning package should encourage security personnel at a shopping centre to discuss their experiences with each other and learn from each other. A package of this kind also means that many people have access to the same information, which can increase the consistency of responses.

What are the limitations of a self-paced learning package?

A self-paced learning package is only one way to enhance knowledge and attitudes of security personnel. Attendance at training and quality supervision are vital in providing opportunities for security personnel to learn and grow. Getting all personnel to complete packages can be a problem, especially for those who do not like to read or for whom English is a second language. Getting support to answer questions and to assist understanding can also be problematic.

Why should shopping centre security guards complete this package?

Young people often use shopping centres. Sometimes their presence is unwanted by other shoppers, centre

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management or security supervisors. In dealing with young people, security personnel can get into conflict or experience problems. This might be because of how they have responded or it might be because of the young person involved. Whatever the reason, as adults, and representatives of the shopping centre and the security company, it will be the responsibility of the security guard to act in a lawful and appropriate way. Having skills and knowledge to deal effectively with young people will reduce the tension and conflict experienced, improve job satisfaction and improve the harmony within the shopping centre. The difference between getting it right or getting it wrong might be small, but getting it wrong might cost you your job, might result in criminal charges and might even cost the security company the contract. Finding new ways and learning new information will not only help with your current job, but it might have benefits for your career. You might be given extra shifts because of the skilled way that you deal with young people and you might even be promoted.

How do I use this package?

Each section has been written to provide a simple summary of the key issues and information. Following this summary, there will be a number of exercises and some short articles for you to read. Complete the reading and the exercises before moving to the next section. Answers to the questions are provided in the back. You should not consult the answers until you have completed each section.

Some exercises require you to talk with your colleagues, to talk with young people in your shopping centre, gather some information from your supervisor or from the centre management team and use the Internet. You might not be able to complete all of the exercises, but you should try your best.

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What if I am having problems?

If you are having problems, you should speak with your supervisor, work colleagues or contact someone listed in the back of the package who might be able to help. Answers to all of your questions might not be able to be provided, but help and support can be found.

Who is the package designed for?

The package has been specifically designed for security officers who work in shopping centres. We recognise that not every security officer will have the time or motivation to work through this package. As such, we also anticipate that the package will be used by security supervisors with their staff and youth workers preparing training to deliver to security officers.

Laws, Policies and Rules

Anything you do within a shopping centre must be within the law. Before we think about how to respond to the situation that Tony found himself in at Southmall, it is important to understand what you can and cannot do. People will and do sue or press charges. Civil and criminal charges for false imprisonment and assault against security guards do happen. If you are charged with an offence through the course of your duties, you might lose your job, your security license and the company you work for might lose their contract with the centre. Not acting within the law might have significant consequences.

We will first look at the laws that cover security officers in shopping centres. You will have covered much of this information in the training you completed to get your security license.

Relevant laws

The key legislation covering your role in a shopping centre includes:

- Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)
- Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 (NSW)

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- Security Industry Act 1997 (NSW)
- Young Offenders Act 1997 (NSW)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)

Crimes Act 1900

Section 352 of the *Crimes Act 1900* is critical to understanding powers of a security officer.

Crimes Act 1900 No 40

352 Person in act of committing or having committed an offence

- (1) Any constable or other person may without warrant apprehend,
- (a) any person **in the act of committing**, or immediately after having committed, an offence punishable, whether by indictment, or on summary conviction, under any Act, [emphasis added]
 - (b) any person who has committed a serious indictable offence for which the person has not been tried,
- and take the person, and any property found upon the person, before an authorised Justice to be dealt with according to law.

Exercise 1.1

Section 352 of the Crimes Act 1900 is generally known as the section which describes a 'citizen's arrest'. It is this section that security guards obtain their powers. Complete the two true / false questions relating to these powers.

- A security officer can detain a person on suspicion of that person committing an indictable offence within the shopping centre?

TRUE / FALSE

- A security officer can use reasonable force to detain a person suspected of committing an offence within the shopping centre?

TRUE / FALSE

Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901

The *Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901* governs activities of persons owning land and that of persons coming onto such land. In the case of shopping centre, security officers act on

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behalf of the owners and generally have delegation to exclude persons coming into a shopping centre. Of course, stopping people coming into the centre will be the opposite of what the centre is trying to achieve – they want people to come into the centre and spend money. As such, excluding or stopping someone coming into a shopping centre should not be an action taken without consulting a supervisor.

The Act, having been created over 100 years ago, includes some old fashioned views and statements. Many of the principles of the Act will not be relevant to shopping centres or to security officers operating in shopping centres. Only the most relevant sections of the Act are set out below.

Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 No 33

Inclosed lands means:

- (a) prescribed premises, or
- (b) any land, either public or private, inclosed or surrounded by any fence, wall or other erection, or partly by a fence, wall or other erection and partly by a canal or by some natural feature such as a river or cliff by which its boundaries may be known or recognised, including the whole or part of any building or structure and any land occupied or used in connection with the whole or part of any building or structure.

4 Unlawful entry on inclosed lands

- (1) Any person who, without lawful excuse (proof of which lies on the person), enters into inclosed lands without the consent of the owner, occupier or person apparently in charge of those lands, or who remains on those lands after being requested by the owner, occupier or person apparently in charge of those lands to leave those lands, is liable to a penalty not exceeding:
 - (a) 10 penalty units in the case of prescribed premises, or
 - (b) 5 penalty units in any other case.

4A Offensive conduct while on inclosed lands

- (1) Any person, who remains upon the inclosed lands of another person after being requested by the owner or occupier or the person apparently in charge of those lands to leave those lands and while remaining upon those lands conducts himself or herself in such a manner as would be regarded by reasonable persons as being, in all the circumstances, offensive, is liable to a penalty not exceeding:
 - (a) 20 penalty units in the case of prescribed premises, or
 - (b) 10 penalty units in any other case.
- (2) It is a sufficient defence to a prosecution for an offence under this section if the defendant satisfies the court that the defendant had a reasonable excuse for conducting himself or herself in the manner alleged in the information for the offence.

6 Offender may be apprehended

- (1) Any person found committing any offence against this Act, and who refuses, when required to do so, to give his or her name and place of abode, may be apprehended by the owner, occupier, or person in charge of the inclosed lands upon or in relation to which the offence was committed, and delivered to the custody of the nearest constable to be taken before a Magistrate or an authorised officer within the meaning of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 to be dealt with according to law.

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- (2) Any person who, upon being so required to give his or her name and place of abode, gives any false name or place of abode, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 0.5 penalty unit.

Basically, it is this Act which gives you the power to exclude someone coming into your home. The powers are much the same when it comes to a shopping centre.

Exercise 1.2

Shopping centres will have guidelines or rules about excluding people from coming into the centre. Review these procedures for the centre that you work at and list three reasons why a person might be excluded from the centre.

1.

.....

2.

.....

3.

.....

We will look at the reasons why shopping centres are often so important to young people a little later. For now, it will be enough to say that you should follow the correct procedures operating at your centre before banning or excluding a young person from the centre. People have successfully challenged bans, resulting in them being overturned.

Security Industry Act 1997

Security officers in New South Wales must complete relevant training, demonstrate understanding of their powers and be regarded as an appropriate person to get a security license. The *Security Industry Act 1997* establishes the ways in which people will be entitled to act as a security officer and the consequences for not operating appropriately.

Key sections of the legislation have been copied below.

Security Industry Act 1997 No 157

26 Revocation of licence

- (1) A licence may be revoked:
 - (a) [Repealed]
 - (b) if the licensee:
 - (i) supplied information that was (to the licensee's knowledge) false or misleading in a material particular in, or in connection with, the application for the licence, or
 - (ii) contravenes any provision of this Act or the regulations, whether or not the licensee has been convicted of an offence for the contravention, or
 - (iii) contravenes any condition of the licence, or
 - (c) if the Commissioner is of the opinion that the licensee is no longer a fit and proper person to hold a licence, or
 - (d) for any other reason prescribed by the regulations.
- (1A) The Commissioner must revoke a licence where the Commissioner is satisfied that, if the licensee were applying for a new licence, the application would be required by this Act to be refused.
- (2) The Commissioner may revoke a licence by serving on the licensee, personally or by post, a notice stating that the licence is revoked and the reasons for revoking it.
- (3) The revocation of a licence by such a notice takes effect when the notice is served or on a later date specified in the notice.
Note: Section 31 requires the licensee to immediately surrender the licence if the licence is revoked.
- (4) The Commissioner may, by serving a further notice on the holder of a licence, cancel a notice revoking a licence before the notice takes effect.

Exercise 1.3

What are some reasons why a security officer might have their license revoked?

.....

.....

Legislation – looking deeper

Understanding the legislation previously described will be of greatest importance to security officers. We thought that it will also be useful to briefly discuss legislation that applies when young people are charged with an offence or if they are at risk of being abused or neglected. These two Acts are not likely to be directly relevant to security work, but having some understanding of this legislation will be helpful.

Young Offenders Act 1997

The *Young Offenders Act* (YOA) commenced on 6 April 1998. The Act provides police with four options when considering how to deal with a young person (10–18 years) who breaks the law. The options available are briefly described below:

- **Warning** – a warning will be used in less serious (or summary offences). The warning is issued on the spot and details of the young person are recorded and placed into the police computer database. Warnings are typically given for offensive behaviour, offensive language, riding a bicycle without a helmet and riding on public transport without a ticket.
- **Caution** – a caution is a more serious intervention. A caution can only happen if the young person admits guilt in the presence of a parent, adult nominated by a parent, a lawyer or if the young person is over 16 years, in the presence of an adult that they select. A caution is then delivered by a police officer at the police station in the presence of the young person and his / her parents or guardian. The caution could take up to an hour and is designed to encourage the young person to take responsibility for their offending and to clearly alert them to the fact that further offending will be dealt with more seriously. A record is made on the police database of the caution. A criminal record does not result from a caution. Cautions are often delivered for stealing, common assault, break and enter and malicious damage (i.e. vandalism).

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- **Youth Justice Conference** – a youth justice conference brings the victims, the young offender and his / her parents together to discuss the crime. The young person will be required to explain their actions and the victim has a chance to inform the young person how the offence has affected them. Together, the young person and the victim decide how the damage can be repaired, and this will generally involve one or a combination of the following: an apology, financial reparation, community work, direct reparation of the damage (i.e. fix the damage to the shed that the young person damaged) or entry into a program designed to stop further offending. A conference will be conducted for similar offences as a caution, but often the young person will have offended previously or the offence had a greater impact on the victim.¹
- **Court** – court is the last option for young people who have offended. Police have no option but to send a young person to court if they do not admit guilt or if they have committed a very serious offence (sexual offences, drug supply or trafficking, armed robbery, offences resulting in death). Courts can impose periods of detention as an outcome.

When you contact police in relation to a young person who has shoplifted or damaged property at the shopping centre, they will have to use the YOA and decide which option is most appropriate. In arriving at their decision, they will look at the offending history of the young person, the impact of the offence on the victim, the severity of the offence and whether there was any violence involved. These factors will help them to decide whether they can and should warn, caution, refer to a youth justice conference or send the young person to court.

If you wish to learn more about the YOA, it is recommended that you contact the local police Youth Liaison Officer. These

¹ As a security officer, you might be a victim of a crime committed by a young person and invited to attend and participate in a youth justice conference. Your involvement will be helpful in showing the young person the consequences of their actions.

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officers have specialist knowledge of the YOA and will be able to provide further explanation.

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

The care and protection of children is the responsibility of everyone. Anyone who has contact with a child has some responsibility for their care and protection – this includes security officers. Although you may not have mandatory reporting obligations (like police, nurses, teachers, child care workers, etc.), you do still need to have some understanding of care and protection legislation.

Basically, security officers should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and who to contact if you encounter a child or young person who appears to be the victim of abuse or neglect. The following will provide very simple information regarding these issues. Further information can be accessed from the NSW Commission for Children and Young People website at www.kids.nsw.gov.au.

There are many potential indicators of abuse (emotional, physical and sexual abuse) and neglect. Some include: children spending long periods in a shopping centre without supervision, children or young people being fearful of returning home, the physical well being of the child or young person (malnourishment, bruising from physical punishment, inappropriate clothing for the climate) and the behaviour of the child or young person (overtly sexualised behaviour, abusive to other children).

In your role as a security officer, it is unlikely that you will get to learn a great deal about the children and young people that visit the centre. However, if you do become aware that a child or young person is being abused or neglected, then you should either contact your local police or the Department of Community Service (DoCS). DoCS operate a telephone helpline to take calls from professionals and the public in relation to child abuse and neglect. They can be contacted on 13 36 27. If you are unsure what you

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should do in a particular case, then it is advisable that you contact your local DoCS office, your local police or call the helpline.

Reading

The following passage has been taken from 'Security Guards: what powers do they really have?', which was written by Nick Manning and Steve Campbell. This section is taken from the book, *Youth justice: Your Guide to Cops and Court* (2000), edited by Nick Manning.

Security guards' powers depend on where they are. In privately-owned places (like shopping complexes), owned by private individuals and companies (not the government), security guards have the same powers as you have in your own home. Once you tell a visitor that you don't want them on your property, and they don't go, they are trespassing on your property. You then have the right to use reasonable force to throw them out. The police can charge them with trespass (remaining on inclosed lands).

It is the same for the general public in privately-owned places. In somewhere like a shopping complex or cinema, the security guards and other staff enforce the rules of the owner. They can deal with anyone on the property according to the owners' rules (as long as the rules aren't against the law, and the guard doesn't break the law enforcing those rules).

Many shopping complexes and cinemas have conditions of entry that you accept when you enter (even though you might not know what the conditions are). If you break these conditions, the security guard or other staff can tell you to leave (and they can use reasonable force to remove you if you refuse).

The rules of entry are different at different places and may include things like:

- rules requiring the opening of bags for inspection
- rules against disturbing other shoppers / movie goers

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- rules requiring users to obey any direction from staff or security

Although the shopping centre management can set the rules, that doesn't give them total power over shopping center users. Here are some extra things to know.

Detain you or arrest – can they do it?

Staff and security only have the power of citizen's arrest – that is, they can only hold you until the police come.

Search – can they do it?

The staff or security guard can ask to search your bags because that is usually one of the conditions of entry. They don't have the power to force a search: any search can only happen with the person's consent (permission). If the person doesn't consent, all the security officer can do is tell the person to leave or ban the person. They cannot force a search of the person.

Banning you – can they do it?

A ban from a business such as a shopping complex is legal because the private property owner has the right to exclude whoever they want from their privately-owned place. They can ban a person as long as the ban doesn't break anti-discrimination laws.

A business cannot ban a person from being near their premises. A private property owner can only ban from their own property.

These laws apply regardless of the age of the person.

Policies and rules in your shopping centre

As we have seen, there are laws that operate for all shopping centres and security officers in New South Wales. Knowing these laws will be important to responding to a

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situation with young people. If you do not know that you cannot detain a person on suspicion or that you cannot use excessive force, then it is possible that you will respond unlawfully.

Further to these laws, it is important to understand the policies and rules that operate where you work. Each centre will have slightly different procedures for dealing with (young) people who come to the centre. If you work in different centres, then you will have to be aware of the different rules in each before you start work. One of the most common complaints from young people in their dealings with shopping centre security is the lack of consistency in the way that security officers respond. Knowing the rules and policies of the centre will be important in responding in the same way as your colleagues and maintaining consistency.

Considering the impact of rules and policies will be important. Often, honest attempts to make things better result in worse outcomes for particular groups. Trying to prevent problems can result in greater problems. As such, it is important to think about the rules and policies that operate in your centre, to question why they exist and find out how they are used by the various security officers.

The following exercise will require you to review relevant policies and rules. You should be aware of these already, so the exercise should not take long. If you cannot locate policies and rules on the topics listed, then you should speak with your supervisor or the shopping centre management.

Exercise 1.4

For each of the following questions, identify if the centre where you work or the security company that employs you has a policy and summarise the key features of each.

- Conditions of entry – what are the conditions of entering the shopping centre and are the rules displayed?

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Does the centre where you work have specified conditions of entry?

YES / NO

If yes, insert the key conditions below.

Key conditions of entry

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Are the conditions of entry displayed?

YES / NO

- Consequences for misbehaviour – does the centre have an agreed/approved list of consequences for misbehaviour (such as swearing, smoking in the centre, playing ball games in the centre, etc.)?

YES / NO

If yes, identify the behaviours and list the consequences:

Behaviours

Consequences

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

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- Banning procedures – if banning is an approved consequence for inappropriate behaviour, complete the following:

Who issues the banning notice?

.....

Does a parent have to be present if a young person is being banned?

.....

What will determine the length of ban?

.....

Can the ban be reduced?

.....

Will access still be provided to government services or employment in the centre if a person is banned?

.....

How will the person know where they are banned from?
Is a map provided which shows the limits of the centre?

.....

We will see later why shopping centres are so important to some young people. Being banned from a shopping centre can cause numerous problems. A good simple article, by the Youth Action and Policy Association, which discusses the importance of centres to young people and some of the problems with the use of banning notices for young people has been provided. Read through this article before moving to the next section.

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People



fact sheet

You're Banned!

Shopping centres, banning notices and young people

Introduction

Young people are major users of shopping centres. In Australia young people represent a market worth more than \$4.6 billion (Quinlivan 1998) which shopping centres are keen to attract. Some young people are welcomed by shopping centres as they spend money and conform to the expectation of managers that shopping centres are spaces of consumption. Shopping centres for many young people today perform roles previously associated with main streets. Centres are a place to hang out, meet friends and observe or be observed by peers as well as places for shopping.

When any group of people congregate in an area issues can arise. Some young people behave inappropriately in centres. Others are seen to interfere with the ability of the centre to be the most successful 'machine for consumption' the world has ever seen. Centres have increasingly been responding to these issues by banning young people.

What is a ban?

A shopping centre is ambiguous space as it is designed to be accessible to the public yet is privately owned. Owners of any private space can ban any person for almost any reason as they have the right to decide who enters that space. A ban means a person is not able to enter a shopping centre for a specified length of time. If they do enter they will be removed and it is likely that they will be charged with trespass.

What are bans issued for?

Bans are usually issued when centre rules are broken. Typical basic rules of a shopping centre are presented below. Breaking any of these rules can lead to a ban. Bans are likely in the cases where there has been shop

lifting, vandalism, offensive conduct and use of offensive language. Any action that leads to prosecution is also likely to involve a ban.

At times banning notices have been issued for frivolous reasons such as questioning a security officer or associating with a person that security have concerns about.

Typical shopping centre basic rules

Minimum dress requirements:
footwear and shirt must be
worn at all times.

The following are not allowed
in centre:

- no animals (except those
trained to assist
physically challenged or
impaired)
- no smoking
- no alcohol
- no offensive language
- no roller blades
- no scooters
- no skateboards
- no bikes
- no fighting, boisterous or
unsafe behaviour
- no portable sound
systems

Security officers are seldom held
accountable for their actions.

Some people view young people
who congregate together as
threatening so security is asked to
break them up and move them on
and at times people are banned. As
Anna Booth, advisor with the
Shopping Centre Council of
Australia states, "young people ...
use shopping centres differently to
other members of the community

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and some never shop" (2001). These different use patterns make young people visible and lead to greater security and management attention being devoted to young people.

A Shopping Council of Australia youth forum identified "that security officers, police and centre management can be as prone to nervously stereotyping groups of young visitors" (Property Australia 1999:22). Centres need to move to accommodate the way young people use them. Hanging out rather than consuming should not be something people are banned for. There are some activities that occur while hanging out that deserve attention and some places where hanging out makes it difficult for others to use parts of a centre.

There are some things that it is illegal for centres to ban people for. Banning because of age, disability, sexual orientation or ethnicity is a breach of human rights law. A centre cannot ban a person from space it does not own such as footpaths near a centre.

How long are bans for?

There is no limit to how long a banning order can be issued for. Bans are usually for 6 months to 2 years. There have been cases where lifetime bans have been issued. YAPA strongly believes that lifetime bans should not be applied to any person. Managers should use alternatives to long or repeat bans such as referring the young person to services that can help address issues that are causing the problem behaviour. In some cases a ban is not a total restriction. A young person might be banned from entering the centre unless accompanied by a parent for the duration of their visit.

There are no regulations, guidelines, procedures or other methods of accountability governing the issuing of banning notices. This means a ban can be as long as the centre management decide.

The lack of banning regulation means there is plenty of opportunity for inconsistent treatment within a centre for the same behaviour and between centres.

Who issues bans

Centre management or security officers issue bans on behalf of centre owners. Banning notices are at times pre-signed by centre management. This facilitates the ease of security offices in issuing bans. However it brings into question how much managers actually know about what is happening in the centre. A manager should be involved in personally signing a banning order as this is a serious matter. As part of the banning processing management should listen to the young person's as well as the security officer's perspective about the situation leading to a proposed ban. Both guards and management should be aware of places young people can be referred to address behaviour or other issues leading to bans.

Security officers and banning

Different security officers frequently respond to the same incident in different ways. The main finding of research on young people and security officer interactions was the need for security officers to improve the way they approach and interact with young people (Turner & Campbell 1999). Often security officers are not aware of what services are available for young people in the areas near a centre so cannot even suggest where else they can go.

The formal training of security staff who are likely to work in shopping centres and other property related work provides training about working with young people as an option, but this is one of many optional training modules so few officers have skills in this area. If more officers had this kind of training, interaction with young people should improve. Shopping Centre managers can influence what training officers need to have before working in a centre.

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

How often are bans issued?

Chris Grant, a lawyer with Legal Aid NSW, has conducted research into the area of banning notices and resulting trespass charges for breaches. His research reveals a growing use of trespass orders and he considers this a reflection of the growing use of banning notices. Between 1995 and 1999 trespass convictions for young people in shopping centres rose from 11 to over 200. It is likely that banning orders also increased at an incredible rate over this time. The drop in trespass orders issued in 2000 is considered by Grant (2001) to reflect a change in centre managers' desire to seek trespass orders due the time this takes, particularly with an increasing trend for trespass cases to be defended in court. Banning notices are unlikely to have dropped.

If it is assumed that for each ban which leads to a trespass conviction, there are at least another ten banning notices issued, this means at least 1760 banning notices were issued in 2000. This appears to be an extremely conservative estimate when it is known that one shopping centre in

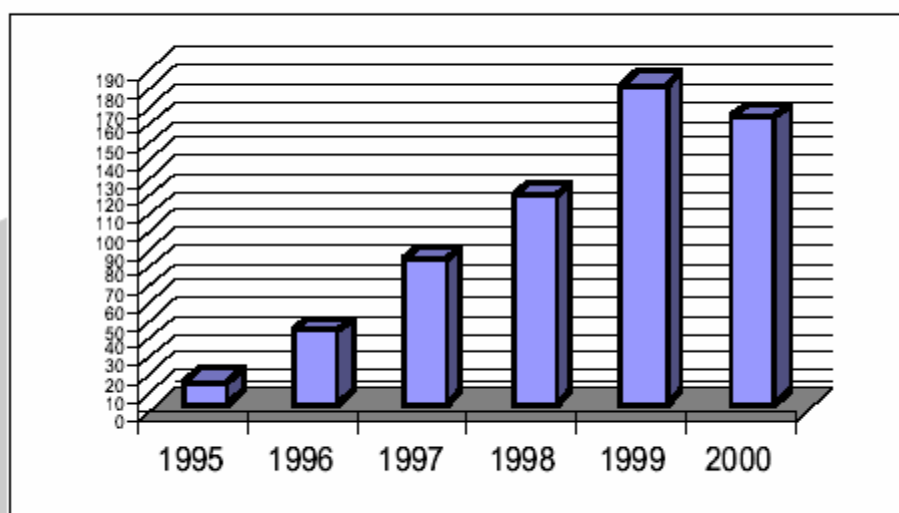
NSW of 60,000 - 70,000 square metres with approximately 200 retailers issues young people with at least 2 banning notices a week and in some weeks 15 bans. In one year this centre would issue 250-400 bans.

There are over 260 shopping complexes of various sizes in New South Wales. With some of these centres issuing hundreds of bans it is easy to see how the number of banning notices becomes substantial. If each centre issued just one ban a week there would be over 13,000 bans issued in a year. If this rose to two bans a week, this would mean 26,000 bans a year.

Addressing banning related issues

There are many ways youth services, shopping centres and other parties like the police youth liaison offices can address banning issues. An issue that can arise from banning is the need to access the services that are located in a shopping centre. At times there may be no alternative local access to basic services like the bank a person uses, post office, supermarkets, family doctor etc. If a person has a job in a centre a ban from the whole of the centre can have a disproportionate effect on them. Some of the issues that arise related to banning are relatively simple to address such as making

Trespass convictions for those aged under 18 for being in a shopping centre in NSW



Source: Grant, C 2001 - based on NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics

Section 1

Laws, Policies and Rules

banning notices clearer and using YAPA's posters about young people and shopping malls. Others are more substantial like setting up a committee to review banning notices or addressing access to basic services while banned. The table below includes information about some initiatives shopping centres and youth services can take to address banning related issues.

References

Booth, A 2001 Private places/public spaces in: *Whose Place? Conference: Public space for young and old in Sydney's west conference papers* pp38-42 Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd (Sydney)

Grant, C 2001 Young people and shopping centres: A legal perspective in *Whose Place? Conference: Public space for young and old in Sydney's west conference papers* pp60-67 Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd (Sydney)

Quinlivan, P 1998 Shopping Centres and Youth: Friend or Foe? in *Shopping Centre News* vol 16 Feb/March (Sydney)

Turner, S & Campbell, S 1999 *Consultation with young people and security officers report* Youth Action Policy Association (Sydney)

Opportunities to address banning issues	
Shopping Centres	Youth Services
Rules should be written in language easily understood, especially by those who are NESB. Clearly displayed and in many places around the centre so people know what behaviour is unacceptable.	Know what the rules at your local centres are, suggest changes where you think something would be unclear to a young person or is inappropriate.
Ensure security staff have skills that help them in relating with young people and apply the same standards to young people as adults.	Meet with centre management so that they know your service exists and what it does, particularly how your service might relate to management to assist young people they consider to be engaging in difficult behaviour.
Issue banning notices that are clear about exactly what area the person is banned from and what they are banned for. Notices have been issued that do not state the reason for the ban or are vague about the area covered.	If a young person is banned help them understand what the ban means.
Set up a review and appeal process relating to banning notices and provide information about this process on banning notices. Invite YLO involvement on this body.	Approach management to set up a committee that reviews bans and acts as an appeal body. Assist young people to appeal bans if they wish.
Support street workers to spend time in the centre. Some centres fund a street worker to work in their centre.	Youth services involved in street work could approach management so they can also spend time working in the centre.

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Observation

In your role as a security officer, it will be vital that you utilise your observation skills. Observation and communication skills will be some of the most important tools that you have as a security officer. It is likely that you will already have well developed observations skills. This brief section is just to get you to recognise the importance of observation and to suggest some reasons why observation is so important.

Exercise 2.1

Go to page iii and re-read the scenario. Put yourself in Tony’s shoes. As you head toward the food court and the incident, what should you be looking for?

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Complete the following table, by identifying some key considerations for each issue.

Section 2

Observation

Issue	Key considerations
<i>Example:</i> Group size	The number of people involved. More people requires a different response. Isolate key antagonists from group – reduce the audience.
Location of incident in centre
Proximity of other staff
Previous contact with the young people involved
Suspected intoxication
Presence of weapons

As you go about your regular duties patrolling the centre, you will observe many things. Having a plan of what to look for and considering how your observation skills can help prevent later problems will be beneficial.

Exercise 2.2

In a normal shift, what do you observe – what are you looking for? Are you simply 'being around' or are you processing information about the centre and the patrons within it? List the things that you look for during a shift.

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Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

Prevention

A key goal of observation is to prevent problems before they arise. You will not be able to prevent all problems before they happen simply through observation, but by being on the look out you can help prevent accidents, disagreements and damage.

Exercise: 2.3

Complete the following table. What will you look for in relation to each of the issues identified?

Issue	What you are looking for?
Crime	e.g. Suspicious activity – frantic watching out
Damage	e.g. People gathering in locations of low visibility
Order maintenance	e.g. Tension between different groups
Accidents and injuries	e.g. Puddles of water

Section 2

Observation

One of the goals of someone wanting to commit a crime in a shopping centre will be to be invisible. Not being seen or noticed provides cover. Wearing loud clothing or bringing attention to yourself through your behaviour is not very smart if you intend to commit a crime. As a security officer, simply saying hello to as many people as you can, might mean that someone feels noticed. For young people not intending to get up to any mischief, they will feel included and accepted in the centre if you say hello and engage in friendly conversation.

Exercise 2.4

How many people do you say hello to in a regular shift?

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During the next two shifts, make more of an effort to say hello to patrons in the centre. What reactions did you get? Did you receive any negative outcomes from saying hello?

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Surveillance

You maintain a level of surveillance through observation. Coupled with electronic surveillance, your observation and communication with other staff will enable concerns to be identified and prevented. While surveillance is part of the security function, it can be a problem for some people within the centre. Have you ever been to a place where you feel watched or where you feel that your every move is being monitored? How does it make you feel? The presence of security and the use of surveillance will make some feel safe, while others will feel less safe.

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

There are many simple things that you can do to conduct active or non-intrusive rather than passive or intrusive surveillance. Active surveillance (non-intrusive) could include saying hello, engaging in conversation, offering assistance, being accessible and generally being seen as a helper rather than a guard. By actively engaging young people and other patrons, you can build a relationship. Rather than only speaking to young people when a problem arises, you can take control and initiate or start conversations. This will help you to gather useful information, develop a better understanding of the individual and establish a relationship that might prove very helpful when and if problems do arise.

Starting conversations and being active in your surveillance can be difficult for some people. To help you get started, we have provided a few scripts that you might use.

- *Hi mate, my name is Tony, I'm one of the security people here. How are things?*
- *Hi, I'm new here. How do you find things at the centre? Is it a safe and enjoyable place?*
- *Good to see you again Andrew. How are things? It must be exam time. Are you looking forward to the start of the holidays?*
- *Hi Angela. Another Thursday night at the centre? Are you expecting to meet many friends here tonight? Have a good night.*

These statements and questions might seem very obvious and will be a normal part of work for some security officers. Developing a list to use yourself will be useful. The next two exercises will get you to list some of the scripts that you use to start conversations, particularly with young people and to identify the benefits of adopting a proactive approach (a proactive approach simply means that **you** make an effort to get to know people without there being a particular reason).

Exercise 2.5

Write three scripts that you currently use or could use in the future.

1.

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2.

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3.

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Exercise 2.6

Complete the following table by identifying the benefits of active surveillance.

Benefits of active (non-intrusive) surveillance

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Observation and stereotyping

One of the potential problems with observation is stereotyping. Stereotyping generally means that you label all people because of the behaviour of a few. If you said that you were going to target all young people because you know they shoplift, then you would be stereotyping. It is true that some young people shoplift, but not all. If you said that you were going to keep an extra close eye on anyone in the centre wearing black beanies, because you know that anyone wearing a black beanie is out to cause trouble, then you would be stereotyping. By doing this, it is possible that many people will be unfairly targeted, while others will receive no attention.

Security officers can be victims of stereotypes. What do people generally think about security officers? Do people have a general view that is different to the way that you behave and operate as a security officer?

Stereotyping is sometimes a response to only remembering particular people. You remember having a disagreement with a young person, so therefore you form the opinion that young people cause problems. What about the many young people who come to the centre and cause no problems whatsoever? It is easy to forget the good young people and easier to remember the minority who cause problems.

Stereotyping can cause problems. Some of these problems include:

- Laws against it – Anti-discrimination laws mean that people can be treated unfairly because of the age, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, religion, etc. If you target people for 'special attention' because of their race, then you are breaking anti-discrimination laws.
- Missed opportunities – by making assumptions about someone, because of how they look or who they are, you might miss opportunities to establish a good working relationship with them.

Section 2

Observation

- 'Self-fulfilling prophecy' – have you heard of self-fulfilling prophecies? Basically, this is when you make an assumption about someone and it comes true because of how you behave toward them. If you are called stupid all of your life, you might start to believe it and begin to act stupid. No one expects any different, so why should you be anything other than stupid? If you label someone as a troublemaker because of the way they look or because of their age, you are likely to act differently toward them. You might keep an eye on them, you might be quick to punish them if they behave inappropriately and you might generally treat them differently. This will become a self-fulfilling prophecy – you will look for behaviours to confirm your original beliefs, which will often mean missing other good behaviour.

These are just some of the problems with stereotyping. Being aware of stereotypes and how they can affect your judgement will be important to being a good security officer.

Building Rapport

Rapport simply means getting to know someone. If you say hello to a shop owner each time you see them, you'll start to build a rapport. You will begin to learn more about them and to share things about you. Building a relationship this way with frequent patrons will make your work more enjoyable and is likely to make you a more effective security officer.

How can such a simple approach help? By gradually building a relationship with frequent customers you will get a better understanding of them as individuals. By knowing a customer better, you will be able to spot if they are not themselves (stressed, angry, intoxicated), you will be able to fall back on this relationship if there are problems ("Come on Andrew; it's me, Tony; I can see you're pissed off, but let's talk about it"), people will be more willing to provide you with information and you will generally make people feel more welcome in the centre.

Building rapport with everyone in a shopping centre is impossible. Of the many millions of people that will visit the centre where you work in a year (some centres have as many as 15,000,000 visitors annually), many will visit the centre infrequently. While this is true, there will be many who are regular customers. As we will see later, for some young people, visiting a shopping centre daily is not uncommon. As such, there will be many young people who you can develop an understanding of, and with whom you can develop a relationship.

Section 3

Building Rapport

There is no mystery to building rapport or relationships. You will already have experience in building rapport, through your social and work life. While you will have experience in this area, the following are some tips that might be helpful.

Tips and hints – building rapport

- **Honesty** – Be honest; don't pretend to be interested if you are not. Try to be natural in the way that you start conversations.
- **Learn** – Try and learn something new about the person that can give you a future connection (interests, hobbies, school attended or employment, friends, etc.) Take care that you don't make this an interrogation.
- **Listen** – Listen to what is being said.
- **Watch** – Watch how the person behaves, as a way of learning how they behave normally.
- **Value** – Value their opinions, particularly about matters that relate to the running of the shopping centre and security practices.

Exercise 3.1

In exercise 2.4 you were required to say hello to people during your next two shifts and to monitor the response. For the next two shifts, in your casual conversation, try to learn more about some of the young people that you see in the centre often. You might find out what brings them to the centre, what they enjoy doing in the centre, what school they go to or what type of job they have and if they have any problems at the centre.

- A.** List some key things that you have learnt about five young people during the two shifts.

1

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Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

2

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3

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4

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5

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B. Be aware of your style when learning about these young people. Were there times when your questions were too much like an interrogation? If so, what could you have done differently to make this 'getting to know you' process more comfortable?

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Observation and building rapport are important preventative or proactive techniques. If Tony had a relationship with the two young people arguing in the original scenario, then he would have some ideas about how best both young men needed to be managed. Through observation and building rapport, you gain invaluable information. You might learn about illegal activity in the centre, you might learn about a

Section 3

Building Rapport

problem that could be prevented and you might learn how best to communicate with and relate to particular young people, which will be useful if there is ever an incident requiring your intervention.

Once you are comfortable with these skills, it is time to think about communication. Good communication skills are fundamental to being a good security officer.

Communicating with Young People

Many, many books have been written about communication. Often, these books assume a relationship between the people speaking with each other. While some of the information from these books is helpful, much is not directly relevant to your experience working in a shopping centre. We have tried to make the following information directly relevant to dealing with young people in shopping centres.

What affects communication in a shopping centre?

You will be required to change the way you communicate in a shopping centre depending on the situation. The general roles of security officers will influence the type of approach adopted. These roles include:

- Speaking with customers
- Providing directions
- Responding to emergency situations
- Preventing crimes such as assaults, theft and malicious damage

Section 4

Communicating with Young People

- Maintaining order within the centre

Each role will dictate how you communicate. If you are responding to a request from a customer about the location of the cinema, the way you communicate will be very different to stopping two small children playing in a dangerous area.

Each role that you carry out requires different communication and each situation will change and influence the way you need to respond. Some of the factors that will influence how you communicate include:

- Situation – as has been shown, a crisis situation will need a swift, directive response ('Get off that railing!'), whereas providing directions will require simple, clear explanation of a particular location ('The cinema is on the next floor on the right hand side').
- Audience – the receivers of the message or the audience will determine how you will communicate. If you are talking to a hearing impaired person, you will have to speak more clearly and possibly more loudly; if you are talking to small child, you will have to use simple language; if you are talking with a group, you will have to speak loud enough for all to hear; etc. Also, the size of the audience watching you will affect how you communicate – some conversations will be better had in private. Giving someone wanting attention or someone who is getting angry an audience might make them even angrier.
- Needs and wants – what the receiver or audience needs or wants will dictate how you communicate. Trying to establish what the person or persons want will help you communicate with them. If they want to make a complaint, then listening to their concerns will often be helpful; if they want to know why they are being banned, then clear information about the reasons and process of banning will be important; if they want to show off to their friends, then not being drawn into conflict will be important.

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

- Previous experiences will influence communication. If the young person has had negative experiences with security previously, then they might be more guarded than if they have had good experiences. If you have had conflict with that individual, then you might be expecting further troubles. Considering how previous experiences impact on communication will be helpful.
- Relationship – if you have a relationship with the person or persons, then you will have a better idea about how to communicate with them. You will have better understanding of their behaviour and be better able to read their behaviour as a cue to whether they are calm, agitated or angry, intoxicated, upset, etc.
- Communication skills – each person can have different communication skills. Some young people will be very confident, while others will be shy; some will be aggressive, while others will be calm.
- Background – different cultures and religions can have (sometimes very subtle) differences in the 'rules' for appropriate communication. For example, for some cultures it is a sign of respect to avoid eye contact with an adult or superior, while for other cultures, a person who avoids eye contact can be perceived as shy or dishonest. Age and gender can impact on the way a person communicates. Trying to learn and understand these differences will help you to respond appropriately to each individual.

These are just some of the factors that will influence communication. You could think of many more from your experiences. Reflecting on exchanges, particularly those that result in an outcome that you are unhappy with, will help to improve your understanding of the way you communicate and how your communication can improve.

The following exercise will require you to think about one such case. We hope that you will be able to think of other ways of handling the situation after completing this package.

Section 4

Communicating with Young People

Exercise 4.1

Think back to an encounter with a young person or a group of young people that did not turn out the way you would like.

a) Briefly describe the situation.

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b) Identify what factors might have interfered with the process (for example, did you communicate appropriately for the role, the situation, the audience, the participants' needs and wants? Could your own or the other person's previous experiences have interfered with the process? etc).

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c) What could you have done to improve the outcome?

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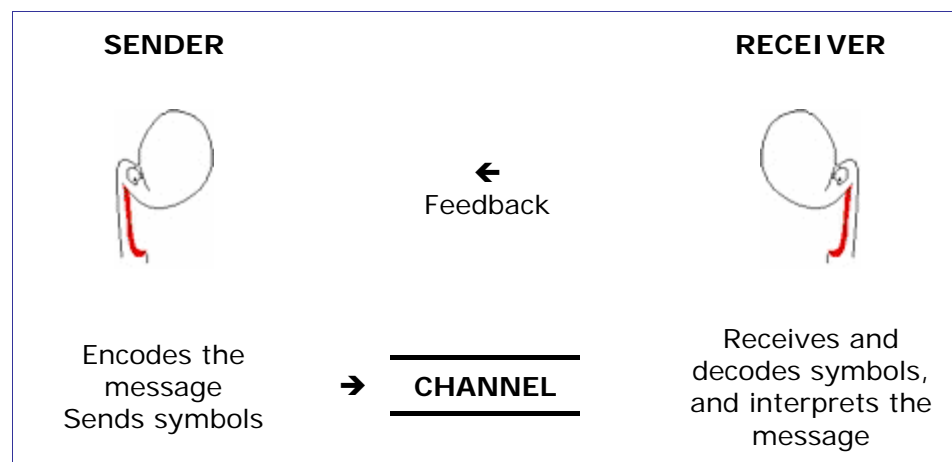
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Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

In order to improve your communication skills, you might find it useful first to learn a bit about how communication works, and some of the barriers to effective communication.

What is communication?

The following simple diagram serves as an introduction to the basic elements of the communication process.



The *sender* is the person who has an idea, opinion, feeling, instruction etc that s/he wants to convey (a *message*). Before sending the message, it needs to be *encoded*, that is, translated into *symbols*, to which certain meanings are attached. These symbols can be *verbal* (words) and/or *non-verbal* (the written word, graphics, gestures, expressions, tone of voice etc). The message is then sent using one, or a combination of, *channels* of communication, for example, in writing, by telephone, face to face. Having received the message, the *receiver* then needs to *decode*, or make sense of, the *symbols* received. The *receiver's* response to the message is known as *feedback*. Feedback tells the sender whether the message was received as the sender intended. In providing feedback, the process is repeated: encode, send, receive, decode...

It is important to remember that communication is a dynamic on-going process: at the same time as participants in the process are sending a message, they will also be

Section 4

Communicating with Young People

receiving and decoding messages. Similarly, at the same time as a participant receives messages, s/he will also be sending messages, often of a non-verbal nature (for example, facial expressions, posture etc). Clearly, the process can become more complicated when the interaction is occurring between more than two people, or when two people are trying to interact when there are other people or distractions around. This could often be the case for your interactions with young people in a shopping centre.

Communication is not just the words that you say. Communication includes your facial expression, your body language (how you position yourself, how you stand, etc), the tone of your voice and the words that you use.

Non-verbal communication

An important component of the communication process is non-verbal communication. It has been said that in a two person interaction, as much as 65 per cent of the 'social meaning of the situation' will be conveyed non-verbally (Johnson, 1981: 132). Thus, for you to effectively communicate you need to be just as aware of what you are saying non-verbally as you are of the words you use. Furthermore, an awareness of non-verbal communication can help you to more accurately receive a message, particularly the feeling component of the message. Non-verbal communication is however, somewhat more complicated than it appears.

Different behaviours can have different meanings in different contexts. How often have you jumped to a conclusion about a person because of what you see them doing? While on duty, you walk past a young woman who is crying. You go over to her, wanting to comfort her. You ask, 'what is wrong, is there anything I can do to help?'. She says, 'wrong? There is nothing wrong. I just got a call to say that I won the lottery!'. You thought her tears meant that she was sad, but they were tears of joy.

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

Your position, your body, your size (particularly if you are much taller than the people you have most contact with), your facial expression and the tone of your voice will often be more important than the words that you say.

Exercise 4.2

Complete the following table. For each scenario, describe what message might be conveyed or what impact it will have.

Scenario	Message sent / impact
<i>Example:</i> Yawning while you are saying that you are really interested in what they have to say.	Bored, disinterested. You won't be believed.
Being six foot tall and standing looking down at a child while you are talking to them.	
Standing very close with your chest puffed out while talking to a young man.	
Constantly watching other people, while talking with a group of young people.	
Sitting down next to a group of young people and asking them about their day.	
Wearing a uniform that has shoulder epaulettes and SECURITY in bold letters.	
Yelling at a young person who has just walked into the centre.	

Being aware of your posture, your size, your voice, your facial expressions, your uniform and the way that you speak

Section 4

Communicating with Young People

is crucial to understanding how other people see you and how you communicate with others.

Remember, 65% of a social exchange will be conveyed non-verbally. If you get the body language right, then you will be more than half way there.

Verbal communication

While non-verbal communication will often convey the greatest amount, the words that you say will also be important. There will be some obvious guidelines in the language and words that you use as a security officer. Below are some dos and don'ts.

DO	DON'T
Speak slowly and clearly	Mumble
Use language appropriate to the person you are speaking to	Use jargon or complicated language when talking to children
Use calming words and tones when someone is agitated	Talk fast to someone who is agitated
Shout if you need to get someone's immediate attention who might be in danger	Shout if it is unnecessary, because it is likely to result in them raising their voice
Speak quietly about matters that a person would not want shared	Talk about something important in a busy area of the centre

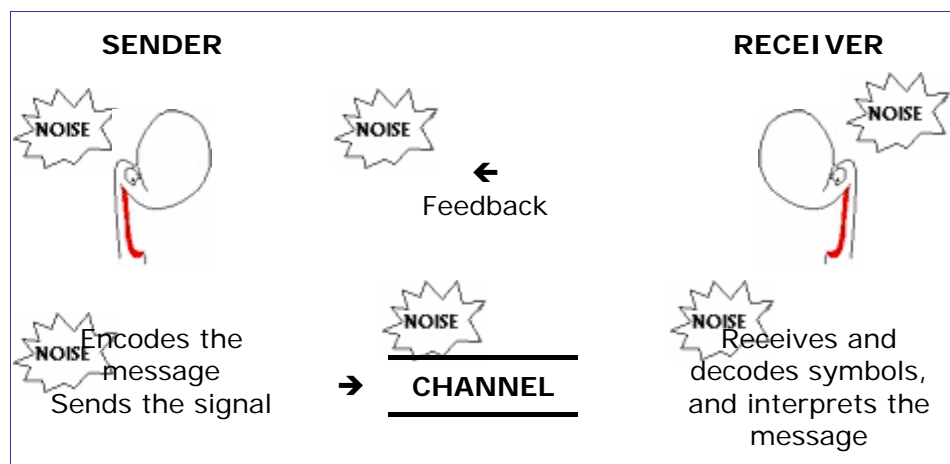
Many of these tips are very obvious and you are likely to do this as a matter of course. Reflecting and thinking about the words you use, the tone you use and how each situation calls for a different approach will help you improve your communication skills.

Barriers to effective communication

Communication does not occur in a vacuum, and as such, is subject to interference. Writers in the field of communication will often refer to this as *noise*.

'Noise is any element that interferes with the communication process. In the sender, noise refers to such things as attitudes, prejudices, frame of reference of the sender, and the appropriateness of her language or other expression of the message. In the receiver, noise refers to such things as his attitudes, backgrounds and experiences that affect the decoding process. In the channel, noise refers to (1) environmental sounds, such as static or traffic, (2) speech problems such as stammering, and (3) annoying or distracting mannerisms, such as a tendency to mumble.' (Johnson, 1981: 76)

Thus, 'noise' can interfere at any point in the communication process.



Common barriers to effective communication include²:

- Lack of trust
- Power
- Differences
- Emotions

² Much of this discussion has been adapted from Beisler et al, 1991 unless otherwise stated

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Communicating with Young People

- Assumptions
- Lack of interest
- Lack of feedback
- Poor expression
- Inconsistency
- Blocks
- Inter-cultural or cross cultural communication

Lack of trust

Lack of trust can get in the way of good communication. Where parties in the interaction do not trust each other (for any number of reasons), communication can be affected.

Power

The position of authority a security officer has in relation to a young person, and thus, the nature of the power relationship between security officers and young people can impact on the interaction. Some research studies have found that where the young person perceives an imbalance of power in the relationship,

- a) they may approach the interaction with a belief that they won't be given a fair hearing and give up before the conversation even starts (Drury et al, 1998 citing Coleman et al., 1997);
- b) communication in these types of relationships can be difficult for young people if they are not familiar with the 'rules' or etiquette that applies to these sorts of interactions, which can be the case for many young people (Drury et al, 1998 citing Catan et al., 1996).

Differences

Individual differences between the parties to the interaction may impact on the communication process. For example

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

age, sex, differing confidence levels, educational differences, ethnic and cultural differences, and differences in personal beliefs, past experiences, attitudes, and intellectual abilities. Language differences can go beyond differences in language to include differences in pronunciations of certain words, differences in feelings about the tone used (some people find sarcasm funny, others can feel put down by sarcasm), differences in vocabulary and differences in understandings of certain expressions. Different cultures or individuals may attribute different meanings to certain non-verbal cues. When young people behave or present in ways that are 'different', such as in their dress, their tendency to gather in groups etc., these 'differences' may engender fear or apprehension in others (see Section 5: Young People and Shopping Centre).

One Australian study (Stankey 2000) found that 'young people's perceptions of adults' beliefs about them made an important contribution to the explanation of problem behaviour involvement.' That is, if the young person thinks the adult believes their behaviour will be problematic, then this perception can lead to problematic behaviour. The implication of this, from a security officer's point of view, is that the attitudes you bring to your interactions with young people (or more importantly, what the young person thinks might be your attitude) may impact on the outcome of the interaction (bearing in mind that a whole lot of other factors may also be operating).

Emotions

Highly charged emotions (anger, fear etc) can interfere with the communication process. It can be very difficult to gather your thoughts, listen, or speak clearly and logically, when you are feeling highly emotional.

Assumptions

While there are times when assumptions can be important keys to understanding a situation, there are also times

Section 4

Communicating with Young People

where assumptions can get in the way of the communication process. Assuming you know what a person is going to say or do before they have spoken or acted, responding to stereotypical beliefs about certain groups of people, thinking you know best without consulting with others involved, assuming you know the intentions of the person with whom you are interacting can lead to misunderstandings, mistakes or conflict (Brounstein, 2001).

Inattention/lack of interest

Communication can fail when participant(s) fail to show any interest or pay attention to what is being said.

Lack of feedback

Lack of feedback during the process is another potential inhibitor of communication. Without feedback from the receiver, the sender does not know whether 'the receiver interpret[ed] the sender's message the way the sender intended' (Johnson, 1981: 76–77).

Poor expression

The message may not be received correctly if it is not stated clearly, in language the receiver can understand. Giving too much information can result in the receiver not taking in all that was said.

Inconsistency

Messages need to be consistent for communication to be effective. If the sender has given conflicting messages at different times in the past, or even during this exchange, the receiver may not 'trust' the integrity of, or the sender's commitment to, the message now being sent. Sometimes the inconsistency can come about because of the words used, sometimes it can be because the verbal message is inconsistent with the non-verbal message.

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‘Blockers’

Responses that criticise, blame, are judgemental, distract, analyse or diagnose can get in the way of a person expressing themselves (for detailed discussion of these blocks, see Bolton 2003 Ch 2).

Environmental ‘noise’

External noises, competing sounds, distractions, poor hearing or eyesight, physical discomforts, poor ventilation are among some of the many physical factors that can impede the communication process. This is particularly relevant to shopping centres, where the noise from the amusement arcade, the crowds, the centre public address (PA) system and your radio can block communication.

Intercultural or cross-cultural communication

There is every likelihood that at least a small proportion of the young people you deal with will come from a culture different from your own. There may be times where cultural differences can cause misunderstandings in the communication process. It may be that you and the young person do not share the same first language, or do not have the same level of English language skills. Rules of communication and etiquette, or non-verbal cues, may differ between cultures. An often-cited example is that of eye contact. In Western cultures, eye contact is considered a positive trait, indicating honesty and openness (and, indeed you will see that eye contact is generally recommended as one means of showing respect and genuine interest in the speaker). In Western culture, a person who avoids eye contact can be perceived as dishonest or shy. In some cultures, however, it is considered a mark of respect to lower the eyes and avoid eye contact.

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Intercultural communication training goes beyond the limits of this manual. For now, we can only point out that cultural differences may impact on the communication process. If you think that you could benefit from more information on intercultural communication, you could ask your supervisor or employer about the possibility of organising a training session on this topic. Alternatively, you could contact a community organisation in your area that represents the culture you are seeking more information about.

Exercise 4.3

Identify 'noises' or barriers to communication that have affected you in the past and suggest ways of overcoming these barriers.

Noise/barrier	Example	How to overcome
Power	A young person was intimidated by my presence and wanted to test my authority	Maintain boundaries, but give power to young person – 'tell me how we can work together'
Lack of trust		
Inconsistency		
Emotions		
Lack of interest		

Given all this, it is little wonder that the communication process can sometimes go wrong. If you keep working at it,

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reflecting on what happened and how it can be improved and talking with your colleagues about how they manage situations, then you will learn from the times when it does not go exactly right.

Before considering some communication skills, it is worth noting that the way you communicate with young people will influence the way they respond. Being in a position of power and authority, you should set the example for young people. If you are inappropriate in the way that you communicate, then you can hardly expect or demand good treatment in return. The following quote sums up this notion:

'In helping other people learn more effective interpersonal skills, it is often helpful to model or demonstrate the skill and then reinforce the other person for engaging in it. Nothing teaches like a good example. Learning new behaviours by imitating others is a major means of acquiring new skills. By engaging in the needed skills you can encourage others to do likewise, and then you can reinforce them for doing so' (Johnson, 1981: 187)

'Base' skills for effective communication

Several specific skills, knowledge and attitudes have been identified as integral to effective communication, including:

- Genuineness
- Acceptance
- Empathy
- Active listening skills
- Speaking skills

Genuineness

Young people are good at detecting whether you're genuine or not. They will have had practice at school and at home in determining who really cares and who is faking it. Being

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aware of how you feel toward someone and being genuine will be important.

For example, in your encounter with a young person you might find that you are becoming increasingly angry or frustrated. To express this anger unreservedly may have the potential to increase the young person's defiance or resistance. However, if you are able to recognise and acknowledge to yourself that you are becoming angry, you are in a better position to control that anger and focus on strategies to resolve the issue appropriately.

Below are some tips for communicating genuineness in your interactions with young people (adapted from James and Gilliland, 2001: 52–57).

- Be spontaneous, communicating freely with tact and diplomacy.
- Be confident.
- Be non-defensive. To be non-defensive it is important to have an understanding of your own strengths and weaknesses. This enables you to be open to hostile or negative messages from the young person without feeling attacked or defensive. In many cases, when a young person directs their anger or frustration at you, it will not be you *personally* who will be the target, you just happen to be the person who is in the line of fire. In these circumstances the attacks will be saying more about the young person and how s/he is feeling than it is about you. If, on the other hand, there is some truth in the attack or criticism ('That is so unfair!!'), your non-defensiveness will help you to control your feelings, leave room for you to rationally consider whether that is the case, and deal with the issue rather than get caught up in inappropriate argument.
- Being consistent: genuine people have less discrepancies between what they say, think, feel and do.
- Being a sharer of self. When **appropriate**, a genuine person will allow others to see them and their feelings through their verbal and non-verbal communications.

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Acceptance

The key attitude here is acceptance of the young person regardless of their views opinions or behaviours. This is a useful adage for dealing with specific unacceptable behaviours from young people. The message you need to convey is 'I reject your behaviour but not you as a person'. In communicating acceptance, you put aside your personal needs, values and desires and do not demand specific responses from the person for them to be accepted (James and Gilliland 2001: 52–57). '*Acceptance* is best defined as an attitude of *neutrality* toward another person or persons. When a person is accepting he offers an atmosphere largely uncontaminated by evaluations of the other's thoughts feelings or behaviours' (Bolton, 2003: 265)

One other important point that Bolton makes is that acceptance **does not** mean approval. '**I can accept another person's feelings and still not approve of his behaviours. It is possible to be accepting and confrontative at the same time**' (2003). This is a useful piece of information to keep in mind when you are having to speak to a young person about unacceptable behaviour. It fits well with a rule of conflict resolution: 'reject the behaviour, not the person'.

Exercise 4.4

For the following scenarios, write down the words that you might say to show that you accept the person but reject their behaviour. There will be times that you must reject the behaviour of young people, particularly if it poses a threat to themselves or to patrons or staff of the shopping centres.

Example: A young man threatens another young man to get off an arcade game so that he can use it.

Response: 'You cannot do that in this centre. You can wait until he has finished or use another machine. You are free to stay here as long as you do not threaten other customers. Is there any reason why you will not be able to do that?'

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Scenario: You spot a young person in the centre. You want to inform them that smoking is not accepted in the centre.

Response:

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Scenario: You overhear a young person swearing in the food court. You want to inform them that swearing is inappropriate.

Response:

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.....

.....

Scenario: A young person that you have got to know in recent months is seen pushing another young person. You want to acknowledge that this behaviour is inappropriate and out of character for the young person.

Response:

.....

.....

.....

If in any of your answers you started by saying something like, 'we don't want your type here' or 'you are an idiot for behaving that way', then you should review your answers. The exercise was to help you focus on the behaviour, not the individual.

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Empathy

Empathy is both an attitude and a skill. It tells the person that you want to hear and understand what it is like to be 'in their shoes'. It tells the person that you are interested and prepared to put some effort into hearing what they have to say.

Empathy is not the same as sympathy. Empathy is 'feeling with' another person, while 'sympathy' is 'feeling for' the person. Sympathy can be patronising. When you have an attitude of empathy, you acknowledge and 'hear' the other person's feeling, but you do not lose your separateness from that person. Empathy is a 'kind of detached involvement with the feeling world of another person' (Bolton, 2003: 272).

Here, Bolton's table showing the continuum from apathy to sympathy is particularly useful:

Apathy	Empathy	Sympathy
'I don't care'	'Looks like you're really feeling down today'	'You poor thing'
'That's your problem'	'Sounds as if you were really hurt by that'	'I feel just <i>dreadful</i> for you!'

Source: Bolton 2003: 270

To communicate empathy is to a) accurately pick up on the sender's thoughts and feelings, and b) communicate back to the speaker what the receiver understands it to be like for the speaker.

The strategy for communicating empathy is often called 'active listening'.

Active listening

As the term implies, active listening requires that the listener show that s/he is listening, by sending out appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues.

Active listening serves three purposes:

- It sends a message to the young person that you are interested in what they have to say
- It is a means for checking that the message you are receiving is the message the young person intended to send
- It is also a means of communicating empathy: 'I want to understand what it is like for you'.

'When you listen accurately and respond relevantly, you communicate to the sender, "I care about what you are saying and I want to understand it". When you fail to listen and respond irrelevantly, you communicate to the sender, "I don't care about what you are saying, and I don't want to understand it" ' (Johnson, 1981: 90)

When you are listening actively you will indicate that you are doing so by both verbal and non-verbal means: by your *attending behaviour* and your *reflective responses*.

Attending behaviour is appropriate to any of the goals of your interactions with young people. Paraphrasing and reflective responses will be more appropriate for circumstances in which the message the young person is trying to convey is complex, or is becoming muddled (they are strategies for ensuring you are receiving the message correctly). These two types of responses are also appropriate when the young person is expressing an emotional component to the message (they provide you with strategies for letting the young person know that you are hearing how things are for them).

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Attending

(Adapted from James and Gilliland 2001)

For the most part, these are the non-verbal signs you give that you are being attentive to the speaker. You focus fully on the young person, you put aside your concerns. It is 'both an attitude and a skill'. Failure to attend to what is being said or conveyed can give the impression that you are not interested, or can cause you to misunderstand the message. The following non-verbal cues can convey that you are involved, committed, concerned and trustworthy. At the same time, they can help you focus on the person and reduce the chances of you being distracted:

- Nodding
- Maintaining eye contact (but not staring or glaring)
- Smiling when appropriate, keeping a serious expression when appropriate
- Leaning forward if sitting, or having an open stance if standing
- Being close enough to the young person, but taking care not to invade the young person's personal space
- Your tone of voice can also tell the young person whether you are attending or not
- Responses such as 'I see' 'uh huh' 'OK' 'Go on' etc verbalised appropriately can also show that you are listening, and encourage the young person to continue talking (responses such as this as sometimes called 'door openers').

Achieving the balance as to what is appropriate takes practice, self-awareness and an awareness of how the young person is reacting to the signs you are conveying. To look too concerned, to stare instead of maintaining appropriate eye contact, to be too close to the young person, can be just as inappropriate as looking anywhere at all but at the young person, or standing with your back to the young person. Attending is an on-going process throughout the interaction. While you are attending to the

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young person's verbal and non-verbal messages, you will also be able to pick up cues from the young person which will give you clues as to whether you are building rapport with the young person, or whether you are doing or saying something that could negatively affect the interaction or cause the young person to become fearful, defensive or to lose confidence in the interaction.

Silence

Sometimes, we can overlook the power of silence. Appropriately used, silence can give thinking time. 'Remaining silent but attending closely...can convey deep empathic understanding' (James and Gilliland, 2001: 55). Silence can give the young person time to think without pressure of questions or lectures from you. Silence can give you time to digest what the young person is saying and formulate a response that is more likely to be helpful and on target.

Paraphrasing/reflective responses

Paraphrasing is also known in the literature as giving understanding responses or reflective responses. It is a strategy for expressing *empathic understanding*. Some writers in the field of communication will distinguish between paraphrasing the verbal content of a message (the words the person uses) and reflecting back the feeling component of the message (which could be communicated both verbally and non-verbally).

A natural tendency for many of us is to respond to what another person is saying by giving *evaluative*, *judgemental*, *blaming* or *approval* responses. That is, we say things like 'I agree with you'; 'I think you are wrong'; 'that's not how you should feel', 'don't be so angry'. These types of responses don't tell the speaker what it is you heard them say, rather they tell them what you think about what you think they said. Paraphrasing takes a step back. Before you present your own point of view, you first try to 'get into the other person's shoes' and understand the message he or she is sending so well that you are able to **restate that message**

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in your own words. For example, “it sounds like you are upset by the treatment you received from the other security guard last night”.

When you make a reflective statement, it should be done in such a way that allows the young person to agree or disagree with your understanding of the message. This leaves room for the person to tell you if you have misunderstood and provides them with an opportunity to clarify their message if they think you have not heard them correctly.

Take for example, the statement “it sounds like you are upset by the treatment you received from the other security guard last night”. As hard as you try, you might not accurately receive the message the person is trying to send. If you express this statement as a question, or with an element of hesitancy “it sounds like you are upset by the treatment you received from the other security guard last night?” or “it sounds like you are upset by the treatment you received from the other security guard last night. Have I understood you correctly?” it won’t matter so much if you have inaccurately received the message, because you are leaving room for the young person to clarify what they were saying – this is more likely to keep the communication channels open:

- s/he could tell you you have misunderstood, in which case, you can explore with him/her further about what s/he was trying to say
- s/he could agree that this is what s/he meant

If, however, you make the same statement in such a way that it sounds like you aren’t prepared to hear that it could have been any other way for the young person, then, if you have not heard the message correctly, it may be that the young person loses trust in your ability or willingness to hear what s/he is trying to say.

Once you have ensured that you have accurately received the message, you will be in a better position to decide on the most appropriate response to the issue, such as giving

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advice, providing instruction, clarifying rules, agreeing or disagreeing, giving reassurance, discussing or exploring the issue further for greater understanding etc

It should be noted here that the message the young person is sending will often be communicated both verbally and non-verbally. According to James and Gilliland (2001: 54), to show empathic understanding, you also need to accurately pick up on non-verbal as well as verbal messages, which can be transmitted in any number of ways. For example, facial expression, body movements or posture, gestures and voice tone. Non-verbal messages can show any number of emotions: anger, sadness, puzzlement, fear, stress, hopelessness for example. You need to be aware of whether the non-verbal messages being sent are congruent with the verbal messages.

James and Gilliland stress that it is important not to read more into the non-verbal than is actually there. 'Communicating empathy in the non-verbal realm is no place for fishing expeditions or long-shot hunches' (2001: 54). In addition, it is also important to remember that paraphrasing is just that: a restatement of the message the young person is sending. Just as it is inappropriate to read more into the non-verbal messages, it would also be inappropriate in these circumstances to enter into the realm of interpreting the message 'you are feeling angry because of a deep-seated problem with your parents...'

The non-verbal messages you send during the exchange will also be important. Are your verbal messages consistent with your non-verbal messages? It is not very helpful to the communication process if you say you are interested in what the young person is saying, but your non-verbal messages (facial expressions, posture, tone of voice etc) show you are not interested. If you can communicate non-verbally and verbally that you are tuned in to what is being said, you have a better chance of making the young person feel that you are willing to hear his/her side of the story.

In summary, a good listener (Cava, 1990: 52):

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1. Lets others finish what they are saying without interrupting them.
2. Asks questions if they are confused.
3. Pays attention to what others are saying and show they are paying attention by keeping comfortable eye contact. They don't let their eyes wander around the room.
4. Remains open-minded, ready to revise their opinion.
5. Uses feedback and paraphrasing skills.
6. Pays attention to non-verbal signals such as the speaker's body language.
7. Doesn't 'tune out' inappropriately when others are speaking.

Speaking skills

We saw earlier in the section on barriers to communication that there are a number of 'noises' that can interfere with effectively sending a message, such as lack of clarity of the message, poor expression, or inconsistency of the message.

The following are some strategies for speaking effectively:

1. Before you say or do anything, think about the purpose of your communication with the young person. If you are clear in your own mind about the purpose of your interaction, then you are less likely to send *inconsistent* messages about that purpose. Sometimes it may be helpful to verbalise your purpose, for example, 'my job is to sort out this problem'; at other times it will not be necessary, and may even be unhelpful, for example 'I'm talking to you today so we build trust and rapport'.
2. Think about what it is you want to say before you say it.

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3. Use language and concepts the young person will understand. This involves taking into account, for example, the young person's age, cognitive (intellectual) ability, English language skills.
4. Make your verbal and non-verbal messages consistent. When people communicate face-to-face they send both verbal and non-verbal messages: when you ask the question 'can I help you?' with a smile or an inquiring look, and/or a pleasant tone of voice, both forms of communication are saying the same thing: you are willing to help. The same question with a sneer, and/or a gruff tone of voice can give a mixed or inconsistent message. The young person may be left with the thought: 'I don't really know whether you want to help me or not'.
5. If you are giving a complex message, or a message that it is very important the young person understands, ask for feedback about how your message was received. For example, if you are telling the young person what the consequences of his/her inappropriate behaviour might be, don't just ask 'do you understand?' (you will most likely get a nod). You could ask instead, 'just so we don't misunderstand each other, can you tell me what will happen if you keep doing [this behaviour]' (or anything similar that feels comfortable for you and appropriate to situation, the age etc of the young person). Your non-verbal communications will be important here: if your tone of voice or facial expressions are threatening, the young person will likely feel intimidated, may not be able to answer your question adequately, or may even become defiant or defensive. The message you want to convey both verbally and non-verbally is simply that you want to be sure that the message you sent is the message the young person received.
6. If you are giving information, state the information clearly. If there is a lot of information to give, you

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may need to break it down and ask for **feedback** as you go. Include all the information the young person needs to understand the message.

We have provided a lot of information about communication. The best way to get the most out of this section, is to break the information down into bits and practice using some of the techniques. When you feel comfortable that you have got one group of skills down, then move to the next. The following questions will try to get you to think and apply information from the communication section.

Exercise 4.5

Approximately, what percentage of a social interaction will be communicated non-verbally?

25% 45% 65% 85%

How might your size or height affect communication with a young person?

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Lack of trust has been identified as a potential ‘blocker’ or barrier to communication. What might erode trust with a young person and how can trust be built?

Eroded:

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Built:

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As an adult, it is important to model effective communication. By being a good communicator, you will encourage others to copy you. Communicating effectively also reflects respect for the individual. What are three key considerations to modeling effective communication?

.....

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.....

For each of the following statements, write the words you would use to show empathy (ie write a paraphrasing or reflective response).

Scenario: A young person tells you that he failed his HSC. He has tears in his eyes, and his voice is unsteady.

Empathic response:

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Scenario: A young person that you know is pacing up and down in the food court. When you stop to speak to her she tells you she is waiting for her first job interview, and she is unsure what to expect.

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Empathic response:

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.....

.....

Scenario: A young woman tells you that her family forbids her from seeing her boyfriend.

Empathic response:

.....

.....

.....

What are three active listening techniques?

1.
-
2.
-
3.
-

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How would you paraphrase the following three statements?

- “I get really pissed off when security guards follow me everywhere!”

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- “I can never understand the rules of this place. I think you change them every week. Why can’t you all act the same?”

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- “I wish you would do something about the young people in this centre. Surely you know that they are the ones who cause all of the problems. They don’t respect their elders; they push us; swear all the time and are generally a bloody nuisance.”

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Understanding Young People

Young people – who are they?

Throughout this package we have focused on young people without actually defining who we mean. This section will focus on young people in an attempt to give you some insight into who we have been talking about and how this will help you in your work.

There are many different terms used to describe people between 12–24 years, which is the age group generally defined by the term and concept 'youth'. Terms such as adolescent, youth, teenager and young person are often used to describe persons between 12 and 24 years, although the group between 12 and 18 will often be the group who security personnel have most contact with in a shopping centre. This is the age span in which parents generally start to allow their children to go to places like shopping centres unsupervised and prior to access to licensed premises.

Section 5

Understanding Young People

Young people – some facts³

- According to the 2001 Census, there are 1,109,554 young people aged 12–14 in NSW. This constitutes 17.4% of the NSW population and 33% of all young people in Australia
- Around 2.7% of young people in NSW are from Indigenous backgrounds
- Most young people in NSW (63.8%) live in Sydney
- Across all groups, young people aged 15–19 years are most likely to be the victims of robbery and assault
- Young people aged 15–19 are over four times more likely than other age groups to be a victim of sexual assault
- In 2001, police attended over 20,000 incidents of domestic violence where a child or young person was present or involved
- In 1999–2000, less than 1% of all young people aged 10–17 years in NSW were the subject of a finalised juvenile justice outcome in the Children's Court
- A large proportion of young offenders have experienced neglect or physical, emotional or sexual abuse. A sample of clients from one NSW juvenile justice centre found 87% had been officially notified as victims of child abuse

³ Information copied from the NSW Youth Policy, which can be found from www.youth.nsw.gov.au; Sercombe, H; Omaji, P.; Drew, P; Cooper, T. and Love, T. (2002) *Youth and the Future: Effective youth services for the year 2015*, National Youth Affairs Research Scheme, Hobart, and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2003) *Statistics on drug use in Australia in 2002*, Canberra.

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- In 1998–99, the rates for 15–19 year olds (25.4%) and 20–24 year olds (12.6%) looking for full-time work were still significantly higher than the average for all age groups (7.9%) across Australia
- Persons aged 14–19 years are the second most likely group to have used illicit drugs in the last 12 months in Australia. More than one in four teenagers used any illicit drug and around one in four teenagers used cannabis in the last 12 months (according to figures obtained for 2001)

Exercise 5.1

Complete the following questions.

- How many people visit the shopping centre where young work annually?

.....

- What percentage of these total visitors are young people?

.....

- Which shops within the centre specifically cater for young people or have young people as the biggest market?

.....

If you are unable to locate this information from your security supervisor, you might be able to access this information from centre management.

The following fact sheet provides more information about young people. Read it prior to moving on to the next section.



Young People in NSW

A Statistical Overview

• How we define Young People?

YAPA defines young people as aged from 12 – 25 years.

Under the new Child Care and Protection legislation, ENACT, young people are defined as anyone 16 or 17 years of age.

Other commonly used age brackets include 12-24 and 15-25.

Age brackets are often specified in funding submission information prepared by different government departments.

• How many young people are there in NSW?

There are 1, 201, 770 young people aged 12-25 living in NSW.

Young people make up 20% of the total population of NSW.

There are 609,900 young men and 591,900 young women that make up the total figure.

(NYARS Young People in NSW 1996)

• Cultural Diversity and Young People

-Indigenous Young People

27,821 (2.3%) of the population of young people in NSW identified as being Indigenous people. (For more information, see Fact Sheet on Aboriginal Young People in NSW)

-Non English Speaking Backgrounds

4% of the youth population were born overseas in a major English speaking country (identified as being Canada, Ireland, NZ, South Africa, UK and USA) 11.8% were born overseas in non English speaking countries. 19.3% of the population speak a language other than English at home.

Of these, 15% spoke a Chinese language and another 15% spoke an Arabic language.

Of young people in NSW who were born in Australia, 644,753 (66%) had both an Australian-born mother and father. Another 317,082 (33%) had at least one parent who had been born overseas. Almost 21% (208,439) had at least one parent born in a non-English speaking country.

(NYARS Young People in NSW 1996)

• Where do young people live ?

22.2% of the population of young people in NSW live independently.

Local government areas with the highest population of young people are:

Blacktown	52,408
Fairfield	40,935
Sutherland Shire	39,484
Penrith	38,150
Wollongong	37,256
Campbelltown	34,706
Lake Macquarie	32,833
Bankstown	32, 379

(NYARS Young People in NSW 1996)

• Young People and School Education

664,049 (55%) of all young people 12-25 were attending an educational institution in 1996. The participation rate was the same for males and females. Most were attending secondary school (63%) and 5% were at primary school.

There has been an increase in the numbers of young people attending school and higher education institutions from 1991 – 1996.

In 1996 there was a 2% increase attending school and a 1% increase

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Statistical Overview.....page 2

attending a higher education institution.
86,663 (7.2%) were attending a technical or
further education institution.
112,049 (9.3%) were attending University/tertiary
institution.

(NYARS Young People in NSW 1996)

• Young people in the labour force

There were 606, 210 15-25 year olds in the
labour force. This is defined as either employed
or looking for work. 83% of these young people
were employed.

The proportion of young people employed in
part-time work increased from 15% to 20% from
1991 to 1996.

In May 1999, 14.3% of the 15-19 year olds
looking for work were unemployed

(NCOSS Pre budget Submission 2000)

In 1996, the largest proportions of young people
were employed in the following industries:

- Retail trade (25% or 132, 084)
- Manufacturing (11%)
- Property and business services (9%).

20% (105,402) of employed young people in
NSW were employed as intermediate clerical,
sales and service workers. For young men, the
most common occupations were trades persons
and related workers (29%), and labourers and
related workers (14%).

Young women were most commonly employed
as intermediate clerical, sales and service
workers (30%) and elementary clerical, sales and
service workers (26%).

(NYARS NSW Young People 1996)

• How much income do young people receive?

16% of young people reported receiving no
income at all in 1996.

The average weekly income for young
people aged 15-25 years is \$186 in 1996.

(See Fact Sheet on Income Support for more
detailed information)

• Young People in Care and Pro- tection

There were approximately 2,450 young
people aged from 12-17 years of age in
care as at June 1998.

In 1997/98 DoCS received 64,645 reports
concerning children and young people.

24% of the reports were made concerning
young people 12-17 years of age.

39.6% of these reports found that abuse or
neglect had been determined by
assessment.

(DoCS Annual Report 97/98)

• Young People in the Juvenile Justice System

In the period 12 June 1998 to 30 June
1999, 1, 155 young people participated in
928 youth justice conferences. In May
2000, 180 young people were on control
orders which made up 56% of all young
people in the juvenile justice system.

Of the 323 young people in detention as at
May 2000, 115 were Aboriginal or Torres
Strait Islander. This represents 33% of all
detainees The second highest ethnic group
represented was East Asian.

(Dept Juvenile Justice Annual Report
1998/99)

Youth Action & Policy Associaton NSW (YAPA)

Mail: 146 **Devonshire** St, Surry Hills, 2010

Phone: 02 9319 1100 / 1800 627 323 (rural areas)

Fax: 02 9319 1144

Email: info@yapa.org.au

Website: www.yapa.org.au

fact sheet

Young people and shopping centres – what is the attraction?

Not only are shopping centres important for young people, but young people are important to shopping centres. Many centres are designed to specifically cater for young people, by including:

- Cinemas
- Amusement arcades
- Ice rinks
- Specific youth retail outlets (like those that you identified in the previous exercise)
- Youth oriented food outlets

Shopping centres clearly cater for young people. Beyond these attractions, young people spend time in shopping centres for a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons include:

- Perceived as safe by parents
- Shopping
- Access to services such as Centrelink, Medicare, banks, Australia Post, etc.
- Employment
- Meeting friends, 'hanging out' and socialising
- Easily accessible by public transport
- Climate controlled
- 'Unsupervised' and parent-free space

Whatever the reason for going to a shopping centre, many young people find shopping centres attractive places to spend time. Knowing how often a young person goes to a shopping centre is not easily determined. One study (Lowe 2001), surveyed 316 young people at Royal Randwick (a small Sydney suburban centre – 15,000 m²) in May 2000. From these completed surveys, it was found that:

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

- 23% come to the centre one day per week
- 19% come to the centre two days per week
- **15% come to the centre five days per week**
- 10% come to the centre three days per week
- **10% come to the centre seven days per week**
- **7% come to the centre four days per week**
- **2% come to the centre six days per week**, and
- 14% generally do not come to the centre in a week.

This means that of the 316 young people surveyed, **34% go to the Royal Randwick shopping centre four or more days per week**. This makes them quite regular customers.

Young people do not just visit shopping centres, they also spend money. In the Dolly Youth Report 2001, compiled from the results of interviews with over 1000 young men and women aged between 10 and 17 years, it was found that 90% of girls visit a shopping mall in a month. With an average disposable income of \$70.86 per week, girls aged between 14–17 years spend money in shopping centres. Not only will they spend their own money, but 85% of girls influence their parents when it comes to clothing for themselves, 80% influence their choice of food from a fast food restaurant, 37% influence where to holiday, 15% which computer to buy, 13% which car to buy and 12% influence their parents on which TV to buy. This suggests considerable economic influence and capacity as critical consumers and users of shopping centres.

While young people are significant users of and consumers in shopping centres, they are not always welcome. They may not be welcome for a variety of reasons. Young people often congregate in groups; spend time in centres without purchasing goods or services; can be boisterous and loud; intimidate other shoppers, often by virtue of the way that they are dressed or the way they look. Some behaviour by young people is unacceptable, but sometimes the response to young people is unwarranted. Simply by being young,

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Understanding Young People

some people will be unwelcome and will receive 'special' treatment.

Exercise 5.2

From your experience, what are some of the views of young people you have encountered in shopping centres? (List words or describe situations which reflect how young people are viewed.)

Views of young people in shopping centres

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As a consequence of the perceptions toward young people, there is often pressure on security to move young people on and to exclude or ban them. This can cause conflict and leads to problems. Directly, there might be conflict when the young person is being asked to leave the shopping centre, particularly if it is in front of friends. Indirectly, banning a young person has potential consequences for them. A ban may disrupt their employment, it might prohibit them from accessing services like banks, Centrelink and other government agencies and it might result in charges for trespass if the banning notice is breached.

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Lawyers working with young people and youth workers have in recent years been concerned about the number of young people who are banned from a shopping centre. In response to these concerns, some lawyers have challenged these bans in court. On one such occasion, the Magistrate in the Court hearing the case stated the following:

"I believe that the issues raised in this case cause concern in relation to the rights of individuals to access essential services e.g. doctors, dentists, banks, post offices, etc. when they are housed in structures such as the shopping centre. I also believe that the way in which these shopping centres bans are placed on young people and the length of the bans border on the harsh and unconscionable given that these shopping centres are placed in areas that service large residential suburbs and often are the only places available to young people to shop, meet, be entertained and carry out everyday business" P v SS (06 July 2000).

This Magistrate identified concerns about the use of banning notices to manage young people in areas like shopping centres, largely because shopping centres are designed to attract young people and because of the services that they contain.

Exercise 5.3

Are banning notices issued at your centre?

YES / NO

If yes, review the number of banning notices issued for the last two years (if such records exist). Count how many people were banned, what age they were and the reasons for the banning notices.

Year	Total number of bans issued	Number of young people (10–18yrs) banned	Percentage of total bans received by young people
eg 2000	320 (A)	280 (B)	$(B/A) \times 100 = 87.5\%$
2002			
2003			

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Understanding Young People

Aside from banning, what other ways can be used to educate young people that certain behaviours might be inappropriate in a shopping centre?

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What can be done to work with young people and educate young people about what behaviour is appropriate in the shopping centre?

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What do young people think
of security guards?

It is the role of security guards in shopping centres to ensure the safety of shoppers, prevent crime and respond to incidents. As major users of shopping centres, often feared by the wider community and easily identified, young people

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

will often come into contact with security guards. These different experiences and roles can put security guards and young people on a collision course.

Understanding what young people think of security guards will be important to finding better ways of working together. Young people have been asked their views of security guards and some of these include:

- Security guards do not listen to young people
- Security guards target young people because of who they associate with
- Some young people felt that security guards were racist or discriminated against them because of their cultural background
- Some young people felt that security guards intentionally intimidated them
- Security guards did not explain why they were being moved on⁴

When two groups (different groups from those who made the above statements) of young people were asked to identify positive and less positive characteristics of security guards, they identified the following (source):

Good qualities	Less good qualities
Protection	Follow or harass you
Don't follow you around	Show off
Come up and have a yarn	Want to fight you
Knows what it is like to be a kid	Jump to conclusions – blame you for stealing
Speak to you nicely, even	Swear at you

⁴ This information has been taken from Turner, S. and Campbell, S. (1999) *Consultation with Young People and Security Officers – report*, Youth Action and Policy Association, Sydney.

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Good qualities

when moving you on

Be nice to them and they'll be nice to you

Friendly but not judgemental

Forceful but not power hungry

Aware of stereotypes, so as to understand that a person should not be guilty by association

Less good qualities

Move you on

Try to be powerful

Plastic cops – lock you up

Many of the qualities that young people appreciate and respect from and in security guards include: showing respect, adopting a casual approach, not just talking to them when there are problems, explaining the rules and the consequences for breaking the rules, being consistent and fair and taking the time to establish what has happened, rather than just accepting that a problem is necessarily the fault of a young person.

This does not mean that young people want to get away with inappropriate behaviour. Young people understand that security personnel have a role to play in the shopping centre. Some young people will also feel intimidated by other groups of young people and will expect to be helped by security personnel. So young people want to be protected, they want to feel safe in shopping centres and they want to be treated fairly.

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

Exercise 5.4

Complete the table below. To complete this table, you are required to list the qualities that you believe young people want from security guards. Next to the list of qualities, rate yourself from 1 (not very good) to 5 (very good) against each quality. For example, one quality that young people might want from security guards is respect. Are you very good or not very good at showing young people respect in shopping centres when you are on duty?

Qualities	Rating
<i>Example:</i> Showing young people respect	3: I think I am average – sometimes I show respect, but sometimes I do not

Section 5

Understanding Young People

Now identify three areas where you could improve.

1.

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2.

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How can you attempt to improve your performance in these areas? What will you be required to do to move from a 1 to a 5 for each of the above issues?

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2.

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Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

What do security guards think of young people?

What you as a security guard thinks about young people is important. While you should not let your feelings or attitudes towards customers affect the way you work, it is often impossible to conceal or hide the way you feel. After a number of hours on shift, while standing under a sign showing people where the toilets are, you get asked directions to the men's toilets. While you might question the eyesight of the customer, your frustration should not affect your response to each enquiry.

In terms of young people, it is important to think about how you feel about them and about their presence in the centre where you work, because these views will influence how you approach them. If you are aware in advance of your feelings, you will be better able to control or manage them.

Exercise 5.5

In the box below, list the words that you would use to describe young people in your centre. Be honest – there is no point listing things that you disagree with. Knowing how you feel will be important to knowing your own behaviour.

Your feelings / attitudes toward young people

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Understanding Young People

When you see a group of young people walking into the centre, what are your first thoughts? What affects the way you will think about them?

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In the study of young people and security guards mentioned earlier, guards were asked about young people. Some of the things that security officers said during the consultations included:

- Peer pressure is important in influencing young people's behaviour
- Young people don't respect what security officers say, particularly when they are in groups
- Some young people go to centres to sort out their problems with other groups of young people
- Previous negative experiences with security officers affected future views and contacts with security officers
- Young people do not fully understand the role of security
- Other people (customers, centre management, retailers, etc.) put pressure on security guards to 'do something about young people'
- Some security officers felt bad parenting was a problem

Exercise 5.6

Do you agree with these statements made by these security officers? Why?

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Understanding young people – what is going on with young people?

Improving your understanding of young people, how they behave and what is important to them will help in knowing how best to deal with them. Adolescence is a time of growth; a time of growing independence and increasing understanding of the way the world operates. Getting older does not necessarily mean that you will necessarily learn everything you need to know, but for the majority of young people, learning through mistakes or trial and error will be a critical feature of adolescence. Remembering that young people are learning and that they will make mistakes can help in responding to them.

Adolescence

Adolescence as a concept is said by some to have a relative short history. While some historical texts describe adolescence, it is generally believed that the concept of adolescence emerged after the industrial revolution. The abolition of child labour, the evolution of school as an institution, the emergence of separate institutions for young delinquents and extended reliance on the family emerged after the industrial revolution. Prior to this time, it was not uncommon for children to work, to be indentured as apprentices and leave the family home for work or marriage. Now, while the exact period of adolescence is debated, it is apparent that the period known as adolescence has increased. Financial independence might not be achieved until the mid-twenties after extended periods of education and reliance on the family for financial and other support.

Different terms will often be used to describe adolescents or young people. Many of these terms have particular connotations. For example, terms such as lout, delinquent and juveniles might infer some form of criminality. The use of terms will often denote particular perspectives, but at times will be used inter-changeably.

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Understanding Young People

Exercise 5.7

There are many challenges confronting young people today. What might some of these challenges be?

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The following information provides some insight into the experiences of young people, the risks they take and challenges that confront them.

- "In Australia in 1998, there were 446 deaths from suicide in the 15–24 year age group. Young males comprised 364 of these deaths"⁵
- "The recently completed *National Survey of Mental Health and Well-Being* (Sawyer et al 2000) revealed that the prevalence of depressive disorder in 12-to 16-year-olds was 4.8% for males and 4.9% for females. In a study of Australian children, Patton (1999) found that 5.6% of 15 year-old males and 14.4% of 15-year-old females suffered mild depressive episodes"⁶
- "Some degree of antisocial behaviour is normal in adolescence. About one in ten participants had been in contact with the police for offending, but only a very small number had been charged (2–3%), appeared in court (about 1%) or been convicted for a crime (less than 1%)".⁷

⁵ Mitchell, P. (2000) *Valuing young lives: Evaluation of the National Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

⁶ Kowalenko, N; Wignall, A.; Rapee, R.; Simmons, J.; Whitefield, K. and Stonehouse, R. (2002) 'The ACE Program: working with schools to promote emotional health and prevent depression', *Youth Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2

⁷ Vassallo, S.; Smart, D.; Sanson, A.; Dussuyer, I.; McKendry, B.; Toumbourou, J.; Prior, M. and Oberklaid, F. (2002) *Patterns and precursors of adolescent antisocial behaviour*, Crime Prevention Victoria, Victoria.

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- “Data from the RTA show that, in 1998 young people in NSW represented 16% of all licensed drivers and riders but accounted for 27% of all road traffic casualties”⁸
- Multiple research studies have established that young people are over-represented as victims of crime. For example, data taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show the victimisation rates of young people for various crime types:

Adolescence is a time of physical, emotional and cognitive development. This means that bodies are changing, identities are being formed and thinking is becoming less concrete. Young people are more able to understand what it is like from another perspective than children and are starting to develop greater insight into their own behaviour. Some theorists suggest that we all pass through specific stages as we get older and mature. One theorist, Piaget, suggests that from about 11 years of age we enter the formal operations period. This means that the young person is able to “think beyond the present and can appreciate possible relations among sets of elements. Hypotheses can be set, which can be confirmed or refuted”. (Slee, 2002: 416)

Similarly, some commentators have suggested that there are certain tasks that we must achieve in adolescence. These tasks relate to maturity and growth.

“Havinghurst (1953) identifies 10 developmental tasks during adolescence:

1. Achieving newer and more mature relations with members of both sexes
2. Achieving a masculine or feminine role
3. Accepting one’s physique and using the body effectively

⁸ <http://maa.nsw.gov.au/roadsafety325youth.htm>.

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4. Achieving emotional independence of parents and other adults
5. Achieving some assurance of economic independence
6. Selecting and preparing for an occupation
7. Preparing for marriage and family life
8. Developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence
9. Desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour
10. Acquiring a set of values and an ethical system as a guide to behaviour" (Slee, 2002: 425)

Silverstone (1989) believes that the 10 developmental tasks during adolescence may be clustered into 4 main categories:

1. Identity, which involves the determination of the question 'who am I?'
2. Connectedness, which includes establishing relationships with peers
3. Power – the development of a sense of control and power
4. Hope / joy, which is achieved via the accomplishment of the previous 3 tasks" (Slee, 2002: 426)

Exercise 5.8

While some contest the above distinctions, it is useful to consider these issues within the context of a shopping centre. Describe how a young person might achieve each of these ten tasks:

1. Mature relations with members of both sexes –

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Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

2. Masculine or feminine role –

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3. Physique –

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4. Emotional independence from adults –

..... 5. Economic independence –

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6. Selecting and preparing for an occupation –

.....

7. Preparing for marriage and family life –

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8. Developing intellectual skills and civic skills –

.....

9. Desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour –

.....

10. Values and an ethical system –

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Some will be more likely to inter-relate to a shopping centre environment than others. It is beneficial to consider the

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shopping centre as a location where adolescents achieve adolescent milestones, especially given how many hours some young people spend in shopping centres.

Thinking about the way young people behave in your shopping centre and relating it to the tasks listed can help you to put these behaviours in context or to better understand the behaviour of young people. By having a better understanding, it is possible to help the young people meet these tasks, but at the same time to also maintain authority or control of the centre.

Peers and public behaviour

It is accepted that our behaviour will be shaped by the behaviour of others. As we grow, the behaviour of adults will be particularly important. It has been shown that the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of our parents will be especially crucial to the formation of beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in young people.

Shopping centres are generally large, open facilities. There will be key areas where people congregate. It is an environment that is easy to be seen and to see others. Catching up with friends, checking out the girls and boys and meeting new friends are common experiences / practices of young people in shopping centres. These are important features of adolescence. One theorist (Elkind, 1967 and 1970) has “stressed the importance of the imaginary audience as one form of adolescent egocentrism. This concept accounts for adolescent’s concerns that they are the focus of other people’s attention. With this preoccupation, adolescents are then continually constructing or reacting to an audience” (Slee, 2002: 428). This concept of the imaginary audience can be very useful in understanding the behaviour of young people in shopping centres. Think about the following:

- You approach a group of young males and ask them to soften their voices because they are causing fear in

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other patrons. One of the young men refuses to calm down and puts on quite a display in front of his peers.

- A young man is out with friends when one of his parents comes over. The young man says 'shame' and tries to hurry them away.
- You have got to know a young man over numerous weeks. He comes to the centre on Thursday evenings with a small group of friends. They are always well behaved. On this one evening, the young man is with a different group. They are playing up – shouting, having mock fights and generally disturbing people in the food court. You approach the group and he steps forward. He is aggressive in his approach. He wants to know why they are being picked on.
- A group of young women come into the centre. They walk around the centre barely speaking to each other. They are great friends, but they are interested in who is in the centre.

Exercise 5.9

How can an audience (imaginary or real) affect the behaviour of a young person?

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Understanding Young People

Exercise 5.10

"Another feature of adolescence is a degree of narcissism or preoccupation with self as a love object. More attention is paid by both sexes to their physical appearances" (Slee, 2002: 433).

How does this statement fit with your experiences? Are young people in your centre often quite concerned about their appearance? How might this impact upon interactions?

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Some basic understanding of crowd psychology can be helpful. One piece of research which might be of relevance is that by Dunphy. Dunphy "describes two types of groups, namely cliques, which are small with an average of six members, and crowds, which are large and are usually composed of two to four cliques ... Cliques and crowds perform different functions. Cliques are for talking and crowds are for mixing, as at parties and other large social gatherings" (Slee, 2002: 437)

It is useful to try to consider what will impact upon an interaction with a young person. Many things will be impossible to predict, but it might be useful to try to interpret behaviour. Often misunderstandings will developed because of inaccurate interpretations of particular behaviours. Some classic ones are listed below:

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

Exercise 5.11

Complete the remainder of the table by filling in each of the empty boxes. The first three have been completed as examples of what you need to do – how might the behaviour listed generally be interpreted and what might be a more thorough explanation?

Behaviour	Interpretation	Possible explanation
An Aboriginal young person does not look you in the eye while you are talking	Disrespect	Some young Aboriginal people (and people from other cultures) do not look older people in the eye as a mark of respect
A young woman is reluctant to speak to a male security guard	Disrespect	Males have been abusive in her life and are frequently feared
A young man becomes aggressive when spoken to by a male guard	Hostility and intention to fight	Male authority figures have been the source of violence. To protect himself he becomes aggressive – a display to ward off potential aggressors
A young person is withdrawn and non-communicative		
A young person's behaviour is erratic – they seem confused and agitated		

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Never assume you know what is going on. Try to check it out with the young person.

Try to interpret and understand the behaviours and learn to DE-PERSONALISE these interactions. At times, it will not be you that the young person is responding to, but the image that you represent. A father, a teacher, an abusive partner, a police officer, etc. might be the images that you represent. Bad experiences with other authority figures might be played out during interactions with security officers. Conflict with these people might mean that a young person has an expectation that they will be treated badly by all authority figures, which might result in particular behaviour during interactions with security officers.

Working with Others

Some security officers will work alone, while others will work in teams. The following information will mainly deal with situations where officers work in teams.

In the original scenario, Tony was confronted with a disagreement between two young people. The presence of friends of each of the young people added to the challenge of managing this situation effectively. If Tony had a colleague to work with, how might he responded? Had he known his colleague well and understood how their strengths could work together, he might have separated the two groups and asked a colleague to look after one group. He could then have established what transpired and how best to resolve the issue. Having a colleague present would also help if any later allegations were made, which in this case they were.

There are many benefits of working effectively with co-workers. Some of these include:

- Other workers will have different skills and approaches to dealing with situations. By observing and talking with your colleagues, you can learn new ways of dealing with incidents as they occur.
- You will not be able to build rapport with all frequent customers. There will be some people that you are not

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Working with Others

able to get to know; there will be some people that you do not 'gel' with. Other colleagues might be able to better work with people that you find difficult and vice versa.

- Colleagues can patrol different areas, ensuring that there is wider surveillance throughout the centre.
- A co-worker can observe and witness what happens between patrons and yourself. If things do not go very well with a particular incident, then you will be able to discuss the incident with your colleague.

Working effectively with colleagues and co-workers can make your job easier. However, the reverse could also be true, in that if you do not coordinate your activities, then it is possible that a co-worker can cause problems. For example, you are handling a situation with a group of young people. Your colleague arrives and inflames the situation, by suggesting that all of the 'ratbags should be ejected from the centre and banned for six months'. You know the young people well and had brought the situation down, to a point where you could reason with them and resolve the situation. Your co-worker in this case has undone your good work.

Working effectively with colleagues can be assisted by the following:

- Communication – maintain communication with your colleagues. If problems arise and you require their assistance, try to be clear about what type of assistance you require. For example, if you are dealing with an argument and you call for assistance, you might state that you just want someone to stand back. You will deal with it and give them a signal if you require their intervention.
- Know your colleagues – get to know your colleague's strengths and weakness. Observe and discuss how they would respond to a particular situation; ask them who they find it easy to work with and which customers they are best at engaging; ask them about their background and their experience in customer service security

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

environments (such as shopping centres) and be prepared to learn from each other. Each security officer in a particular location will bring experience, skills and knowledge that will add to the team.

- Plan – discuss how you will deal with common situations and what type of assistance you would require. Rehearsing how you will work together in training will prepare you for the real situations. Consider common situations like conflict between groups, detaining someone for an offence such as malicious damage (that you have witnessed) and evacuating a particular section of the centre and develop strategies about how best to deal with these situations and the roles that each officer should assume. Determining who will take the lead, times to hang back, signals for intervention and plans for contacting centre management or police are all strategies that can be worked out prior to being confronted with a problem.
- Use resources at your disposal – natural surveillance will be one of the greatest tools that you have as a security officer. It will not just be your eyes and presence that prevents problems from occurring. We know from crime prevention research that the fear of being seen and caught will be a deterrent to some people committing crimes or antisocial behaviour. This is true in a shopping centre. The general presence of large numbers of people will prevent certain offences from taking place. People are less likely to steal an item if they are in full view of other shoppers, staff or security cameras. This means that many people can assist you in your duties. Retailers, cleaners, assistance desk staff and patrons of the centre can be resources that you call on. Asking retailers to keep a look out for shoplifters and explaining the quickest way to contact security will assist you in your duties. There are many people and ways that others can help you – think about how can use these resources.

Section 6

Working with Others

Exercise 6.1

For the following three scenarios, identify how you would work cooperatively.

You can see that a colleague is inflaming a situation. Voices and tempers are rising. How can you ease your colleague out of the situation, allowing you to take over?

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You are having a dispute with a young person. They are claiming that they did not threaten another customer. You are getting nowhere with the young person, when a colleague arrives. Your colleague has a better relationship with the young person. How can you involve them in resolving this problem? Write the words that you would use in this situation.

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There is a small group of young people causing minor problems at the main entrance. They have gathered inside the entrance, playing with a basketball. Their bags are strewn in the path of customers entering the centre. You know them well. One of the young people tends to dominate or lead the group. How might you be able to utilise this person to assist you in managing this situation? Again, write the words that you would use as you approach the group.

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Youth workers – an untapped resource

Youth workers operate from some shopping centres. Some centres have offices and youth facilities, which are run by youth workers. Others allow youth workers to conduct outreach work in the centre. This means that youth workers walk around the centre and engage young people, refer them to appropriate agencies (if required) and suggest activities and programs within the local area.

Youth workers can be a resource to security officers. Youth workers will often know many of the young people in the centres; they will have skills in forming relationships quickly with young people and will be experienced in diffusing conflict. Getting to know your local youth workers can help you more effectively work with young people.

To contact a local youth worker, ring your local Council and ask to speak to the Youth Development Officer who will put you in touch with local youth workers, or use the web to find out where there is a local youth workers network – see www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/networks.html.

Appropriate Records

Tony was contacted by police in relation to allegations of assaulting a young person in the original scenario. Police will want to interview Tony regarding this allegation. They will obviously be interested in learning the facts of the incident to determine if there is evidence that charges of assault should be laid. It is likely that the police will contact Tony soon after they have been notified, which will generally mean that little time will have elapsed between the incident and the investigation. This will help with Tony's memory of events. However, if there is sufficient evidence to proceed to court, then it may be many weeks or months before the matter is heard. This time period will make it more difficult for Tony to remember all of the events leading to the incident.

Maintaining appropriate records will be important for security officers. While each company and centre should have policies about what records need to be kept, it is important to make sure that there are some procedures for maintaining simple records of what happens during a shift. You do not have to keep detailed notes for every shift, but we would recommend that you do carry a small notepad and a pen and record details if something happens that might require you to later re-tell the event. Many of the incidents

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

described throughout this package would be appropriate for recording some basic information.

This section is very brief, because it is likely that you already operate under clear guidelines. The main reason that we have included this section, is to remind you of the importance of keeping records to protect both yourself, your company and the people you have contact with on a regular basis.

One way of keeping appropriate records is to keep a book at the security office. Record some key notes in the book at the end of every shift. The following might be important information to keep:

- Time, date and location of any incidents where there are injuries, where a crime has taken place or where you think that there might be further consequences
- Contact details of people who witness serious incidents, altercations or criminal activities
- Damage or occupational, health and safety hazards

Exercise 7.1

For the following event, identify the key pieces of information that you might record.

You are walking by the food court, when you see a young man strike another young man. You approach the young men, ask them to separate and check the health of the victim. You speak to them both individually and learn that the punch was thrown because of what the victim said about the aggressor's girlfriend.

What information might you want to record?

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Section 7

Appropriate Records

It is not your responsibility to conduct an investigation. Given that you witnessed the punch being thrown, you call police and use reasonable force to detain the young man until the police arrive. You also request that the victim wait to speak to police or provide contact details for police to contact him. You might also note the time and date of the incident, the location and possible witnesses for the police to follow-up. The task of recording information is to assist rather than to conduct an investigation. Some basic facts about the event will be sufficient.

Debriefing and Reflection

Throughout this package we have encouraged you to reflect on your practice. You will become a better security officer if you review your own performance, if you watch and observe other security officers and if you talk with colleagues about how to improve.

You should review your practice as a matter of course, but there might be times when you need to discuss particular events with your colleagues. It is unlikely that this always happen, but there will be times when you need to discuss an incident or issue. There might be times when you will be threatened; there might be times when you have to administer first aid and there might be times when you have to deal with other people's emotions. These things can have an impact on you. Talking about them and trying to understand them will help you to work effectively.

Exercise 8.1

Knowing who you can speak to about things that happen during work is important. Identify five people you can go to talk about difficult things that happen during your work.

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Section 8
Debriefing and Reflection

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Sometimes security work can be stressful. You might have worked a number of shifts in a row or had a number of difficult incidents to deal with in a short time. Having ways of coping with the stress is important. Identify three ways that you might cope with stress if it occurs.

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Further Training and Where to Get Help

The following information on key relevant agencies and services has been provided. Each of these agencies should be able to provide some assistance on specific relevant issues.

Youth Action Policy Association (YAPA)

YAPA is the peak organisation for young people and youth services in NSW. YAPA has had extensive involvement in public space issues and have wide networks within the youth services sector. YAPA can provide advice about strategies to adopt, suggest people to contact for support or assistance or can provide ideas that might have been successful in other locations.

Telephone: (02) 9319 1100
Freecall: 1800 627 323
Website: www.yapa.org.au
Email: info@yapa.org.au

NSW Attorney General's Crime Prevention Division

The Crime Prevention Division provides advice to local government and other agencies across NSW. Regional Advisors within the Division have sound knowledge of local projects and have developed strong links with government, non-government and business organisations.

Telephone: (02) 9228 8307

Website: www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpd.nsf/pages/index

Email: cpd_unit@agd.nsw.gov.au

NSW Commission for Children and Young People

The Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) develop policy, advise government, undertake research and educate people about the needs of children and young people. CCYP has developed a number of useful resources, including *Taking Participation Seriously*, a guide to involving young people in making decisions which affect their lives.

Telephone: (02) 9286 7276

Website: www.kids.nsw.gov.au

Shopping Centre Council of Australia

The Shopping Centre Council of Australia is the peak advocacy body for shopping centre companies across the country. The Council promotes understanding of issues affecting the operation of shopping centres, advocates on behalf of shopping centre managers and companies and lobbies government. The Council has been significantly involved in reviewing issues associated with young people's access to shopping centres and can provide advice and resources relevant to this issue.

Telephone: (02) 9336 6902

Website: www.propertyoz.com/scca

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

Children's Legal Service, NSW Legal Aid Commission

The Children's Legal Service operates across NSW. The Service employs solicitors who work in Children's Courts and represent young people in other courts. The Service also operates a legal advice helpline, which enables young people to receive legal advice from appropriately trained solicitors most hours of the day / week / year.

Helpline Phone Number: 1800 101 810

Urban Design Advisory Service

The Urban Design Advisory Service have developed guidelines (*Urban Design Guidelines with Young People in Mind*) for the development of public spaces affecting young people. These guidelines provide advice and direction about how young people can be involved and spaces designed to address the needs of young people. These guidelines can be accessed via the website.

Website: www.duap.nsw.gov/programservices/advisory.html

Y-Space Website

The Queensland University of Technology created and maintains the Y-Space website, which is a clearinghouse of publications, articles and information about public space projects. The website is an excellent resource and the information contained on the website can promote thinking about different, innovative ways to tackle public space problems.

Website: www.yspace.net/

Security Industry Registry

The Security Industry Registry (SIR) is the unit within NSW Police established to oversee the licensing arrangements for

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Further Training and Where to Get Help

security provides and personnel and to monitor and manage complaints against security providers. Complaints about the behaviour of security guards can be made to SIR. For further information about the SIR or about making a complaint about a specific security provider, contact SIR on the following:

Website: www.police.nsw.gov.au/sir
Email: sir@police.nsw.gov.au

Australian Centre for Security Research, University of Western Sydney

The Australian Centre for Security Research, University of Western Sydney conducts research and provides tertiary education for security providers on an array of relevant topics. The Centre can provide assistance in developing specific training programs for security personnel on issues associated with young people.

Telephone: (02) 9772 6676
Website: www.security.uws.edu.au
Email: <mailto:acsr@uws.edu.au>

Authors of the Package

The authors of the package are available to conduct training on the information provided. With extensive experience in policing, criminal justice issues, social research and youth issues, the authors can tailor training to specifically meet the needs of the audience.

For further information about possible training programs or consultancy services, please contact Garner Clancey on:

Telephone: 0425 231 825
Email: garner@hn.ozemail.com.au

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Youth Action and Policy Association (YAPA) Fact Sheets

Answers

Answers have been provided for each of the questions posed throughout this package. Some answers provide guidance rather than strictly correct approaches, particularly as an approach adopted might vary from centre to centre.

Exercise 1.1

Section 352 of the Crimes Act 1900 is generally known as the section which describes a 'citizen's arrest'. It is this section that security guards obtain their powers. Complete the two true / false questions relating to these powers.

- A security officer can detain a person on suspicion of that person committing an indictable offence within the shopping centre?

TRUE / FALSE

..... FALSE. A security officer CANNOT detain on suspicion.

- A security officer can use reasonable force to detain a person suspected of committing an offence within the shopping centre?

TRUE / FALSE

..... TRUE. Reasonable, but NOT EXCESSIVE force can be used to detain a person suspected of committing an offence.

Exercise 1.2

Shopping centres will have guidelines or rules about excluding people from coming into the centre. Review these procedures for the centre that you work at and list three reasons why a person might be excluded from the centre.

Reasons for exclusion will vary across centres. We would encourage exclusion or banning to be used ONLY AS A LAST RESORT. There will be times when banning might be necessary, but all other options should be exhausted prior to resorting to issuing a banning notice. The reasons why banning or exclusion might be necessary might include: committing an offence within the shopping centre (particularly more serious offences, such as assault or robbery); being intoxicated on the premises; harassing or threatening other shoppers and causing damage to property (which is also an offence). Less trivial misbehaviour should be dealt with in alternative ways, such as warnings, discussion of consequences of further inappropriate behaviour, etc.

Exercise 1.3

What are some reasons why a security officer might have their license revoked?

There are different reasons why a security officer might have his or her license revoked, including: commission of an offence; failure to maintain appropriate qualifications; and provision of false or misleading information. Being charged with assault or false imprisonment, for example, as a result of inappropriate practices while on duty, might result in your security license being revoked.

Exercise 1.4

For each of the following questions, identify if the centre where you work or the security company that employs you has a policy and summarise the key features of each.

- Conditions of entry – what are the conditions of entering the shopping centre and are the rules displayed?

Each centre should have guidelines about conditions of entry. Ideally, this information will be displayed for shoppers and patrons to observe as they enter the centre.

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

Does the centre where you work have specified conditions of entry?

YES / NO

If yes, insert the key conditions below.

Key conditions of entry

Conditions of entry will vary in each centre. However, some of the more common conditions of entry include: appropriately dressed; no smoking; no riding of skateboards, bikes or other machines; not being intoxicated; no pets; etc.

- Consequences for misbehaviour – does the centre have an agreed/approved list of consequences for misbehaviour (such as swearing, smoking in the centre, playing ball games in the centre, etc.)?

YES / NO

If yes, identify the behaviours and list the consequences.

Having an agreed list of consequences reduces inconsistency. You should be aware of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour in the centre. While each centre will adopt different guidelines, the table below sets out the type of consequences that might apply to particular misbehaviour.

Behaviour	Description of behaviour	Initial consequence	Continued behaviour	Upper consequence limit
Minor matter	No real victim; swearing, smoking inside, ball games	Warning	Caution	Borderline
General matter	drunkenness or alcohol consumed in centre; swearing in public; interfering with other patrons	Caution	Borderline	Ban from part day up to 2 weeks
Serious matter	Violence or intimidation; threatening behaviour; abusive language directed at person	Borderline	Ban for up to 2 weeks	Ban for 2 months
Criminal matter	Actual offence has taken place; shoplifting, assault, etc	Matter referred to police	Continue to refer to police	Ban for up to 6 months

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Answers

- Banning procedures – if banning is an approved consequence for inappropriate behaviour, complete the following:

Who issues the banning notice?

Who issues a banning notice will become important if the ban is challenged. The function of issuing a banning notice essentially becomes a function delegated from the owners of the property. As such, there should be clear guidelines as to whom has delegated authority to take such action. Generally, banning will be the responsibility of the Centre Manager (or Operations Manager where they exist) and the Security Supervisor.

Does a parent have to be present if a young person is being banned?

Best practice suggests yes. There have been some cases where banning notices have been successfully challenged because a parent or guardian was not present when the ban was issued. By way of example, an admission or information gained in a police interview with a young person will only be admissible in court if a parent, adult nominated by a parent or a lawyer is present at the time of the interview. Similar procedures are encouraged when issuing a banning notice to a young person. Beyond the legal protections of having an adult present, including a parent in such procedures will often mean that there is parental intervention, which will help to rectify the situation and prevent further problems.

What will determine the length of ban?

There are likely to be a number of factors that influence the length of a ban. Some of these might include: the severity of the behaviour / action, previous poor behaviour in the centre, mitigating circumstances (reasons for the behaviour) and agreed guidelines (similar to those outlined previously).

Can the ban be reduced?

Best practice suggests that there should be some mechanism to appeal or review banning notices. There might be reasonable grounds to review a ban. Advising a young person of this might provide an incentive to rectify the original problem and to behave appropriately in the future.

Will access still be provided to government services or employment in the centre if a person is banned?

Again, best practice suggests that access to employment or essential services (government agencies, doctors, banks, etc.) will

Shopping Centre Security Guards and Young People

be made available despite a ban. Provisions could be made for a young person to be in the centre to travel to their place of employment or to utilise the services within the centre.

How will the person know where they are banned from?
Is a map provided which shows the limits of the centre?

There have been disputes about the actual boundaries of a centre. It is advisable that the boundaries of the shopping centre are clearly outlined for the young person. This will often be best achieved through attaching a map of the centre to the banning notice.

Exercise 2.1

Go to page iii and re-read the scenario. Put yourself in Tony's shoes. As you head toward the food court and the incident, what should you be looking for?

The issues listed in the table below will be the key considerations – group size, location of the incident and proximity to exits, proximity of other staff, previous contact or relationship with the young people involved, any signs of intoxication, the presence of weapons and body language to indicate levels of aggression.

Complete the following table, by identifying some key considerations for each issue.

Issue	Key considerations
<i>Example:</i> Group size	The number of people involved. More people requires a different response. Isolate key antagonists from group – reduce the audience.
Location of incident in centre	Proximity of the exits, the presence of an audience, dangers posed by location and potential support will be influenced by the location of the incident.
Proximity of other staff	The ability of other staff to provide back-up and the ability of staff to intervene more effectively due to their skills or relationship with the young people will be important considerations.
Previous contact with the young people involved	Determining if you or any of your colleagues have previous relationships with any of the young people that can be used to de-escalate the situation will be important.
Suspected intoxication	Intoxication might add to the unpredictability of the situation. Establishing whether anyone is intoxicated will help in deciding how you tackle the situation.
Presence of weapons	Quickly scanning to determine if there are any visible weapons or items in the near vicinity that could be used as weapons will help you to manage the situation. If the incident has taken place in area where there might be stools or other objects that could be used as weapons, try and move the group toward a safer environment.

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Exercise 2.2

In a normal shift, what do you observe – what are you looking for? Are you simply 'being around' or are you processing information about the centre and the patrons within it? List the things that you look for during a shift.

The issues identified in the table below are some of the things that you might look for. This list is not exhaustive. Rather, we are just attempting to get you to reflect on the types of things that you might keep in mind as you go about your duties. Being more observant and vigilant will help you to prevent problems, rather than waiting for them to occur.

Exercise 2.3

Complete the following table. What will you look for in relation to each of the issues identified?

Issue	What you are looking for?
Crime	e.g. Suspicious activity – frantic watching out People gathering or lurking in areas of low visibility; people trying to distract security; someone looking for security cameras; someone who is becoming increasingly agitated; exit doors open providing access to dock or storage areas; security equipment that has been tampered with.
Damage	e.g. People gathering in locations of low visibility Someone carrying implements to use in damaging property (i.e. spray cans, hammer); changes in physical structure (i.e. early signs of damage).
Order maintenance	e.g. Tension between different groups Someone becoming increasingly agitated; groups who have had previous conflict; obvious signs of tension building (threats being exchanged, young people saying that there is going to be trouble).
Accidents and injuries	e.g. Puddles of water Damage to property that could cause injury; obstacles blocking pedestrian traffic; sharp or dangerous displays; slippery surfaces and unexpected declines or inclines; general areas in which people are having accidents.

Exercise 2.4

How many people do you say hello to in a regular shift?

There is no set amount that is regarded as a target. Rather, this and next questions are designed to get you thinking about how many people you make an effort to greet and to introduce yourself.

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During the next two shifts, make more of an effort to say hello to patrons in the centre. What reactions did you get? Did you receive any negative outcomes from saying hello?

It is unlikely that there will be negative consequences for saying hello, but record them if they do occur.

Exercise 2.5

Write three scripts that you currently use or could use in the future.

As has been identified, it is likely that you will have a number of phrases that you already use to greet people and to build rapport. By thinking of scripts or phrases that you can use, you are increasing your range of opening lines. Apart from those already listed, other scripts could include:

"I don't think we've met. Hi, my name is Tony. Don't hesitate to let me know if there is something I can help with".

"Excuse me sir. I notice that your mobile phone is on the table. I should just warn you that a few phones have been stolen recently".

"Sorry to bother you, but smoking is not permitted in this centre. Perhaps you could just go to the front entrance to finish your cigarette. Please come back to me if I can give you a hand with anything."

Exercise 2.6

Complete the following table by identifying the benefits of active surveillance.

Benefits of active (non-intrusive) surveillance

There are a number of benefits of active surveillance. These include: forming relationships; getting to understand the 'normal' behaviour of repeat customers; gathering information; preventing problems, such as accidents and crime; identifying other concerns; greater job satisfaction; and better job outcomes.

Exercise 3.1

In exercise 2.4 you were required to say hello to people during your next two shifts and to monitor the response. For the next two shifts, in your casual conversation, try to learn more about some of the young people that you see in the centre often. You might find out what brings them to the centre, what they enjoy doing in the centre, what school they go to or what type of job they have and if they have any problems at the centre.

- A.** List some key things that you have learnt about five young people during the two shifts.

The type of information that you will gain will vary depending upon the individuals you have contact with. Some of the issues that might be appropriate to discuss could include: education (what school or institution does the young person go to?; how are they finding school?; when do they finish school and what do they hope to do when they leave?); employment (what job do they have or would they like to have?; how easy do they think it is to get work?; are there any jobs at the centre that would interest them?); interest in coming to the centre (why do you come to the centre?; are there other things that you can do in the area or are leisure activities limited?; what do you enjoy most in coming to the centre?); and hobbies (what else do you besides coming to the centre?). These are just some of the topics that will be easy to raise with young people and will not be too intrusive or personal.

- B.** Be aware of your style when learning about these young people. Were there times when your questions were too much like an interrogation? If so, what could you have done differently to make this 'getting to know you' process more comfortable?

Be aware of your role and the perception that a young person might have if you seem to be interrogating them for information. A casual approach that suggests interest rather than an ulterior motive is likely to be more effective.

Exercise 4.1

Think back to an encounter with a young person or a group of young people that did not turn out the way you would like.

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- a) Briefly describe the situation.
- b) Identify what factors might have interfered with the process (for example, did you communicate appropriately for the role, the situation, the audience, the participants' needs and wants? Could your own or the other person's previous experiences have interfered with the process? etc).
- c) What could you have done to improve the outcome?

This exercise is to encourage reflection. It is our belief that improved practice will often come from reflective practice. This means that you will learn from each encounter and can improve your practice by considering what worked, what went wrong and how things can be improved from every encounter and interaction. You will never get it right all of the time – the goal is to work toward continual improvement. Reflecting on your experiences, discussing strategies with other security officers and observing good communicators (security supervisors and youth workers, for example) will help to improve your practice.

Exercise 4.2

Complete the following table. What will you look for in relation to each of the issues identified?

Scenario	Message sent / impact
Yawning while you are saying that you are really interested in what they have to say.	Bored, disinterested. You won't be believed.
Being six foot tall and standing looking down at a child while you are talking to them.	Power over the child; your position could be intimidating and cause the child to be fearful and may inhibit communication.
Standing very close with your chest puffed out while talking to a young man.	Such a stance might be interpreted as provocative. Such a stance is likely to suggest aggression and might result in conflict.
Constantly watching other people, while talking with a group of young people.	This might denote disinterest. While it is your job to observe, constant surveillance will suggest a lack of interest in a conversation that you are having.
Sitting down next to a group of young people and asking them about their day.	Sitting down brings you to their level, which reduces any potential power issues. Taking a relaxed approach will suggest interest rather than surveillance.
Wearing a uniform that has shoulder epaulettes and SECURITY in bold letters	Uniforms can be a sign of power and authority. Some young people will seek to challenge this perceived power, despite who is in the uniform. They may have had negative previous experiences with authority figures and the uniform could be a cause for defiance.
Yelling at a young person who has just walked into the centre.	This could be unsettling and provocative. Unless there is an immediate emergency requiring quick action, yelling is likely to intimidate.

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Exercise 4.3

Identify 'noises' or barriers to communication that have affected you in the past and suggest ways of overcoming these barriers.

Noise/barrier	Example	How to overcome
Power	A young person was intimidated by my presence and wanted to test my authority	Maintain boundaries, but give power to young person – 'tell me how we can work together'
Lack of trust	A young person had a previous bad experience with security and is reluctant to engage with you.	Take time to build rapport. Continue to be polite and encourage conversation.
Inconsistency	One security officer allows smoking near the entrance, while another does not.	Develop clear guidelines so that all security can enforce the same rules.
Emotions	A young woman is angry that she has been hassled by a group of young men.	Acknowledge her anger and ask if there is anything that you can do. Stay close by and invite her to approach you if required.
Lack of interest	A young person has previously been told that they are important by a security officer, but realised this was not true when the officer forgot his name.	Try to remember key things about repeat patrons. This will demonstrate a level of interest.

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Exercise 4.4

For the following scenarios, write down the words that you might say to show that you accept the person but reject their behaviour. There will be times that you must reject the behaviour of young people, particularly if it poses a threat to themselves or to patrons or staff of the shopping centres.

Example: A young man threatens another young man to get off an arcade game so that he can use it.

Response: 'You cannot do that in this centre. You can wait until he has finished or use another machine. You are free to stay here as long as you do not threaten other customers. Is there any reason why you will not be able to do that?'

Scenario: You spot a young person in the centre. You want to inform them that smoking is not accepted in the centre.

Sorry mate, but you are not allowed to smoke in the centre. If you head up the ramp to the main entrance, you can smoke outside.

Scenario: You overhear a young person swearing in the food court. You want to inform them that swearing is inappropriate.

Hey guys, I just overheard one of you swearing. I'm not interested in who it was, but I do need to tell you that swearing is not ok in the centre. We have a number of small children and elderly people around who really get upset at swearing. Can I ask you to tone it down? Thanks guys – I know you understand why I have to ask you to stop swearing here.

Scenario: A young person that you have got to know in recent months is seen pushing another young person. You want to acknowledge that this behaviour is inappropriate and out of character for the young person.

Andrew, I saw you before pushing another young person. What is going on? That isn't like you. Is something a problem – you looked angry? I know you are a good kid, but that type of behaviour is not ok in the centre. Do you know why? Because we have so many people here, including children, any pushing and shoving can result in people getting hurt. You wouldn't want that to happen to your younger brother or sister now would you?

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Exercise 4.5

Approximately, what percentage of a social interaction will be communicated non-verbally?

25%

45%

65%

85%

The correct answer is 65%. The majority of communication is non-verbal, which is why we have included exercises that look at uniform, stance, height and approach to situations. It will often not be what you say that is remembered or that causes a reaction, it will be what you do physically, such as your facial expression, posture etc.

How might your size or height affect communication with a young person?

As has been stated, your size and height can affect communication. If you are big and tall, then you might intimidate people (particularly those smaller or shorter than you). Even without you knowing it, your size might be seen as a threat or a challenge to some young people. Trying to find ways to be on the same level rather than looking down when communicating will help.

Lack of trust has been identified as a potential 'blocker' or barrier to communication. What might erode trust with a young person and how can trust be built?

Eroded:

Trust might be eroded for a number of reasons including: concerns that they have been betrayed (personal information spread, promise not met), if they think you are being dishonest or if they think that you do not like them.

Built:

Trust will be built by being consistent, following through on promises or plans, sharing information, showing respect, setting clear boundaries and being honest.

As an adult, it is important to model effective communication. By being a good communicator, you will encourage others to copy you. Communicating effectively also reflects respect for the individual. What are three key considerations to modeling effective communication?

There will be various considerations as an effective communicator. The key issues covered in this package include: genuineness, acceptance, empathy, active listening skills and speaking skills.

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For each of the following statements, write the words you would use to show empathy (ie write a paraphrasing or reflective response).

Scenario: A young person tells you that he failed his HSC. He has tears in his eyes, and his voice is unsteady.

Empathic response:

It seems like you are pretty upset about your HSC result.

Scenario: A young person that you know is pacing up and down in the food court. When you stop to speak to her she tells you she is waiting for her first job interview, and she is unsure what to expect.

Empathic response:

I guess you're feeling a little nervous then. Job interviews can be nerve wracking, especially if it is the first time you have been to one.

Scenario: A young woman tells you that her family forbids her from seeing her boyfriend.

Empathic response:

It must be really difficult not being able to see your boyfriend – I can't imagine what you must be going through.

What are three active listening techniques?

1. Attending (nodding, maintaining eye contact, leaning forward, tone of voice).
2. Reflective response or paraphrasing.
3. Silence.

How would you paraphrase the following three statements?

- "I get really pissed off when security guards follow me everywhere!"

Sounds like you get quite angry when security guards follow you.

- "I can never understand the rules of this place. I think you change them every week. Why can't you all act the same?"

You sound frustrated. It must be difficult not knowing what rules will apply.

- "I wish you would do something about the young people in this centre. Surely you know that they are the ones

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who cause all of the problems. They don't respect their elders; they push us; swear all the time and are generally a bloody nuisance."

You sound quite upset by the behaviour of the young people.

Exercise 5.1

Complete the following questions.

- How many people visit the shopping centre where young work annually?

The answers for these questions will vary depending on the centre where you work. They are designed to make you consider how important young people are to the viability of the centre and how much shopping centres are designed to attract young people – amusement centres / facilities, youth-specific shops, cinemas, etc. are all placed in centres to attract young people.

- What percentage of these total visitors are young people?

It is unlikely that this information will be readily available. As has been stated, considering the importance of young people to the centre is the goal of the question.

- Which shops within the centre specifically cater for young people or have young people as the biggest market?

Various shops will be specifically for young people – clothing, music and some jewelry stores being the most obvious store seeking to attract young people

Exercise 5.2

From your experience, what are some of the views of young people you have encountered in shopping centres? (List words or describe situations which reflect how young people are viewed.)

Views of young people in shopping centres

There will be many different views of young people in shopping centres. Research and anecdotal evidence suggests that some people will view .

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young people as potential troublemakers, gangs if they are in groups of three or more, disrespectful, a nuisance, unwanted if they are not spending money or unruly.

This question is designed to encourage you to reflect on the views of others toward young people and how might impact on you and on them. If these are the views of some people, how might young people feel going to a centre? How might young people react if this is what they think other people feel? Having some understanding of these views and perspectives will be helpful to differentiate between legitimate complaints / concerns or perceptions that are not justified based on your experiences of young people.

Exercise 5.3

Are banning notices issued at your centre?

YES / NO

If yes, review the number of banning notices issued for the last two years (if such records exist). Count how many people were banned, what age they were and the reasons for the banning notices.

There are no correct answers to these questions – they are designed to get you to think about the experiences of young people, particularly in relation to being excluded. Reviewing banning notices and make a conscious effort to identify the reasons why young people are banned and how long they are banned for, can raise particular trends that might warrant review.

Aside from banning, what other ways can be used to educate young people that certain behaviours might be inappropriate in a shopping centre?

As has been discussed previously, there can be a range of sanctions or responses to inappropriate behaviour in a shopping centre – banning should only be used as a last resort. We have suggested warnings, cautions, borderlines and natural consequences. Saying to a young person, “I’d like you to go for the rest of the day, but you are welcome to come back tomorrow if you do what we have discussed”, will often have the desired effect. Asking a young person to clean up an area if they have tipped a bin over or remove marking pen if they have written on a table, will be natural consequences for inappropriate behaviour. Asking a young person who has done something wrong what they think should happen will often get them to own their behaviour, accept

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responsibility for the consequences and give them an investment in the outcome. And surprisingly, young people will often be harder on themselves than you.

These are just some suggestions. You will have your own ways of dealing with problematic behaviour, but trying to increase your range of options can only be helpful.

What can be done to work with young people and educate young people about what behaviour is appropriate in the shopping centre?

If young people are not aware of the rules, then it is potentially a cause for conflict. "But no one said that I couldn't" or "Where does it say that I can't" are probably common responses in the absence of clear guidelines or rules. Displaying what is acceptable, involving young people in reviewing guidelines / rules, getting schools involved in discussions about acceptable behaviour in public areas and taking opportunities to explain guidelines / rules will all be helpful.

Exercise 5.4

Complete the table below. To complete this table, you are required to list the qualities that you believe young people want from security guards. Next to the list of qualities, rate yourself from 1 (not very good) to 5 (very good) against each quality. For example, one quality that young people might want from security guards is respect. Are you very good or not very good at showing young people respect in shopping centres when you are on duty?

Qualities	Rating
<i>Example:</i> Showing young people respect	3: I think I am average – sometimes I show respect, but sometimes I do not

There are many qualities that young people seek out in security officers. Some of the most commonly identified include: consistency, respect, fairness, casual / relaxed, comfortable with own authority, willing to listen, willing to get different sides of the story before making a judgement, able to explain decisions and actions, funny and flexible.

Rate yourself against some or all of these qualities. Are there areas

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that you would like to improve? Remember, making an effort to be a better security officer could make it easier to deal with certain people, will potentially reduce stress and tension and might help with your career.

Now identify three areas where you could improve.

As above.

How can you attempt to improve your performance in these areas? What will you be required to do to move from a 1 to a 5 for each of the above issues?

Knowing exactly what will be required is difficult to anticipate. You might like to discuss these answers with a colleague or supervisor. You might be aware that you want to be more relaxed in dealing with a certain group of young people. You can probably think of ways how to do this and you will be able to review whether you have improved by the interactions that you have after identifying this as an area requiring attention. However, other issues might require training or some assistance.

Exercise 5.5

In the box below, list the words that you would use to describe young people in your centre. Be honest – there is no point listing things that you disagree with. Knowing how you feel will be important to knowing your own behaviour.

Your feelings / attitudes toward young people

This exercise is designed to get you to review your own feelings and attitudes. Describing the views of others (which you have done) helps you to understand their perspective, but it does not help you in your dealings with young people. Being aware of your own attitudes and feelings will be important to understanding what some of your prejudices might be, what some of your weaknesses might be and possible causes of conflict.

When you see a group of young people walking into the centre, what are your first thoughts? What affects the way you will think about them?

Your initial response / reaction will often influence how you deal with a group of young people. If you immediately assume that they are 'up to no good', then it is likely that you will look for things to confirm this. As we have identified before, a self-fulfilling prophecy can develop, whereby you respond in a way that creates the response that you are

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looking for. Review the thoughts that go through your head when you approach a group of young people – try to determine if negative thoughts result in negative outcomes, and if so, think about ways of stopping these thoughts.

Exercise 5.6

Do you agree with these statements made by these security officers? Why?

There is no right or wrong answer here. This question is to encourage you to consider the views of other security providers and determine whether they match your experiences.

Exercise 5.7

There are many challenges confronting young people today. What might some of these challenges be?

There are many views and things said about young people today. Some suggest that young people today have it easy compared to years gone by, while others recognise the different pressures that young people now face.

Certainly, the ease in which people move in and out of employment two to three decades ago no longer exists; the goal of owning your own home is fast becoming just a dream for some; having a job for life is now the exception rather than the rule; and with an ageing population, increased taxes are inevitable. Furthermore, young people today face considerable pressure to succeed at school, they have greater access to alcohol and other drugs, are expected to stay in education longer (prolonging dependence on parents) and increasingly feel excluded from various social institutions.

These are but some of the pressures faced by young people today. While there could be many more issues listed, it is important to consider the uncertainty of the future for some young people and the duality of saying that young people are growing up faster, but are often dependent on parents longer.

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Exercise 5.8

While some contest the above distinctions, it is useful to consider these issues within the context of a shopping centre. Describe how a young person might achieve each of these ten tasks:

1. Mature relations with members of both sexes –

Shopping centres will be venues for young men and women to socialise outside of school. Developing relationships with members of the opposite sex will often be forged in shopping centres.

2. Masculine or feminine role –

Learning what it is to be masculine or feminine will be in part influenced by what is observed in a shopping centre context. How males and females act, how genders respond to other, what roles are perceived as being essentially masculine or feminine and what types of behaviours are considered acceptable in the social setting of a shopping centre will help with gender identification / formation.

3. Physique –

Greater awareness of physique and the impact of your own physique on people around you will be tested and learnt through social interactions. The posturing of young men and women, the displays, the clothing and image will all be in part about physique.

4. Emotional independence from adults –

Shopping centres are generally regarded as safe locations by parents. As such, shopping centres will often be some of the first locations where a young person is allowed to frequent without parental supervision. These early opportunities to spend time independent of parents and adults will help form identity and allow young people to test particular behaviours and define themselves free of parental input / observation.

5. Economic independence –

A shopping centre will be a location where young people spend money and perhaps make money. Learning to manage spending money and wages will take place within a shopping centre.

6. Selecting and preparing for an occupation –

Time spent in a shopping centre provides young people with exposure to various career choices and employment options. Developing an interest and understanding of particular occupations will be influenced and formed by observations conducted in a shopping centre.

7. Preparing for marriage and family life –

As has been stated, shopping centres will be sites where romantic attachments form. Finding a partner and learning about how couples behave will be shaped by watching people in a shopping centre.

8. Developing intellectual skills and civic skills –

Shopping centres are venues for considerable multi-generational interaction. Very small babies right through to grandparents frequent shopping centres. To effectively mediate these very social settings, young people have to develop civic skills; they have to learn the 'rules' of social interaction in these settings.

9. Desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour –

Further to the previous adolescent task, young people will desire and achieve socially responsible behaviour in a shopping centre. Through the response of adults, such as security officers, young people will learn what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in a social setting.

10. Values and an ethical system –

The values and ethical systems of young people will be influenced by the way that they perceive adults respond to their needs. Inconsistent and harsh responses will impact upon the way that they see the world.

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Exercise 5.9

How can an audience (imaginary or real) affect the behaviour of a young person?

As has been stated, adolescence is a time of identity formation and a period in which the views of others are given significant weighting. As adults, comments about our appearance or behaviour may have little or no affect, whereas for adolescents, such comments might have considerable impact. Young people will be mindful of how they will appear to their peers – being seen with parents at a certain age is akin to a social disaster. Being seen in clothes that are not in fashion or with the wrong friends takes on new meaning during adolescence.

As such, it is likely that perceptions of being put on show will be important to young people. Losing face or being shamed may have particularly acute consequences for young person. This means that for security officers, being mindful of the location and possible audience in which a young person is spoken to might be important. If they think that they are being ostracised or ridiculed, then it is likely that that will be more resistant to what you are saying. Also, the egocentricity of adolescence can mean that young people will think you are talking about them, even if you are not. For example, if you have just spoken with a young person and then walk over to a colleague, the young person might assume that the conversation with the security officer will be about them. Being mindful of these potential traits can be helpful in better understanding the often social nature of young people's behaviour.

Exercise 5.10

“Another feature of adolescence is a degree of narcissism or preoccupation with self as a love object. More attention is paid by both sexes to their physical appearances” (Slee, 2002: 433).

How does this statement fit with your experiences? Are young people in your centre often quite concerned about their appearance? How might this impact upon interactions?

Grooming, image and status will be important considerations for adolescents. In a shopping centre, this might mean particular attention to looks, dress and grooming. As a security officer, you can support the importance of these issues for young people, by making comment about their new t-shirt or bracelet. Making negative references to images on T-shirts or other aspects of a young person's appearance might have a greater impact than anticipated.

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Exercise 5.11

Complete the remainder of the table by filling in each of the empty boxes. The first three have been completed as examples of what you need to do – how might the behaviour listed generally be interpreted and what might be a more thorough explanation?

The purpose of this exercise is simply to get you to consider other alternatives. Too often assumptions are made that influence our behaviour, despite the inaccuracy of the initial assumption. Trying to establish the cause of a particular behaviour, rather than simply assuming a particular reason will be important.

Behaviour	Interpretation	Possible explanation
An Aboriginal young person does not look you in the eye while you are talking	Disrespect	Some young Aboriginal people (and people from other cultures) do not look older people in the eye as a mark of respect
A young woman is reluctant to speak to a male security guard	Disrespect	Males have been abusive in her life and are frequently feared
A young man becomes aggressive when spoken to by a male guard	Hostility and intention to fight	Male authority figures have been the source of violence. To protect himself he becomes aggressive – a display to ward off potential aggressors
A young person is withdrawn and non-communicative	Rude	The young person has difficulty with language or is not confident in social settings

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A young person's
behaviour is
erratic – they
seem confused
and agitated

Intoxication or
mental illness

There has been a very
recent traumatic event
in the young person's
life

Exercise 6.1

For the following three scenarios, identify how you would work cooperatively.

You can see that a colleague is inflaming a situation. Voices and tempers are rising. How can you ease your colleague out of the situation, allowing you to take over?

This will be difficult – you will want to help your colleague withdraw, without appearing to compromise their authority. The longer you have worked with the person, the easier it will be to determine what approach will work best. Moving into the situation and saying something like, “I can see that things are getting heated here. How about we move out of the food court and have this discussion over here”. Moving the group will give you time to talk with your colleague and will potentially take the heat out of the situation.

You are having a dispute with a young person. They are claiming that they did not threaten another customer. You are getting nowhere with the young person, when a colleague arrives. Your colleague has a better relationship with the young person. How can you involve them in resolving this problem? Write the words that you would use in this situation.

“I am concerned that I am just making things worse here. Can I suggest that Tony takes over for a minute, because I think he'll do a better job of this than I am”.

Excusing yourself or withdrawing to allow a colleague to take control will not erode your power. It is likely to reduce conflict and you stay in control of the situation by increasing the power of your colleague to manage the situation.

There is a small group of young people causing minor problems at the main entrance. They have gathered inside the entrance, playing with a basketball. Their bags are strewn in the path of customers entering the centre. You know them well. One of the young people tends to dominate

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or lead the group. How might you be able to utilise this person to assist you in managing this situation? Again, write the words that you would use as you approach the group.

While we have not provided a great deal of information about how to manage such a situation, this question is designed to encourage you to think about how other people can be beneficial in managing particular situations.

By inviting the young person with some status within the group to help out, you are potentially deflecting some of the attention from you and empowering one of the young people to accept responsibility for the problem. "Hi guys. Can I ask you to help me out? Playing basketball and leaving your bags around the entrance might cause someone to hurt themselves. Can I ask you to move your bags to the side and if you want to play basketball, can you head down to the courts down the road? Come on Michael, you know the rules. Can we sort this out?"

Exercise 7.1

For the following event, identify the key pieces of information that you might record.

You are walking by the food court, when you see a young man strike another young man. You approach the young men, ask them to separate and check the health of the victim. You speak to them both individually and learn that the punch was thrown because of what the victim said about the aggressor's girlfriend.

What information might you want to record?

Some of the information that you might want to record includes: time, date and location of incident; details of individuals involved; nature of injuries and any potential witnesses. This information will be helpful in providing details to police if they become involved. Your centre is likely to have guidelines or policies on what information should be collected. May sure you are aware of these guidelines.

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Exercise 8.1

Knowing who you can speak to about things that happen during work is important. Identify five people you can go to talk about difficult things that happen during your work.

The people that you will speak to will differ to your colleagues. Developing a list of this type will be very specific to the individual. Nonetheless, the following are just some people who might be good people to speak to about work issues: supervisor, colleagues, centre management (in some circumstances), friends who will understand, partner and family.

Sometimes security work can be stressful. You might have worked a number of shifts in a row or had a number of difficult incidents to deal with in a short time. Having ways of coping with the stress is important. Identify three ways that you might cope with stress if it occurs.

Once again, managing stress will be very person specific. Some people will exercise, some will meditate, others will talk things out, yet others will read. Finding ways to cope with difficult times will mean that you are better at your job and better at leaving difficult things behind you. Coming to work upset, angry or agitated, is likely to only make work more difficult.