



# CASE STUDY

## SHIRE OF HALLS CREEK

### BACKGROUND

The Shire of Halls Creek (the Shire) in Western Australia is home to an extremely young population with unique and urgent needs. The youth of Halls Creek experience myriad risk-factors and damaging effects of entrenched poverty. Youth suicide, self-harming, bullying, petrol sniffing, cruelty to animals, poor health, mental illness, homelessness, incarceration, and FASD are all symptoms of pervasive disadvantage in the Shire and require building community capacity to credibly address.

These needs are, however, unable to be met because of chronic underfunding of municipal Youth Services through a combination of inflexible, insecure service agreements with external funding agencies, a low rate payer base, and a steady reduction of Federal Assistance Grants that have all combined to disrupt, and, in many cases, cease youth services operations. Service disruptions have serious implications in our communities where young people are at a high risk of suicide.

In an attempt to address these urgent issues, the Youth Service Diversion Program (YSDP) has been developed in partnership with local Aboriginal communities – who also play an ongoing role in the implementation and evaluation of program outcomes through their steering committee governance function. YSDP is part of the Shire of Halls Creek and hosts a unique service in that its clientele is comprised of 'youth at risk' who have been referred to the program from supporting agencies such as the Western Australian Police Force, the Department of Corrections and the Department of Child Protection and Family Support.

The Shire YSDP targets only 10-17 and 18-25 year old cohorts in separate diversion activities, engaging young offenders in a series of 'camps-on-country,' and in the design and delivery of their own diversionary activity with ongoing support and assistance from Youth Development Officers.

### OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT STRATEGY & CONSULTATION

The Shire of Halls Creek and its local community partners realised early in their Youth Services Diversionary Program journey that they needed to develop clear outcomes, relevant indicators, and invest in an outcomes focused case management system to capture the right data to create an evidence base that would support sustainable funding and effective service delivery.

The Shire opted to use SquaredImpact to develop its outcomes measurement plan.

Margaret Glass, Manager of the Shire's YSDP says this (in April 2016) about the Shire's experience with SquaredImpact in terms of the development of the YSDP Outcomes Plan:

“SquaredImpact’s personal and intimate understanding of social change work and outcomes measurement, and their ability to provide a combination of a top-down and bottom-up approach to the work was considered crucial by the Shire.

SquaredImpact linked the identification of outcomes to coal face practice of our program and developed relevant and operationalised indicators to benchmark the outcomes with. They also provided excellent advice and assistance in setting up and sourcing appropriate measurement methodologies.

Lastly, SquaredImpact shares our intent to promote and support indigenous community capacity, empowerment and self reliance, and this was important to us in the way we developed our Outcomes Plan.”

## SQUAREDIMPACT OUTCOMES DATA SYSTEM SERVICES

In addition to developing clear social outcomes, and associated operationally relevant indicators, the Shire's YSDP was determined to collect the right data to support measurement of their outcomes. They undertook a search for outcomes focused case management software and selected Efforts to Outcomes™ (ETO).

SquaredImpact implemented the ETO system for the Shire, providing a seamless transition between the outcomes plan work and the outcomes system design and implementation, and Margaret Glass, Manager of the Shire's YSDP had this to say (in April 2016) about SquaredImpact's outcomes system implementation services:

“SquaredImpact (Brenda) has been fantastic to work with and her clinical background has been a huge asset in this process. She really gets it!

We didn't want a consultant who had never worked in the field, we wanted to access SquaredImpact's practitioner experience. The value SquaredImpact has brought to the implementation process has been enormous.

Brenda developed a system that captures relevant information representative of what we do on the ground and linked to the outcomes we set with SquaredImpact before the system design commenced. This allows us to properly explore what works (and what doesn't) adjust how we do things to be more effective, and we are building reports that can easily tell funders and partner agencies exactly what they need to know.

If you need to set up an Outcomes Plan, and/or need to implement an outcomes focused case management system, choose SquaredImpact. Their knowledge and unique skill set is unbeatable and your project will really benefit from that.

Style-wise, we loved that Brenda is very practical in her approach. She made sense of outcomes measurement to us, avoided unnecessary jargon and encouraged internal capacity building. Her friendly and flexible style really worked for us too.”