



City of
Greater Geraldton
Youth'n'Motion - Youth Services



Midnight Basketball

~ Progress Report January 2011 to June 2011 ~



**MID BASKET
NIGHT BALL**

Midnight Basketball Tournament 1 2011

The first of two tournaments in the 2011 Midnight Basketball season was successfully launched on Friday April 1st, 2011 with 40 players. With a slightly late start to registrations, momentum soon built to have a total of 86 players registered for the Tournament. The delay occurred because Michael Lay, Tournament Manager, was in Germany honouring his professional basketball contract which expired on March 30th, 2011.

An advertising campaign was conducted involving school visits, posters, and radio advertising. 82% of registered participants were between the ages of 12-14.

Tournament 1 of 2011 was managed by American and State Basketball League player, Michael Lay. Michael added significant insight and structure to the program. With his in-depth knowledge of the sport he was able to pass on his wisdom and skills of the game. His participation in the program also created a strong link between the Geraldton Buccaneers, Geraldton youth, and living a health life.



A new Tournament Manager and Tournament Administrator were acquired for the 2011 tournament. Training was provided by Midnight Basketball to both staff to ensure the quality and affiliation established with Midnight Basketball in 2010 was continued.

Midnight Basketball's standard eight week tournament schedule was maintained with the Tournament running from April 1st – June 3rd. The program ran four consecutive weeks, had a two week break, and then continued to run four more weeks. The two week break served as a very important time for volunteer rejuvenation and allowed time for the Tournament Administrator to catch up on administrative task.

A professional caterer was hired to organise the weekly menu and oversee the meals for the tournament. This ensured the youth were fed a healthy and nutritious meal each night.

Building a committed and passionate staff is challenging, but instrumental to the program's success. Proudly, tournament 1 secured 27 volunteer and staffing from the local community.

In addition, a significant partnership with Durack Institute of Technology (TAFE) was also established. Students interested in Community work were afforded the opportunity to get hands on experience through Midnight Basketball. The Youth and Community workers of tomorrow learned and studied theory in the classroom and received practical youth related experience through Midnight Basketball.

In other words, with the support of the local community a team of 27 volunteers were able to execute and deliver an award-winning program to 86 Geraldton youths.

Number of Professional Development Workshops Offered

A variety of life skills workshops were conducted over the course of Tournament. These workshops included Arts and Culture, Team Building through Aboriginal Art, and Disability Awareness complemented through wheelchair basketball.

Over the course of the tournament all teams developed a team name and logo as part of the skill workshops. Consequently, these workshops developed a stronger bond amongst the group and more camaraderie within the teams.



In fact, the youth were so interested in the workshops that they frequently asked for the same workshop in the following weeks or next program.

Number of Basketball fixtures offered per year

In addition to the scheduled 8 week program Michael Lay also delivered basketball programs in the local schools and recreational areas to encourage participation in Midnight Basketball. These included Youth Week 2011 and the Youth Outreach Bus located at the Geraldton foreshore.

No Workshop, No Jump Shot rule enforced

The program motto of “No Workshop, No Jumpshot” was well received again by the participants. It is an accepted part of the program, and all the participants know they cannot play basketball unless they attend a workshop.

Effective Project Planning

The project was supervised and managed by an enthused committee of 8 members:

- **Committee Chair** - Chad Holten, Commonwealth Bank
- **Volunteer Recruitment Manager** – Adrian Bartlett – Department of Sport & Rec
- **Finance Manager** – Karina Day – City of Greater Geraldton
- **Personnel Manager** – Denise Wrensted – Geraldton Amateur Basketball Association
- **Youth Manager** – Natasha Lay – Youth Care
- **Assistant Role** – Michael Lay – City of Greater Geraldton
- **Assistant Role** – Jayden Valenti – Geraldton Police
- **Assistant Role** – Graham Greenway – Member of Council

Many hours of concentrated and direct planning resulted in a well organised tournament and effective execution of the program. A number of areas were strengthened and streamlined with the logistical support of Midnight Basketball Australia. As a result of the partnership, the program has improved its overall effectiveness of the project.

Several volunteers, who previously participated in the program, commented as to how well organised and smooth the program ran compared to previous years.

Target Group – Approx 80 Youths aged between 12 and 18 Years of age who are considered at risk of offending

The first tournament had a total of 86 player registrations. All of which had been confirmed by a parent/guardian either in person or over the phone. Most of the participants would be considered at low, medium or high risk of offending.

In tournament 1, 93% of the participants were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island descent with a mere 7% of participants being non-indigenous. This is 4% more than in the previous year.

The average age for the participants was 13 years of age. This average is virtually identical to the average age of the 2010 tournament.

The average number of youth attending on any given Friday night was 37, a little less than in 2010. This is most likely due to the fact that other youth activities, such as Wildfire, were operational on the same night.

Number of participants at each workshop (Minimum 40)

The No Workshop, No Jumpshop rule was strictly enforced to all youth attending the program. The rule requires all participants to sit in on the workshops in order to compete in the basketball tournament. The workshops were conducted on a 30 minute rotation from 8.00pm – 10.00pm with two teams attending each workshop. There were a total of 6 teams registered.

Number of participants identified as at risk (Minimum 20 per year)

It is unclear the exact number of participants involved with Tournament 1 of Midnight Basketball who have been identified as at risk. Those numbers have not been compiled by the Police as of yet. However, it is safe to say that a number of youth involved in the program would be prone to destructive behaviour outside of Midnight Basketball that puts them at risk of committing an offence. Truthfully, the boundaries set and enforced by Midnight Basketball provide a unique environment for the youth making it very hard to identify who is at risk and who isn't. Structure, boundaries, and consistency are what youth respond to. Since Midnight Basketball provides all three, youth participants are less likely to engage in high risk behaviour and more likely to cooperate and have fun.

Number of Participants of Aboriginal descent (Minimum 20 per year)

As mentioned earlier, 93% of the participants were of Indigenous descent, which equates to a total of 80 of 86 registered players.

Evidence from Law Enforcement Authorities as to the reduction of antisocial behaviour project period.

In previous years a reduction of close to 30% in antisocial behaviour was observed during the tournament periods. Such data is not currently available for the 2011 tournaments. Police have reported an overall significant decrease in antisocial behaviour and juvenile related crime, especially during the time Midnight Basketball is operational.

Evidence from Law Enforcement Authorities as to the number of priority one youths involved in the program

At this stage, the number of priority one youths involved in the program are yet to be determined.

Evidence of improved relationship between at risk youth and the Police

The relationship between at risk youth and the Police has slightly improved. Midnight Basketball was able to secure the support of Officer Jayden Valenti. Mr. Valenti dedicated his Friday evenings to Geraldton's Youth for the duration of the Tournament. Mr. Valenti was also a member of the Midnight Basketball Committee, which further solidifies his passion and dedication for youth.

This relationship will continue to grow as another Police Officer, Paul Acton, has committed to assisting in Tournament 2 of Midnight Basketball. Having an officer present on the night in uniform really allowed for trust to be established between the youth and the police. This was a huge accomplishment, one that will only improve with time.

Numbers of occasion's positive role models were used to support the program

Positive role models were engaged as much as possible, especially as part of the workshops. We were able to engage Buccaneers Import Todd Brown, from America, to come and coach a team. His commitment to the program added great value as he was able to build healthy relationships with members of his team.

We were also able to secure the support of representatives from the Department of Child Protection, TAFE students, Youth Care, Midwest Yellow Ribbon for Life, and Department of Sport and Recreation. This proved to be a strong team of positive role models which further explains the success of the program.

Provision of transport from the program

Midnight Basketball engaged the Police Community Youth Club, better known as P.C.Y.C, to undertake the safe transportation of participants. P.C.Y.C. was generous in their support of the program by not only providing transportation, but also a trustworthy driver.

Midnight Basketball also connected with Sun City Christian Centre to assist in the safe transportation of the participants. This was a huge help as it allowed Midnight Basketball to secure two reliable vehicles to get the participants home safely.

Number of participants who enrol in mainstream basketball (Minimum 20 per year)

It is not known at this stage how many young people have enrolled in mainstream basketball. For young people, such as the ones participating in the program, there are still some significant financial barriers that must be overcome.

Many of the youth engaged in the program cannot afford to participate in mainstream sport, although the interest would be soaring in many of them.

Number of youth who become involved in the delivery of the program (Minimum 20 per year)

We had 2 youth, participants from previous years, helping out with the direct program delivery of Tournament 1. The youth were put in charge of umpiring and scorekeeping after successfully completing a referee course. Getting more youth to become involved in the delivery of the program is certainly an area to improve on. It would be ideal to have youth's go through the program as participants then become involved through volunteering or as workers. Efforts to reach out to former participants have been made in hopes of securing their support for the upcoming tournament.

Evidence of program promotional efforts/acknowledgment of sponsor

The program was promoted through a range of media and personal face-to-face contact with youth at the two local public high schools in Geraldton. Promotion included a write-up in the local paper and promotional posters and flyers.



Reduction in youth crime and antisocial behaviour

As pointed out earlier, the police have noted a decrease in juvenile-related crime. There has also been a general improvement in the overall behaviour of the youth who attend



the program. They displayed a positive attitude towards the program and a respect towards authority figures and the volunteers.

An exciting trend that is developing is that the youth have started to self police themselves during the tournament, meaning they began to

reprimand and discipline one another.

Improved relationship between the participants and the community in general

Youth participants were surprised that the community members and volunteers involved on the night did not receive any compensation for their time and effort.

Likewise, many of the volunteers have reported that their perception of the youth had changed drastically since volunteering with Midnight Basketball Geraldton.

These changes in perception are important to note because they reflect a changing community attitudes towards youth.

Number of volunteers engaged in the program

The program recorded 27 registered volunteers. Amazingly, 11 of the 27 registered volunteers committed to the entire Midnight Basketball program, which last 8 weeks.

Conclusion

The Midnight Basketball program has been very successful. The program is a national social inclusion program to assist youth in identifying and embracing positive opportunities. With dinner, a compulsory life skills workshop, and tournament basketball games being offered the program attracts the right youth's who will benefit the most. The program also appeals to local community businesses and members, who are ultimately responsible for guiding the program to its initial success.

Midnight Basketball aims to offer these positive contributions to the City of Greater Geraldton:

- Providing young people with a safe, healthy and positive environment at times when they may be vulnerable to harmful and anti-social behaviour.
- Combating drug, alcohol and other physical abuse by young people.
- Supporting the learning needs of young people and providing them with encouragement to participate in mainstream society and their local community.
- Providing positive role models and reinforcing the importance of self esteem among young people.
- Diverting young people in areas of need from the risk of anti-social and criminal behaviour.

The above aims, in fact, are the cornerstone of the program. As the program continues to grow, the youth and community involvement will also grow. The initial success is only a sign of what the Midnight Basketball program can truly become. Since its inception, the program has been received by the community. The focus then shifted to improving the program and optimizing its potential. Clearly, this has been achieved seeing that 86

youths and 27 volunteers were registered to the program. Another sign is the improved relationship between the youth and local police. Now the task at hand is how to sustain the program. The answer is simple, by secure future funding through sponsorships, build a reliable team of community members who are passionate about youth, and continue to deliver a first-rate program.

Finance

The Midnight Basketball program is financed entirely through grants through the Midnight Basketball program, Department of Sport and Recreation and the Attorney General Office.

Michael Lay and Karina Day
Tournament Manager and Tournament Administrator
15 July 2011



HOLDING COURT: A Youth'n'Motion three-on-three competition last week generated interest in the upcoming Midnight Basketball Tournament. Sun City Plumbing Buccaneer's American import Todd Brown works out some strategies, watched by his wife Tarin, while the Buccs' Lou Causer and local police officer Mark Adam, far right, look on.

Program shoots for youth welfare

MIDNIGHT basketball returns on April 1.

Organisers say shooting hoops, developing teamwork, learning new skills, making friends, keeping fit and a bus home at the end of the night is a cool way for Geraldton youth to spend a night.

Geraldton Midnight Basketball is an eight-week program, held from 7pm to midnight on Fridays at Geraldton Basketball Stadium.

The award-winning, youth-based program is community driven and requires a local committee and many volunteers for each night of the

tournament. Volunteers include team managers, referees, bus drivers, scorers and catering assistants.

Volunteers don't need to know how to play basketball to help with any of these activities.

City of Geraldton-Greenough youth outreach officer Karina Day said Geraldton Midnight Basketball was a structured program for 12 to 18-year-olds, which combined sport and education in a safe and motivating environment.

"It is designed to help identify and embrace positive opportunities for our youth. The night

starts with a healthy meal, followed by compulsory life-skills workshops, loads of basketball and a bus ride home at the end of the night," she said.

Ms Day said the program was about more than just basketball.

"The program's motto is: 'No Workshop, No Jump Shot'," she said.

"In order to play, all participants must attend the workshop dealing with teen-related issues ranging from subjects such as conflict resolution, communication skills, health and well-being — including drugs, alcohol and nutrition,

through to job readiness and much more."

For more information, contact Karina Day on karinad@cgg.wa.gov.au, 9956 6681 or (0408) 422 430.