



## Midnight basketball coming in '09

The East Metro Crime Prevention Unit, Office of Crime Prevention and the City of Swan are launching a program designed to positively influence local youth early in 2009. The 'Midnight Basketball' program provides a combination of life skills workshops and basketball competitions held during 'peak crime' periods. It provides participants with the opportunity to become involved in basketball tournaments on Saturday nights when they are at the highest risk of harm including

self-harm or antisocial behaviour.

Other community services are generally not available during this time.

Before taking part in a basketball tournament, participants must first attend the workshops, which will provide information on managing finances, finding a job and even anger management.

Well-known identities have also got on board, and will be on-hand to share their experiences and skills.

Const. Robyn Cottman

from the East Metro Crime Prevention Unit said the program had been an effective means of tackling antisocial behaviour, burglary and damage to property.

"The program targets at-risk youth, mainly between the ages of 12 and 18 and it's been identified as a method of keeping young people occupied at times when it's easy for them to feel bored," she said.

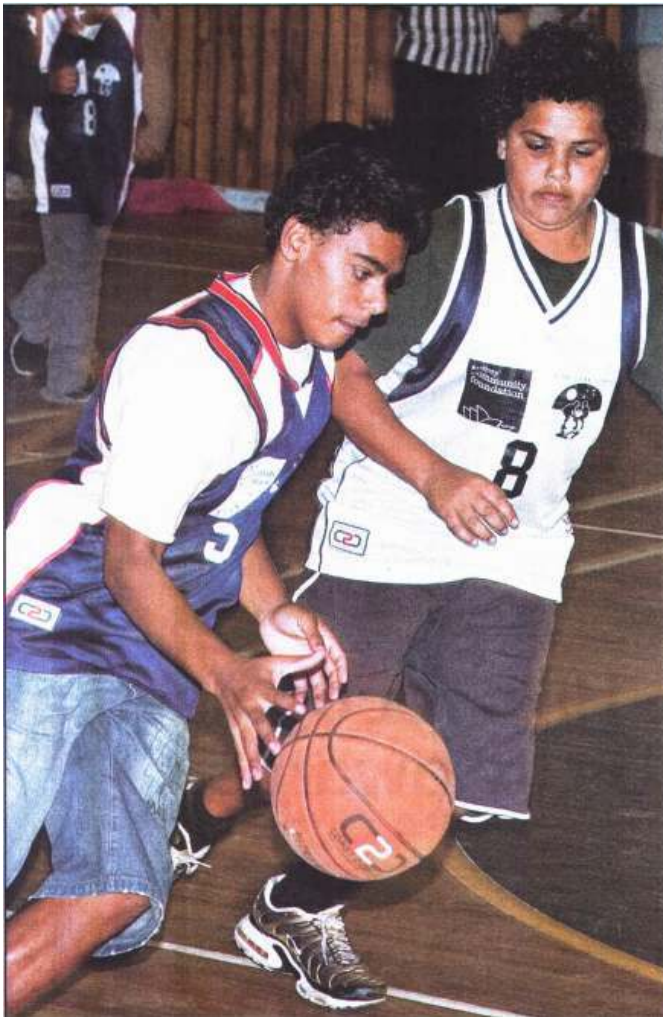
"We're basically looking for kids that may not have anything else to do on a Saturday night so instead

of just congregating, they can do something constructive that they can also get enjoyment from."

The program originated in The Bronx, New York and has since been used in Redfern, New South Wales, where it caught the eye of police and community members in WA.

Successful programs are already under way in Geraldton and Kwinana.

Const. Cottman said she hoped a range of people from the area would get involved, to promote community interaction.



The 'Midnight Basketball' program provides young people with the chance to compete in tournaments during 'peak crime' periods on the weekend. It is due to commence in April 2009.