






<p>Project</p> 	<p>The Impact of Reclink Australia Programs on Participants – Canberra</p>	<p>Partner</p>	
<p>Purpose</p> 	<p>Reclink Australia commissioned La Trobe University to undertake research into its programs and operations over a four year period. This report examines one of the project phases: the impact of Reclink Australia programs on the lives of participants within Canberra. The aim of the project was to identify the ways in which Reclink Australia programs contribute to the physical, mental and emotional health of people experiencing disadvantage.</p>		
<p>Method</p> 	<p>Semi-structured interviews with people who were active participants in Reclink Australia funded or supported sport, recreation and arts programs were the primary sources of data. Twenty-nine interviews (twenty-three participants in high-density public housing and six agencies) were conducted in April, 2012. During the four-day data collection phase, visits were made to two community gardens based in high density housing areas, an art program operating out of a community building and a gym program operating out of a local leisure centre. The project collected and analysed data on the perceptions of individuals about the impact of Reclink Australia funded and supported programs on their lives.</p>		
<p>Application</p> 	<p>The research found that Reclink Australia participants in Canberra, particularly those in high density public housing, live in difficult conditions, which often exacerbate the pre-existing problems and disadvantage they have faced.</p> <p>Importantly, the findings reveal that Reclink Australia programs and activities have six key benefits for the residents of high density public housing: breaking down the barriers to isolation; establishing and maintaining friendships; alleviating boredom; providing a sense of community; encouraging self-esteem and confidence; and acquiring skills. The Canberra participants, in the main, believe that they will not be able to ‘escape’ their high density housing living arrangements and consequently view Reclink Australia activities as essential and an important part of their futures.</p>		

