



Youth Partnerships

Communiqué March 2012

Background

Youth Partnerships is a Victorian Government initiative that will design and test new ways for services to work together more collaboratively to support vulnerable young people aged 10 -18 years. The initiative aims to better support 'at risk' young people by working at the local level to improve the coordination and efficiency of services. Seven demonstration sites have been established to trial new approaches and to make sure young people receive coordinated and holistic support.

Youth Partnerships Update

Secretariat Staffing

Co-location of DHS Staff Member

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has provided a staff member to work alongside the Secretariat to ensure a whole of government approach. Eric Polli, Manager, Strategic Projects and Business Planning, Youth Services and Youth Justice, will be co-located with the Secretariat until June 2012.

Eric will be exploring opportunities to better support and engage high risk cohorts of vulnerable young with education, including those involved in out of home care, Youth Justice and experiencing homelessness. For further information, Eric can be contacted via email at polli.eric.e@edumail.vic.gov.au

Co-location of a Local Government Staff Member

Discussion with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is underway regarding the co-location of a local government staff member within the Secretariat to strengthen local government communication and involvement in the initiative.

Demonstration Site Update

A range of activities to support vulnerable young people aged 10-18 years are being undertaken in the Youth

Partnerships demonstration sites. Some of the key activity highlights include:

Yarra Ranges, Maroondah and Knox

Discussion to expand the No Wrong Door approach and Initial Needs Identification tool to capture all local government areas in the demonstration site is currently occurring. The No Wrong Door approach will create changed practice through a formal commitment from agencies and schools to embed a consistent supported referral process for all young people.

Grampians

One of the site's key priorities is the development of a wrap around multi agency support model that caters to the holistic needs of vulnerable young people. As a means to achieve this, professional development has been provided to all key stakeholders on the use of the Homelessness Outcomes Star which will be trialled as a wellbeing and assessment tool in the site.

Frankston and Mornington Peninsula

Key priorities for the site are the establishment of a flexible learning and outreach setting for vulnerable young people and the development of a shared model between DHS and DEECD. The model will focus on embedding educational attainment and excellence into case management practice.

Evaluation Framework

An Evaluation Design team has been established consisting of representatives from the Secretariat, DEECD and the Youth Research Centre, the University of Melbourne. The group will support the design and implementation of the Evaluation Framework for the initiative, which will include the following components:

- **Survey Research** - surveys will be conducted with Demonstration Site agency and School representatives and young people who are engaged in programs across all regions to determine the overall effect of the projects.



- **Interviews** - Interviews will be conducted with agencies, schools and program personnel involved in one selected project in each site to further investigate the impact of the intervention.
- **Ethnographic Research** - a series of interviews with a small number of young people will be undertaken to ensure that the experiences and voice of young people who are disengaged, or at risk of disengaging is captured.

Funding and Accountability Project

The Nous Group has been engaged to undertake a mapping and analysis of Victorian Government funding and accountability mechanisms targeting young people aged 10-18 years in four demonstration sites. The selected sites comprise both rural and metropolitan representation:

- Grampians Region
- Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Southern Metropolitan Region
- Loddon Mallee North Region

Surveys have been distributed to education providers and community sector agencies across the participating sites, with a final recommendations report to be produced in June 2012.

Consultation with Young people

The Secretariat is working with the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) to engage and consult with young people about their experiences and views of the education and youth service systems. High risk groups will also be targeted through CREATE and the Centre for Multi-cultural Youth (CMY).

Cross Government Activity targeting vulnerable young people

To ensure that the work of Youth Partnerships aligns and complements current and emerging activity targeting vulnerable young people, the Secretariat are providing input into the development and implementation of a number of key projects both within and external to government.

Key projects include:

- 0 – 18 Assessment Framework – DEECD
- Board representation on the Parkville Youth Justice Precinct Education Project
- Health and Wellbeing Framework - DEECD
- Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry
- Case Management Reform - Department of Human Services

Looking Forward

The next tasks for the Secretariat include:

- Undertaking a Social Network Analysis in up to three Demonstration sites. The analysis will measure changes in partnerships across sectors through new governance and integrated service delivery approaches.

Further Information

For more information on the Youth Partnerships initiative please refer to the following website <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/sensecyouth/Youthpartnerships> or contact the Secretariat at youth.partnerships@edumail.vic.gov.au or by phone on 03 9947 1817.

SAVE THE DATE : 25 & 26 June 2012

Victorian Youth Conference Connect For: Improved outcomes for Victoria's vulnerable young people

A two day collaborative conference that brings together government, local government and the community sector.

The conference is a response to children and young people experiencing barriers to accessing opportunities to learning and development designed for those working in education, youth support, health, housing, justice services, and police.

There will be keynote speakers, presentations and workshops around future thinking in education and service delivery, early intervention, partnerships, integrated service responses, and participation of young people.

Venue: Melbourne Park Function Centre, Batman Avenue, Melbourne.

This conference is a collaboration of YACVic, VCOSS, MAV, DEECD, DHS, DH, DOJ, VicPol and OCSC.

Further information on the YACVic website shortly! <http://www.yacvic.org.au/>



Spotlight on.....

Barwon Youth Partnerships (Greater Geelong, Queenscliff and Surf Coast)

The Barwon Youth Partnerships Strategic Plan identifies a range of innovative activities that the local governance group have decided to address; including:

Alternative Education Setting: the establishment of a state funded alternative education setting, as a campus of a Victorian Government School, that caters specifically for disengaged learners who experience trauma and attachment based behavioural and learning challenges

Improve Early Identification and Intervention: building on the foundation of the Geelong Better Youth Services Pilot, develop a 'community of schools and youth services' that is better equipped to identify and intervene earlier with young people at risk through developing common cross sectoral practices and tools, inclusive of the development and trial of a cross-sector data system.

Engaging Our Most Vulnerable Young People: the development and trial of an Outreach Teacher model designed to provide the most disengaged and marginalised young people in our community with an opportunity to receive a high quality education. This will be initially tested with identified young people in residential care settings.

For more information on the work being undertaken in the Barwon Youth Partnerships Demonstration Site please contact:

Peter Jacobson, Barwon Youth Partnerships Project Officer: jacobson.peter.m@edumail.vic.gov.au

