

GREATER DANDENONG YOUTH NETWORK 2025 MINUTES

Meeting Theme: Youth Employment: Work Readiness and Workers' Rights

Thursday 1st May 2025, 9:30am – 11:00am

Meeting: Zoom <https://greaterdandenong.zoom.us/j/88662086378?pwd=xlNOgtTi8qa4izxhQSb5QuNjY0wbP.1>

Meeting ID: 886 6208 6378, Passcode: @pB8KB@JQz

Acknowledgement of Country	9.30am
Background <p>In 2024, Greater Dandenong had the third highest unemployment rates by Victorian municipality at 6.4% of the population. The 2024 Mission Australia report found that 29% of young people reported barriers to achieving their work or study goals, including lack of motivation (37%), mental health (33%) and lack of confidence (31%). This 29% of young people are those who are not in paid employment but are actively looking for work.</p>	9.35-9.40am
Work Readiness Presenters Presenter 1: Andrea Wintrip and Jane Knight, Gamechange Project <p>GameChange is delivered through Greater Dandenong City Council and funded through the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry, and Regions. GameChange works with people across the skills and jobs system to include employers, jobseekers, community organisations, and service providers to shape the local system to better meet the local needs. The initiative is placed based, community led and believes no one person or organisation holds the solution for community but that solving complex problems requires a team of people from across sectors working together to make change. We were lucky enough to hear from Andrea – Coordinator and Jane – Senior Project Officer on the GameChange Initiative.</p> <p>Challenges and Solutions identified in breakout rooms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing a young person as a whole <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Looking at why they might be experiencing barriers so you can address them meaningfully – rather than looking at a symptom, looking at a cause. • Empowerment and awareness raising can help to address many challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Socialisation The ability to socially interact and communicate. Especially post-COVID, young people can be digital natives with a preference to communicate via text. Create prospective safe spaces to learn and practice socialisation skills that are so essential to the workplace. • Transport issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ L2P as a means of supporting those through the graduating licence system where there is disadvantage/barriers: L2P: Getting young people on the road - South East Community Links ○ Programs offering bikes to youth to borrow to get to their workplace ○ When young people apply for a job, they could plan out how they would commute to a job in advance. This way they can articulate to an employer their reliability. • Systemic barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing, mental health barriers ○ Services need to work together. If you are working with a young person, ask those questions early and help get onto tackling those other barriers. • English language barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Help young people see much of their communication comes through body language ○ RMIT provide English language classes ○ Take opportunities to practice English at the market • Gaming as a significant barrier to school and work attendance 	9.40-10.30am

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Networking and relationships are the best way to tackle the ‘spaghetti and confetti’ of youth employment in Greater Dandenong <p>Presenter 2: Mark Drummond and Sarah Stephen, Director of Dandenong Tech School</p> <p>Mark is the Director and Sarah is the Head of Programs of Dandenong Tech School. Both come from a teaching background, with Mark most recently having worked in CSIRO's Education and Outreach area. Dandenong Tech School is an exciting new STEAM centre opening next year in partnership with Chisholm TAFE, where they will connect young people to local industry and career pathways through innovative, hands-on STEAM learning programs.</p> <p>Empowering local young people to tackle global challenges. Connects to tertiary pathways, while also teaching young people how they might go straight into industry.</p> <p>Presenter 3: Sarah Curley, Community Partnerships Manager at Trades Women Australia</p> <p>Sarah Curley is the Community Partnerships Manager at Tradeswomen Australia. Sarah has a background in management, construction, education and working in project management within the NFP sector. She is passionate about helping women and non-binary individuals to realise their dream of succeeding in trades, particularly those most vulnerable and disadvantaged. In addition, she is committed to supporting trade industries across Australia to support and advocate for inclusive, supportive workplaces where women can thrive and forge a successful career path through gendered best practice. She is currently leading the Bennelong Future Pathways into Trades Project, which she will now share details with you on.</p> <p>Bennelong Project is accessible for anyone who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15-24 years of age Has experienced vulnerability and disadvantage Within the Greater Dandenong area Particularly those who have struggled to be engaged at school, CALD women, and non-binary people as they are particularly disadvantaged in the traditional trades areas <p>See brochure attached to the GDYN Minutes email to find out more about Bennelong Future Pathways.</p>	
<p>Workers' Rights</p> <p>South-East Monash Legal Service (SMLS) is a Community Legal Centre based in Springvale and Narre Warren. SMLS provides free, trauma informed and confidential legal advice and representation across Victoria, with outreaches in City of Greater Dandenong, Casey and Cardinia, and Melbourne CBD.</p> <p>Milly Lefau is a youth worker and community development worker who does community legal education, outreach and work for youth and mothers – particularly those from diverse backgrounds. Her youth work focus is on the sporting change program, where high school students in Dandenong High School and Hampton Park learn the law through playing sports, focusing on a preventative approach, general legal education and legal rights. Through this program, the students get access to a school lawyer who works closely with Milly. Ariz Ansari, a lawyer practicing in the areas of Employment, Discrimination, Sexual harassment and Tenancy Law, focusing on providing legal advice and representation to high school students as part of the sporting change program at Dandenong High School, and international students as part of the ISEALS (International Students Employment & Accommodation Legal Service) program run by the Department of Justice.</p>	10.30-10.50am
<p>Network Information Sharing</p> <p>An opportunity for network members to introduce themselves and share a brief program / service update.</p> <p>Hello from Youth and Family Services. We are currently in the process of registering young people for the Holiday Activities Committee (HAC). Check this out via the Greater Dandenong City Council Youth Services website: Youth Services Youth or contact Adheesha: Adheesha.DeSilva@cgd.vic.gov.au</p>	11.00-11.05am
<p>Evaluation and Meeting Close</p> <p>Thank you to those who completed the evaluation form. The results were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I was satisfied with today's meeting: 9.2/10</i> 	11.00am

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I would attend another GDYN meeting in the future:</i> 9.6/10 • <i>I would recommend the GDYN to other local professionals:</i> 9.3/10 <p>For those who attended but haven't yet completed the evaluation form, you are still welcome to respond here.</p>	
Time and space to network for those who can stay a little longer	11.00-11:15am
<p>Next meeting Wednesday 18th June Young People and Social Media Meeting Format: Face to Face Greater Dandenong City Council, Level 2 Meeting Rooms, 225 Lonsdale St, Dandenong VIC 3175</p>	

**For submissions to the GDYN eNewsletter, please provide a brief update to jim.moynihan@cgd.vic.gov.au
Deadline for June 2025: **MAY 23rd****