

GREATER DANDENONG YOUTH NETWORK 2025
MINUTES

Meeting Theme: Youth Health and Wellbeing

Tuesday 19th August 2025, 9:30am – 11:00am

Meeting Format: Zoom

<https://greaterdandenong.zoom.us/j/87803840190?pwd=JSsBlp46UkVZ6M5tndqk8am34ZPneC.1>

Meeting ID: 878 0384 0190, Passcode: @Kzt!1j&3Z

Acknowledgement of Country	9.30am
Welcome and Introduction Background and current Greater Dandenong context.	9.35-9.40am
Monash Health Community - Youth Services Adam Sands – Team Leader, Youth Services With a background in Exercise Rehabilitation, Adam has worked in several roles across Monash Health since 2007. After a period of time working within the acute hospital services, in 2018, Adam took up a position with the Forensic Mental Health in Community Health Team under the Youth and Family Service at Monash Health Community. Here, Adam worked with adults on court ordered Community Corrections Orders, teaching the participants of the program the benefits of exercise on their physical and mental well-being, while navigating through a difficult period in their lives. In 2020, Adam was asked to lead a team of multi-disciplinary allied health clinicians who work with young people. With a side passion for sports coaching and team building, Adam has thoroughly enjoyed his time as Team Leader of the Youth Service program and the support that this program brings to young people who are willing to engage and invest in their own physical and mental health. Flyers available, Drop-in service as well as referrals Youth and Family Services Monash Health youthtriage@monashhealth.org or 0434 601 300 Services can bring YP in during drop-in hours and support them with a warm handover to the service	9.40-9.55am
What youth health and wellbeing trends are you seeing? In breakout rooms, discuss: Name, pronouns, role/service and what trends you are seeing. Trends and challenges we are seeing in youth health and wellbeing: • School stressors • Young people with Disabilities navigating NDIS • Absenteeism in schools • Family/friend relationships • Struggle to access specialist support • Sleep, mental health, accessibility of services • Not enough information on sexual health or the quality to it (eg. safe sex, contraceptive advice). • Great to learn young people are interested in creative therapies (music) to support their wellbeing • Housing within our young people • Social isolation is a big one for us • Issues around employment especially challenges for newly arrived young people, social health & wellbeing and making friendships, and housing/homelessness • Alternatives to good food is limited. Food desert. • Sexual exploitation • Anxiety/depression • Self-harming behaviours	9.55-10.05am

• Young people engaging in at risk/criminal activities • Mental health - anxiety, stress - school/study stress, education - motivation • Falling behind in school due to caring responsibilities. • Young people taking too much on - finding it hard to balance school, life, health • We work with multifaith/multicultural communities, there's a gap in culturally responsive services that understands the unique challenges the diverse communities face and how they perceive mental health. Most families are either reluctant to engage or don't actively engage with services • Challenges multicultural communities face is Stigma and Shame associated to mental health. • Many youth are experiencing bullying at school as well based on their background, appearance getting attack racially which is affecting their mental health as well. Low self-esteem one of them • Dietetics • Sleep • CMY Reconnect – newly arrived 12 – 21 been in country less than 5 years. One on one case management support • VACCA – main issue is around housing. Trauma and mental health both upstream and downstream impacts of this issue. Have noticed an escalation in recent months and this is now the primary issue they're seeing	
Sharing trends Back in main Zoom room, sharing findings or questions from breakout rooms back to the network.	10.05-10.15am
The Victorian School Nursing Program Jay Eugenio and Anna Syposs – Secondary School Nurses Jay is a Registered nurse with 7 years of experience. He started his clinical nursing career in adult oncology and haematology at Box Hill Hospital. He then ventured to caring for children at the Royal Children's Hospital, in oncology and adolescent medicine. Jay moved to working as a campus nurse for a private school in Caroline Springs for 2 years, and now a Secondary School Nurse in the Southern Melbourne Area, SEVR of The Victorian Nursing Program. Jay is currently on his last year of his Master of Public Health/Infectious Disease Intelligence. Anna Syposs is a Division 1 Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse with a Master's in Mental Health Nursing. She also holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Adolescent Health and Welfare, along with certifications in Play Therapy and Sand Play Therapy. Anna has experience working across both private and public health sectors, she has worked in a range of clinical settings including adult, youth, and child psychiatric units, as well as community-based services such as Youth Prevention and Recovery Centre. Anna is currently working in the secondary school nursing program. Her practice is grounded in holistic, client centred strengths-based approaches, with a strong focus on youth mental health and promotion in the health and wellbeing of young people. Q&A Achievement Program and Vic Kids Eat Well in schools – good programs but seem to be burdensome for schools to implement. Seems that there are some changes coming shortly which may make things simpler. Observation that health and wellbeing programs go well in primary schools, but face some dropoff in secondary schools e.g. sunsmart has a strong uptake amongst primary schools but tends to drop off in secondary schools as students are more resistant to wearing hats etc. How does the Dep Ed determine which schools access the school nursing program? Determined based on SES of families.	10.15-10.30am
Supporting those who support youth health In breakout rooms, discuss: What resources and/or information would be helpful for you to support youth health and wellbeing in your role?	10.30-10.40am

• One of the challenges accessing resources in mental health and wellbeing is that there's not much in-language resources available. - Health Translations website has a lot of information on health in different languages....this may help a little bit. • Community services directory • Headspace • Ysas • Knowledge is power • An accessible Youth Directory from these meetings: includes name of service, who they support, what services the have available, phone numbers, etc. So we can lean on each other to support the young people more. - Youth Directory - There is this that you can add your service too • Better access for young people to information (websites, social media, platforms that are relevant to youth) • A general service directory on Council'd website including all information about various available services and contacts • A barrier that came up was that Dandenong Council Website may not have easy access to information on sexual health and wellbeing for young people. Young people may come across it as a referral from other partners but there maybe not a direct link to reliable partners (eg. Monash Health) on the website it self. • Youth friendly content on social media, tiktok etc • Gap in community – there are employment services that help with CV, resume etc., but a gap in how to actually get the job – networks between the employers and people looking for work. It would be good to know if there are services that actually provide this connector part, not just resume and interview.	
Network Information Sharing An opportunity for network members to introduce themselves and share a brief program / service update. Open to all network members for input. Contacts/services shared Sucha - School support program at Foundation House – RESP (Refugee Education Support Program). Currently scoping schools for inclusion in the next round of the program 2026/27 – expressions of interest are open now to schools with a high proportion of “refugee-like” students. Doesn’t only have to be students on refugee visas, but could be parents etc. It’s a useful program for students from broader trauma and/or neurodivergent backgrounds as well. Refugee Education Support Program - School's in for Refugees - My email address is chakravarthys@foundationhouse.org.au Saied Rezawi - Settlement Worker, M: 0499 884 059, E: Saied.Rezawi@micare.com.au Stacey - Monash Health Sexual and Reproductive Health Clinic, Young people are a priority group for their service, so please make referrals. Free service. They are also available to come in to meet with groups to discuss sexual or reproductive health on request. They are able to provide medical terminations. Contact via 0466022449 , Sexual and reproductive health services - Community-based Monash Health CGD YFS - Introduction to Public Speaking - Youth Leadership Collective Micro-Learnings - Confidence for Young Leaders - Youth Leadership Collective Micro-Learnings - Small Grants: Getting Started - Youth Leadership Collective Micro-Learnings - IMPACT Volunteering - Foodie Futures Youth - Holiday Activities Youth - school holiday activities - https://youth.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/holiday-activities-committee Adam Sands - Youth and Family Services Monash Health King Ewelike – Gamblers Help Community Engagement Officer at Better Health Network. Raising awareness around gambling harm, reduce stigma in seeking support and providing help to people struggling with others gambling. Free and confidential services. Have a school-based program, they can deliver presentations – financial education and gambling harm. Youth support workers available to work with young people	10.40-10.55am

experiencing challenges with gambling. Kewelike@bhn.org.au, Gamblers Help Community Engagement Officer, Gambler's Help Southern Bek W - Free 10-month financial wellbeing program. 2 components – encouraging them to save \$50/month for 10 months, if successful they can receive \$500 matched funds. Run info sessions online about fraud, scams, managing budgets, super, cost of living etc. Can access for free with healthcare card. Saver Plus Berry Street, rwarrener@berrystreet.org.au Indah Johannes – SECL - Hi everyone, I'm currently planning upcoming youth programs from SECL, but very soon I will be releasing a survey which will ask for local young people's thoughts on how we can improve our youth hub at Noble Park. I will also be looking at recruiting for our Youth Advisory Group. I will send these out to everyone once I have these things established. Thank you! Rebecca Roberts - Young Women's Program – St Kilda Gatehouse Work in Dandenong, not just St Kilda. Provide one-on-one support outreach to young women who are at risk of sexual exploitation. Referrals can be made to young women who may be experiencing or at risk; they can also provide secondary consultations. Next year will be looking for more schools to deliver 6 week school early intervention program. Delivered in a group by specialist facilitator with young women identified by the school as being potentially at risk. Arise – professional development program on how to work with young women at risk of sexual exploitation. Next cohort is coming up in September. supporting young people at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation. 1. one on one outreach. 2. professional development for practitioners 3. schools based group work program. Contact is Rebecca Roberts: rebecca@stkildagatehouse.org.au Shaylee - Women and Mentoring Early intervention program for young women in early contact with the justice system, or potentially at risk of this. Looking for more volunteer mentors who could support this program. Also open to further referrals within Casey and Dandenong. In November will be launching a panel to support secondary consultations – more information to come. Women and Mentoring or contact: shaylee.g@womenandmentoring.org.au Kirstie - Young mothers transition program. Coaching support for young mothers up to the age of 22 years old in the Casey, Cardinia and Greater Dandenong region to return to education or employment. Currently no wait list. Contact Jen on 0474 546 382 Greg Kavarnos – I am from the Shine program (early intervention program for children with mental health issues), our office is in Dandenong and we are no longer taking referrals through the intake email inbox. We now take referrals through our website address https://www.familylife.com.au/our-services/mental-health-and-counselling/shine/	
Evaluation Quick feedback on today's meeting Thank you to those who completed the evaluation form. The results were: • <i>I was satisfied with today's meeting: 9.1/10</i> • <i>I would attend another GDYN meeting in the future: 9.2/10</i> • <i>I would recommend the GDYN to other local professionals: 9.3/10</i> For those who attended but haven't yet completed the evaluation form, you are welcome to respond here.	10.55-11.00am
Meeting Formally Closes	11.00am
Zoom link stays open for time and space to network for those who can stay a little longer	11.00-11.30am
Next meeting Thursday 16 October 2025 Meeting Topic: Digital Safety Forum Meeting Format: Face to Face Time: 9:30am-12:00pm Location: Greater Dandenong City Council, Level 2 Meeting Rooms, 225 Lonsdale St, Dandenong VIC 3175	

For submissions to the GDYN eNewsletter, please provide a brief update to Jim.Moynihan@cgd.vic.gov.au
Deadline for September 2025: Monday 25 August.