

**GREATER DANDENONG YOUTH NETWORK 2026  
MINUTES**

**Meeting Theme:** AOD – Emerging Trends and Local Concerns

Tuesday 31 March, 9.30-11.00am  
Meeting Format: Online

<b>Acknowledgement of Country</b>	<b>9.30am</b>
<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>	9.35-9.40am
<p><b>Presentation 1 – Greater Dandenong Council – Community Safety</b> <i>Madalene Cursio, Community Safety Program Officer, Greater Dandenong Council</i></p> <p>Madalene Cursio from Council’s Community Safety team provided an overview of trends relating to alcohol and other drug use amongst young people in our local community, Council’s key areas of focus and initiatives being delivered to address some of the challenges.</p> <p><b>Questions:</b> <b>Safe needle exchange program:</b> Partnership with Monash Health. There was initially some unclear messaging circulating within the community, which led to misunderstandings about the purpose of the program. In response, efforts were made to provide clearer, more accurate information to ensure the community had a proper understanding of how the program operates and what it aims to achieve.</p> <p>Read more about Council’s work to reduce alcohol and other drug harm in the community: <a href="#">Reducing Harm from Alcohol and Drugs   Greater Dandenong Council</a></p>	9.40-10.00am
<p><b>Presentation 2 – Royal Children’s Hospital</b> <i>Emma Calley, Content Specialist – Kids Health Info, Health Literacy team, The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne</i></p> <p>Emma Calley from the Royal Children’s Hospital Health Literacy team presented on the team’s Youth Health Fact Sheets, as well as findings from the 40<sup>th</sup> Edition of the National Child Health Poll, which focused on nicotine use amongst Australian teens.</p> <p><b>Questions:</b> <b>New topics covered in fact sheets:</b> Post anaesthesia team, pre and post-surgery – what not to do pre and post-surgery with vaping, alcohol, Plans to go into specific drugs and health conditions <b>Do you have social media collateral/resources that we can share?</b> Only have fact sheets and social media. <b>Reports on clicks, fact sheets w the most views?</b> Top viewed topic from the last couple months is social media, but also lots of clicks on vaping fact sheet, usually second or third on the list.</p> <p>Read more about RCH’s Kids Health Info project, and access the fact sheets: <a href="#">Kids Health Info : About Kids Health Info</a></p> <p>Read the results of RCH’s National Child Health Poll: <a href="#">RCH National Child Health Poll</a></p>	10.00-10.20am
<p><b>Presentation 3 – Nitrous Oxide</b> <i>Julaine Allan, Deputy Director Rural Health Research Institute, Charles Sturt University Senior Visiting Fellow, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW</i></p> <p>Professor Julaine Allan spoke about her research into young people’s recreational use of Nitrous Oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) in Wollongong, and a co-designed harm minimisation campaign created by her team in partnership with students with lived experience of N<sub>2</sub>O use.</p>	10.20-10.40am

<p><b>Questions:</b>  <b>Did your research sample for interview include people of refugee backgrounds?</b>          Didn't ask a lot of details about people's demographics due to ethics.</p> <p><b>What government regulations are they planning to prevent the easy access to the nangs?</b>          Most regulations are around punishing people who use them rather than restricting the sale. Nothing specific planned to change. Knowledge is power in the situation for YP.</p> <p>Read more about Julaine's team's work: <a href="#">Co-creating harm reduction resources with young people who use nitrous oxide: What catches their attention?   Harm Reduction Journal   Springer Nature Link</a></p>	
<p><b>Network Information Sharing</b>          An opportunity for network members to introduce themselves and share a brief program / service update.</p> <p><b>St Kilda Gatehouse:</b> ARISE training, 10<sup>th</sup> &amp; 17<sup>th</sup> April- PD training for workers in regards to sexual exploitation</p> <p><b>Cire Community School</b> – Berwick – Independent trauma informed high school. Two new blocks of land have been purchased for new locations in Clyde North and Bangholme. Any other questions about our schools please reach out: <a href="mailto:irushton@cire.vic.edu.au">irushton@cire.vic.edu.au</a></p> <p><b>Extended Families Australia</b> – work with multicultural children who are disabled. HACCC program free in South East Melbourne, 4 or 5 events each quarter, for participants and their families, open to young people between 5 – 31 living in the South East. Free Events and Volunteer supports for disabled children youth and their families. <a href="https://extendedfamilies.org.au/">https://extendedfamilies.org.au/</a> or reach out <a href="mailto:samantha@extendedfamilies.org.au">samantha@extendedfamilies.org.au</a></p> <p><b>Saver Plus Program-</b> \$500 of matched funds for any eligible participants who are studying to assist with education costs. <a href="https://saverplus.org.au/">https://saverplus.org.au/</a> or contact <a href="mailto:rwarrener@berrystreet.org.au">rwarrener@berrystreet.org.au</a></p> <p><b>CGD Libraries</b> – Dandy Con 11 April – Anime, gaming. Gaming trucks, artists etc coming. Event is free, more info here: <a href="#">Dandy-Con   Library</a></p> <p><b>YSAS</b> – therapeutic dungeons and dragons starting term 3. <a href="mailto:abaldwin@ysas.org.au">abaldwin@ysas.org.au</a> for updates on the program</p> <p><b>Maree Radford-Key Assets – Foster Care Recruitment Update</b>          Key Assets is a not-for-profit organisation providing foster care and family support services across Victoria. We are currently seeking to recruit more foster carers to meet the growing demand for safe and supportive placements for children and young people in care. There is an ongoing need for carers from a range of backgrounds, including those who can offer short-term, long-term, respite, and emergency care.</p> <p>We are actively working to raise awareness in the community and would appreciate support in promoting foster care. This may include sharing information through newsletters, social media, workplace networks, or community events. We are also seeking permission to display a foster care recruitment banner on-site where appropriate to help increase visibility and community awareness. Key Assets is also available to attend community groups, services, and organisations to deliver presentations to those interested in learning more about foster care.</p> <p>Anyone interested in learning more about becoming a foster carer is encouraged to contact Key Assets on <b>(03) 9566 7800</b> for further information or to begin the enquiry process.</p>	10.40-10.55am
<p><b>Evaluation  </b> Feedback on today's meeting</p> <p>Attendees completed a short feedback survey. If you did not complete the survey on the day, please do so via <a href="https://www.menti.com/alq74u8rkg6n">https://www.menti.com/alq74u8rkg6n</a></p>	10.55-11.00am
<p><b>Next meeting   Thursday May 14 2026, 9.30am – 11am</b>          Meeting Format: In person at <b>Third Place Youth &amp; Community Hub, 26 McRae St, Dandenong</b>          Topic: Responsible AI use in the Youth Sector</p>	

For submissions to the GDYN eNewsletter, please provide a brief update to [matilda.houlihan@cgd.vic.gov.au](mailto:matilda.houlihan@cgd.vic.gov.au)  
 Deadline for May 2026: Friday 24 April