



GREATER DANDENONG YOUTH NETWORK – MEETING MINUTES

Meeting 1 | Alcohol and Other Drugs

Wednesday 22 February 2023

9:30am – 11:30 am

Greater Dandenong Council Civic Centre

225 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong

| ITEMS | MEETING NOTES |
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| <p>WELCOME</p> | <p>All attendees welcomed Traditional Owners acknowledged</p> |
| <p><u>PRESENTATION 1</u></p> <p>Guest Speaker Bridget Hanson Victoria Legal Aid</p> | <p>Drugs, Alcohol and the Law Bridget Hansen, Community Legal Education Coordinator from Victoria Legal Aid.</p> <p>Bridget delivers a range of early intervention and prevention programs that assist clients with their legal problems, support disengaged young people, and provide them with the options of where and how to get help. She facilitates workshops, legal education, and professional development sessions across a variety of topics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex, Young People and the Law • Group Offending • Police Powers • Family Violence • Family Law and Child Protection <p>Bridget’s presentation explored common criminal offences and legal issues experienced by young people relating to alcohol and other drugs (AOD). These ranged from substance use and possession, through to manufacture and distribution – coupled by an increased risk of committing other offences while under the influence of alcohol and other drugs. Bridget also provided information about the legal channels and support services available to young offenders.</p> <p><u>Please see accompanying links for access to Bridget’s presentation slides.</u></p> <p>Key discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people in the justice system are 30 times as likely to receive AOD services • Decriminalisation of public intoxication will take effect from November this year • The age of criminality is 10 years. Offenders may be granted a “diversion” where they receive a formal court warning, without a criminal record, focusing on the young person’s pathway to rehabilitation |


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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Referral and Independent Person Program (YRIPP) provide advocates who can attend police interviews with a young person, when a parent or guardian is not available • Being substance affected is not a legal defence (does not diminish responsibility) but may lead to more therapeutic sentencing |
| <p><u>PRESENTATION 2</u></p> <p>Guest Speakers Sarah Dobbie & Jonte Duffy TaskForce Community Agency</p> | <p>Youth Substance Use and AOD Support</p> <p>Taskforce Community Agency is a not-for-profit organisation that provides counselling, information, education, and support for individuals and families directly and indirectly affected by alcohol and substance use. They provide wraparound supports for community members of all ages and backgrounds – anyone can make a referral.</p> <p>Sarah Dobbie is the Manager of the Youth Services team, and Jonte is a Youth Outreach Worker.</p> <p>Sarah and Jonte’s presentation explored emerging trends that they have observed since COVID-19. They discussed harm minimisation strategies to reduce risk from substance use and identified a range of programs and support services available. Presenters shared the Nuggets Video to demonstrate the process of substance addiction.</p> <p>Key discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in clients using alcohol and other drugs alone, rather than socially – exacerbated by COVID lockdown • Increase in risk associated with substance use due to isolation (e.g. mental health and crisis management) • Prevalent substances include cannabis, GHB and chroming (inhalants such as spray paint and deodorant) • There is a small research body which suggests that chroming is associated with sexual assault history. It is most common amongst young people Under 16 • Harm minimisation strategies for chroming include using “nangs” (nitrous oxide) as a safer alternative, and using a thicker cloth to inhale less harmful chemicals • GHB carries a high risk of overdose. Harm minimisation strategies include purchasing a “plunger” from the chemist to accurately measure dosage <p>There is currently a 6-week wait for youth support services. Please contact youthreferrals@taskforce.org.au For further information, please contact Sarah Dobbie by email sarahd@Taskforce.org.au</p> |
| <p><u>PRESENTATION 3</u></p> <p>Guest Speakers Venushi Dewundege</p> | <p>AOD Awareness Project</p> <p>Youth and Family Services piloted a youth-led program in November 2022, to prevent harm from alcohol and other drugs. Program facilitator, Venushi Dewundege, presented alongside program participants Duc-Tri Bui and Thuy Nguyen.</p> |

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| <p>City of Greater Dandenong</p> | <p>The AOD Awareness Project aimed to reduce harm from alcohol and other drugs, by empowering young people to develop a communications campaign that challenged common misconceptions and reinforced protective factors amongst their peers. The project comprises of three main parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity building: participants completed three interactive workshops to build their understanding of alcohol, illicit drugs, smoking/vaping, and harm minimisation strategies. 2. Campaign development: participants unpacked key issues and motivators for youth substance use, then brainstormed strategies to help mitigate risk factors. Young people distilled their learnings into key messages and were supported to transform these into a digital campaign - designing social media content using the Canva graphic design app. 3. Campaign dissemination: participants developed a total of 20 social media posts, which are being shared weekly on Youth and Family Services' Facebook and Instagram pages. The campaign focuses on four priority areas – alcohol, vaping, resistance skills, and the law. <p>Network members are encouraged to share the campaign on their organisations' platforms. You can access posts via Youth Services social media pages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook: facebook.com/cgdyouthservices • Instagram: @greaterdandenongyouthservices |
| <p>Greater Dandenong Youth Network Priorities for 2023</p> | <p>GDYN Meeting Topics for 2023</p> <p>Network members brainstormed emerging trends in their work with young people and identified key priority topics to focus on through the GDYN this year. Findings will be shared at the next meeting.</p> <p>For those who missed it, you can still provide feedback via our online survey.</p> |
| <p>INFORMATION SHARING</p> <p>The following attendees shared a program/service update</p> | <p>Siobhan Paxton Chisholm Foundation College</p> <p>Work Education Programs - Dandenong & Frankston</p> <p>Supporting students with special learning needs that would like to improve their life and living skills and become work ready. Students attend practical work placement and a variety of vocational taster classes</p> <p>Action: Siobhan is seeking volunteer opportunities for students to attend. Please contact siobhan.paxton@chisholm.edu.au if your organisation is interested in providing hands-on learning experiences for students.</p> |

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| | <p>General Education – Frankston, Dandenong & Berwick</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caters to school students who are not coping/thriving with their schooling in a traditional setting. We offer Certificates I, II & III in literacy and numeracy including Foundation VCAL for early school leavers (16 years onwards) and adults. • These courses are self-paced, individualised certificate learning programs that range from an alternative to Year 9 through to preparation for Year 11 and 12. Classes are flexible, casual, and supportive with teachers giving individualised support to students. <p>Ongoing enrolments throughout the year – individual learning plans – one to one teaching in classroom, personal pathways and wellbeing support. Spaces available. For enquiries and/or enrolments please contact – janis.mitchell@chisholm.edu.au or siobhan.paxton@chisholm.edu.au or call Christel Felix on 9238 8577.</p> |
| | <p>Amy Bruce Cire Community School</p> <p>Cire Community School is a co-educational independent secondary school that offers flexible learning opportunities that are an alternative to mainstream schooling. Education and personal development opportunities are hands-on, project-based and relevant in order to engage our students in their secondary education and life beyond school. Operating at four campus locations: Berwick (years 7 to 12), Lilydale (years 7 to 12), Mt Evelyn (years 7 to 12) and Yarra Junction (years 5 to 12). There is currently a waiting list, however students can register their interest online: www.cire.org.au/community-school</p> <p>For more information please contact abruce@cire.vic.edu.au</p> |
| | <p>Mayom Athiv Jesuit Social Services</p> <p>Youth Justice Community Support provides intensive and integrated support for young people aged 10-21 involved with the youth criminal justice system. It aims to support young people to reduce re-offending, make an effective transition into adulthood, and build their capacity to participate fully in society. Referrals to the program must be made by youth justice worker at the Department of Justice and Community Safety.</p> <p>Community Connections Mentoring connects young people who are living in or have lived in out-of-home care with a volunteer mentor from the community. Through lasting, positive and encouraging relationships with community mentors, young people are supported through their transition to independence. To be eligible, participants must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged between 15 years and 9 months and 20 years of age, and • Currently or previously on a Family Reunification Order, Care by Secretary Order, or a Long-term Care Order. |

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| | <p>Support After Suicide provides free support to improve the lives of children, young people and adults bereaved by suicide. The program offers counselling, support groups and online resources to support those who have lost a loved one. Jesuit also deliver training to health, welfare and education professionals. To access support or speak about our program, please contact aftersuicide@jss.org.au or call 1800 943 415.</p> <p>Ready Set Work Barista is a practical course (non-accredited) designed to prepare people for work in the vibrant café scene or further training. For more information please contact mayom.athiv@jss.org.au</p> |
| | <p>Jenny McDougal WISE Employment</p> <p>WISE Women provides targeted support for females facing barriers to employment. Participants are partnered with a dedicated, female Case Manager, who provides ongoing wraparound employment support – pre and post job placement. For more information please contact Jennifer.mcdougal@wiseemployment.com.au</p> |
| | <p>Tarryn Heeger Casey Aboriginal Gathering Place</p> <p>Action: Tarryn is seeking a venue for their women’s network. Please contact Tarryn if you have a room to hire by phone 0423 893 589 or email theeger@casey.vic.gov.au</p> |
| | <p>Reath Tot Centre for Multicultural Youth Community Support Group (CSG)</p> <p>CSG offer a variety of programs and supports for South Sudanese young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brothers for Brothers Program – Engage young people through sport, running drop-in basketball sessions on Wednesdays at St Johns Regional College • My Sisters Keeper – A mentoring program for young women in youth justice. • Also offer a parenting program, crisis support, and some material aid services (e.g. school resources) <p>For more information please contact rtot@cmy.net.au</p> |
| | <p>Ceilidh Eadie Mental Health Coordinator Department of Education</p> <p>The Mental Health Practitioners initiative provides funding to government school campuses with secondary enrolments to employ a mental health practitioner (mental health nurse, occupational therapist, psychologist or social worker) for between one and five days a week.</p> |

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| | <p>The Mental Health in Primary Schools Program provides funding to employ a mental health and wellbeing leader in every government and low-fee non-government primary school in Victoria. The Program will be implemented across Victoria over a staged rollout between 2023 to 2026.</p> <p>For more information please contact Ceilidh, Mental Health Coordinator for the Southern Melbourne Area - South Eastern Victoria Region by phone 0448 366 381 or email Ceilidh.Eadie@education.vic.gov.au</p> |
| | <p>Tasmin Lewis Living Free Project TaskForce Community Agency</p> <p>The Living Free Project is a place-based program for girls at risk of, and women in contact with the justice system. The project provides advocacy for these women to improve their justice outcomes whilst simultaneously working to reduce the likelihood of further contact with the justice system. For more information please contact tasminl@taskforce.org.au</p> |
| | <p>Greg Kavarnos Shine Family Life</p> <p>Shine is an early intervention program offering whole-of-family assistance and support to young people and families, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual child and adolescent support • Parenting assistance • Advocacy and assistance for families <p>Who is eligible – Children and young people between the ages of 0 -18 years, with at least one adult willing to work with the child or young person. For more information please contact gkavarnos@familylife.com.au or email shinecdintake@familylife.com.au to make a referral.</p> |
| | <p>Chelsea Davies White Lion Youth</p> <p>Above Barriers Project supports employment pathways for young women (aged 16-24) who have been impacted by the justice system or are at-risk of offending. Aims to increase the capacity of participants entering into employment or vocational training, using a trauma-informed lens. For more information please contact Chelsea by phone 0417 462 173 or email Chelsea.davies@whitelion.asn.au</p> <p>Housing Independence Project (HIP) provides housing information sessions for young people aged 16-25 – equipping young people with tools to live independently and navigate housing options. Available to present at your organisation within Casey, Dandenong, Frankston and Mornington Peninsula. To enquire or make a referral for a group session please contact Steve Turner by phone 0431 022 451 or email frankston.outreach@whitelion.asn.au</p> |

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| | <p>Southern Homeless Youth Assistance Program supports young people aged 12-25 who are at risk or experiencing homelessness. Provide case management, housing placements, and connect young people with housing options and support services. For information and referrals, please contact frankston.outreach@whitelion.asn.au</p> |
| <p>FEB MEETING EVALUATION POLL</p> | <p>Each meeting we take a poll to ask members to rate their satisfaction with the meeting, including the guest speaker. Findings from this meeting show that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% agreed that the presentations by Taskforce and Victoria Legal Aid were informative and relevant • 83% agreed that the AOD Awareness Project case study was informative and relevant • 100% agreed they learned new ideas and information • 92% increased knowledge of services and supports |
| <p>YOUTH POSITIVE PATHWAYS</p>  <p>Youth Positive PATHWAYS GREATER DANDENONG • CASEY • CARDINIA</p> | <p>Greater Dandenong–Casey–Cardinia Online Youth Services Directory</p> <p>There are many services for young people and families within the City of Greater Dandenong, the City of Casey, and Cardinia Shire. This directory brings local service information together in the one place. It aims to assist young people, families, schools, and agencies by improving awareness of and accessibility to services available to young people and their families across the City of Greater Dandenong, the City of Casey, and Cardinia Shire.</p> <p>Please routinely check your service and program information on the website to maintain its accuracy and currency. Also, if your service is not yet listed, please visit the website, and log your service information. www.youthpositivepathways.com.au/about</p> |
| <p>GDYN E-NEWS</p> | <p>Reminder to network members to promote programs/service updates in the monthly GDYN eNewsletter.</p> <p>April edition: submissions due Monday 27 March COB. Please send a blurb to Catherine.Maine@cgd.vic.gov.au</p> |
| <p>NEXT MEETING</p> | <p>Thursday 27 April Topic TBC Online via Zoom. Link distributed closer to the meeting via calendar appt. Time: 9.30am – 11.00am</p> <p>For further information, please contact Catherine Maine, Acting Team Leader Youth and Community Development by phone 9793 2155 or email Catherine.Maine@cgd.vic.gov.au</p> |