



GREATER DANDENONG YOUTH NETWORK MEETING MINUTES
Meeting 2 | Student Engagement and School Refusal

Thursday 27 April 2023
 Online via Zoom

ITEMS	MEETING NOTES
WELCOME	All attendees welcomed Traditional Owners acknowledged
PRESENTATION 1 Guest Speaker Ceilidh Eadie, Department of Education	<p>Ceilidh Eadie, Mental Health Coordinator Department of Education Ceilidh is the Mental Health Coordinator for the Southern Melbourne Area and South Eastern Victoria Region. Ceilidh discussed what the Department of Education is implementing to support student engagement and wellbeing in secondary schools following the mental health reforms.</p> <p><i>Mental Health Fund and Menu</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Menu provides schools with opportunities to purchase evidence-based programs and initiatives across three tiers of intervention. • This includes initiatives that promote student mental health and wellbeing, enable schools to intervene early to support students and provide targeted and more individualised support for students who need it. • Menu items have been externally assessed for how well they support student mental health and wellbeing, ensuring schools have access to a range of evidence-based supports to meet their needs. • The Menu will be updated in 2024 - there will be an opportunity for services to tender for this. • Mental Health Menu funding is ongoing - schools can see their funding for up to 2 years. <p><i>Mental Health Practitioners in Secondary and Specialist Schools</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every Victorian school now has a Mental Health Practitioner (MHP) or is actively recruiting one. MHPs include fully registered and accredited psychologists, social workers, mental health nurses or occupational therapists. • MHPs support schools to address student mental health and identify issues. Emphasis is on Tier 1 and 2 interventions, with a smaller focus on counselling (Tier 3) • Amount of EFT is dependent on enrolment numbers in school. <p><i>Mental Health in Primary Schools</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mental Health in Primary Schools model was piloted from 2020 and is being expanded to every government and low-fee non-government primary school in Victoria by 2026.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The model involves having a trained teacher (Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader) who builds staff capacity to the meet social and emotional needs of students in classroom, to connect with external agencies, and to activate referral pathways. • Primary schools will only have Tier 1 and Tier 2 support. • There will be a focus on the transition between primary and secondary school, and looking at how can the Mental Health reforms help this transition. <p>Disability inclusion model will be rolled out in schools from 2024 – Tier 1 and 2 only.</p> <p><u>Please see accompanying links for access to Ceilidh’s presentation slides.</u></p>
<p>PRESENTATION 2</p> <p>Guest Speaker Dr Tom Brunzell (MST, EdM, PhD)</p>	<p>Dr Tom Brunzell, Director of Education Berry Street <i>What’s next for Trauma-Informed Education? Strategies for student engagement and learning</i></p> <p>Dr Tom Brunzell has experience as a teacher, school leader, researcher, and education advisor. Tom presents internationally on topics of transforming school culture, student engagement, trauma-informed practice, wellbeing, and positive psychology. His research at the University of Melbourne investigates trauma-informed strengths-based classroom strategies; and he authored the book: <i>Creating Trauma-informed Strengths Based Classrooms</i>.</p> <p>During the presentation, Dr Brunzell discussed how supporting young people’s engagement in learning requires a shift in mindset to focus on proactive, consistent structures which bolster the systems surrounding students, and build on students’ capacities and strengths. Dr Brunzell debunked three myths about young people who have experience trauma:</p> <p><i>Myth #1 – Young people need to make better choices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We must assume young people are making the best choices they can in that moment. • Trauma is an overwhelming experience that can undermine the individual’s belief that the world is good and safe. • Some young people feel that they are in permanent survival mode, which can begin from in-utero, and may have maladapted strategies to make themselves feel safe. • Unpredictability equals risk. Workers can build a new predictability through regularity and consistency. • Behaviour is just one part of the picture. There are many needs which need to be met including physical, emotional, cognitive, energetic, and spiritual needs. Teachers to create the environment where students can have their needs met. • Instead of asking yourself “What’s wrong with this student?” - consider what unmet needs does this student have? Stay strengths based. Look at what about what they are doing well and build on their capacities. <p><i>Myth #2 - We need to manage the big things, not the small</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at the Berry Street Cycle of Adverse Behaviour, the best time to intervene is in the micro-moments before the “thinking brain” cuts off.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During a crisis or an incident, the young person is not able to regulate their behaviour. Workers need to focus on building safety until the incident has passed. • To effectively manage adverse behaviour, 90% of our focus should be proactive, rather than responding <i>after</i> the incident. • This requires universal strategies to support healing, connection, safety, belonging and success. <p><i>Myth #3 – I’m just going to have to figure this young person’s behaviour on my own</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with young people who have experienced trauma needs a systems approach. The individual student is located within a system of family, peers, education system, social and cultural values. • Trauma informed teaching requires understanding adverse behaviour within this system as a whole. <p>Tom shared a new free tool: The Eucalypt Way - Trauma-informed education for Australia The Eucalypt Way provides educators with a pathway to understanding the impacts of trauma on the learning and engagement of children and young people, and provides practical steps to support healing and growth.</p>
<p>PRESENTATION 3</p> <p>Guest Speaker Andrew Simmons South East Local Learning and Employment Network</p>	<p>Andrew Simmons, Chief Executive Officer South East Local Learning and Employment Network</p> <p>The South East Local Learning and Employment Network (SELLEN) is a community managed regional network made up of local organisations in Melbourne’s South East, who are working to give young people (aged 10 to 19) a better go at successfully moving through the education system to employment. Andrew shared a range of resources available to support young people’s engagement in education and training.</p> <p><i>Navigator Education Re-engagement Program</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between 12 and 17 years of age ○ Attendance less than 30%, for a period of 10 weeks or more ○ Have a connection to SMA (live, work, school, play) • Family and agencies can refer, with follow up from schools. • Case management model – identify barriers to engagement at school and assist with removing barriers. • Consortium group consists of 5 organisations – SELLEN (as lead agent), Taskforce, South East Community Links (SECL), Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) and the Department of Education. • Waitlist is usually 5-10, referrals take a day to commence after school provides information. <p><i>SELLEN observations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistency across schools about how they manage young people and school disengagement. • Complexity of cases has increased overtime – especially after covid. • Reasons for disengagement usually fall into three main areas - mental health, family, and school. • Financial stress and access to resources for learning is a huge contributor to non-attendance. <i>This is IT project</i> has a supply repurposed laptops for Secondary Schools. Over 1000 laptops have been given to schools directly.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with SELLEN, Department of Justice and Jesuit Community College - Women on Community Service Orders created 30 attendance posters available for free download - sellen.org.au/school-attendance <p><u>Please see accompanying links for access to Andrew's presentation slides.</u></p>
<p>PRESENTATION 4</p> <p>Guest Speaker Jennifer Orlandi & Kirstie Leach Young Mothers Transition Program</p>	<p>Jennifer Orlandi and Kirstie Leach Young Mothers Transition Program Jen and Kirstie are Wellbeing and Transitions Coaches, working to re-engage young mothers into education or employment. The Young Mothers Transitions Program (YMTP) provides support via coaching and case management – working with clients to develop and implement an individualised Education to Employment Plan.</p> <p>Key discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free service for mothers aged up to 22 years (mothers do not have to have care of their children) 50 young mothers have registered since the program began in 2022. Time is taken with young person to meet them where they are, there is no pressure to start education. <p><u>Please see accompanying links for access to Jennifer and Kirstie Leach's presentation slides.</u></p>
<p>INFORMATION SHARING</p> <p>The following attendees shared a program/service update</p>	<p>Siobhan Paxton, Pathways and Wellbeing Advisor Chisholm Foundation College Certificates in General Education for Adults – Frankston, Dandenong and Berwick.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caters to students who, for one reason or another, are not coping/thriving with their schooling in a traditional setting. We offer Certificates I, II & III in General Education for Adults (literacy and numeracy) for early school leavers (16 years onwards) and adults re-engaging in education. The courses are self-paced, individualised certificate learning programs that range from an alternative to Year 10 through to preparation for Year 11 and 12. Classes are flexible and supportive with teachers giving individualised assistance to students. Students can then pathway from completing certificates to apprenticeships, further certificates or employment options. In Dandenong and Frankston we are also supporting students with special learning needs that would like to become work ready through our Work Education programs. Contact siobhan.paxton@chisholm.edu.au for further information. <p>Yanni WAYSS Dandenong Youth Development Team Our Youth Case management team works with young people aged between 16-24 years experiencing housing instability or at risk of homelessness in the Casey, Dandenong and Cardinia areas. Case management team support young people to work towards their identified housing goals and link them to broader housing options as well as exploring and supporting them with their broader goals and linking to relevant services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> REFERRAL PROCESS - Case management Referral/ THM Application Ready Form to be completed and sent through to servicesforyoungpeople@wayss.org.au

- Case management team meet weekly to discuss referrals received - support services will be informed of outcome of their referral following week. Ready FORMS submitted proceed to 3 x THM assessments by case workers. Outcome will be discussed with referrer after the third assessment.

Totti | CMY Community Support Group

CSG are offering presentations for South Sudanese clients to promote available services and supports. Please email rtot@cmynet.au or phone 0422 094 225.

Keziah Everett | South East Community Links

[The Noble Park Students Connect program](#) offers free tutoring and study support for young people aged 12-25 years. Running on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the school term, from 3.30pm – 6pm. Young people can access support in-person or online via Zoom.

SECL are also seeking Volunteer Tutors and Homework Helpers. Volunteers will assist culturally diverse youth with homework, assignments, and other learning tasks. To find out more and get involved, please contact Keziah Everett by phone 0466 338 182 or email keverett@secl.org.au

Anwar Afzali | Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre

SMRC offer a range of free programs and supports for recently arrived young people:

- [STAR Homework Club](#) on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, from 3.30pm – 5.45pm during the school term.
- Youth Career Support Program – individual employment support, including resume and cover letter writing, job searching skills, and assistance writing university and scholarship applications.
- Eligibility: for young people aged 14-25, who have been living in Australia for less than five years.
- Contact Anwara@smrc.org.au for further information.

Brendan Titford, Reconnect Program | Chisholm TAFE

Reconnect provides individual support for persons experiencing barriers to accessing education/training. For further enquiries please call 0448 082 765 or email brendan.titford@chisholm.edu.au

Kei Murakami | Alfred Health Carer Services

Alfred Health Carer Services provides Carer Gateway services in Melbourne's Southern Metro region. We support unpaid carers, including Young Carers (aged 5-25) e.g. those who care for a parent with mental ill-health or a sibling with a disability.

Supports provided include:

- Short-term funded support e.g. school-related expenses (determined following assessment of the Young Carer's goals)
- Individual counselling and coaching
- Events and support groups (e.g. Rainbow Young Carers – a peer support group for LGBTQI+ Young Carers)
- Please contact k.murakami@alfred.org.au for further information.

Alfred Health Carer Services - www.alfredhealthcarers.org.au
Carer Gateway - www.carergateway.gov.au

Nick Schmull | Melbourne City Football Club

City in the Community will be running weekly drop-in sessions at Pop Up Park (Dandenong) on Friday afternoons as part of their Healthy Spaces football program. Please contact nick.schmull@melbournecityfc.com.au for further information.

Emilie, Team Leader Child, Youth & Family | Foundation House

Foundation House support refugees and people seeking asylum that have had pre-arrival torture and/or trauma experience. Our supports are often delivered in school settings, including counselling and advocacy, predominantly in the Dandenong, Casey, Cardinia region. The referral form is on the website: foundationhouse.org.au/for-clients/make-a-referral
Please contact Emilie on 0400 332 491 or dacree@foundationhouse.org.au

Ilka Sievers | CMY Employment Empowers

The Employment Empowers program provides one-on-one mentoring for newly arrived young people looking to gain job seeking and employment skills or pathway support. To be eligible, the young person should:

- Be 18 - 25 years old
- Have been in Australia from 6 months to 5 years
- Be from a refugee or humanitarian background
- Meet their mentor once or twice a month for up to 1 year

If you have anyone in mind you can find the referral form on our website: www.cmy.net.au/young-people-community/employment/employment-empowers or contact isievers@cmy.net.au


Anh Tran | Greater Dandenong Libraries

Greater Dandenong Libraries has books available to donate to community services. If you would like to request donations, please contact Anh by email anh.tran@cgd.vic.gov.au

Paora Te Paki | CMY Le Mana

New Zealand citizens who have been living in Australia for four years or more will be eligible to apply directly for Australian citizenship. They will no longer need to first apply for and be granted a permanent visa. These changes apply to New Zealand citizens holding a Special Category (subclass 444) visa (SCV) who arrived in Australia after 26 February 2001. Protected SCV holders will continue to be eligible to apply directly for Australian citizenship. With effect from 1 July 2023:

- All New Zealand citizens holding an SCV will be considered permanent residents for citizenship purposes.
- New Zealand citizens granted an SCV before 1 July 2022 will have their period of permanent residence for citizenship purposes backdated to 1 July 2022.
- New Zealand citizens granted an SCV for the first time on or after 1 July 2022 will be considered a permanent resident for citizenship purposes from the date of their SCV grant.

<p>APRIL 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"> • 95% agreed that the presentation by the Department of Education was informative and relevant • 98% agreed that the presentations by Dr Tom Brunzell, Andrew Simmons and the Young Mothers Transitions Program were informative and relevant • 98% agreed they learned new ideas and information • 98% 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>June edition: submissions due Monday 29 May COB. Please send a blurb to Catherine.Maine@cgd.vic.gov.au</p>
<p>NEXT MEETING</p>	<p>Wednesday 28 June Topic TBC In person Greater Dandenong Council Civic Centre 25 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong Time: 9.30am – 11.30am</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>
<p>FURTHER RESOURCES</p> <p>Ceilidh Eadie, Department of Education</p>	<p>Please refer to the links below for school refusal/attendance and engagement articles, services and supports.</p> <p>CatholicCare - Service - School Refusal Support</p> <p>Bayside School Refusal Clinic</p>

[Questionnaires for parents and young people](#) - International Network for School Attendance (NSA)

[Toolkits – Attendance Works](#)

[Industry Report - Those Who Disappear – Prof. Jim Watterston](#)

[School Can't / School Phobia / School Refusal Australia](#) - Facebook group, support for parents

[Attendance and missing school | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](#)

[Understanding school refusal | headspace](#)

[How to deal with school refusal - ReachOut Parents](#)

[School refusal: children & teenagers | Raising Children Network](#)

[Dr Jodi Richardson on LinkedIn](#)

[International Network for School Attendance \(INSA\)](#)

[School Attendance Problems: A Research Update and Where to Go](#) - book by INSA

[School Refusal paper](#) by Jill Sewell Deputy Director Centre for Community Child Health – Royal Children’s hospital Melbourne.

[The national trend of school refusal and related matters – Parliament of Australia](#)