Murray Bridge Safe Youth Ambassador Program

Promoting social, emotional and mental wellbeing in young people
Murray Bridge Safe Youth Ambassador Program

Our Partners

Rural City of Murray Bridge, Murray Mallee GP Network, Moorundi Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service, Murray Bridge High School, headspace Murray Bridge, Rotary Murray Bridge (financial contributor)
Local challenge

The Murray Bridge Council region and surrounding area

- High prevalence of socio-economic issues
- More disadvantaged in terms of level of income, educational attainment and unemployment compared with the state average
- Higher than state average concentration of young people aged 0 – 14 years
- Region has higher level of mental health disorders than both country SA and Australia
Local Challenge

- Incidence of mental health disorders the highest in 18 – 24 year age group
- A significant indigenous population (4.2% in MB, 3.3% in region, 1.6% state average in SA)
- A rapidly expanding refugee population (400 between 2006/10; 300 settled in MB; Afghan, Uzbek, Bhutanese and Sudanese)
- Considerable housing trust population and private housing needs (39% of rental accommodation is provided through Housing SA)
Solution

• The Murray Bridge Safe Taskforce – Reducing Community Harm
• Community Consultation via forums, workshops and surveys
• Engage with local Young People and Community, Schools, local Council, Sporting Clubs, Aboriginal Health Service
• Outcomes from 500 ‘Have Your Say’ surveys
• What influences young people to use alcohol and other drugs - peer pressure, family context and wellbeing issues
• Develop and implement a peer support & leadership program to promote social, emotional and mental wellbeing in young people
MURRAY BRIDGE SAFE PRESENTS

WED 13 JUNE, 6.30PM

BOUNCING BACK FROM ROCK BOTTOM

WITH HEATH BLACK
‘HOW TO DEVELOP HIGH PERFORMANCE MOTIVATION AND RESILIENCE’

AT THE IMPERIAL FOOTBALL CLUB,
ADELAIDE RD, MURRAY BRIDGE

FOLLOWED BY A COMMUNITY FORUM

Please RSVP to:
Marc from STARClub on 0438 973 511 or
Frauke from headspace Murray Bridge on 8531 2122

FREE COMMUNITY EVENT
Implementation steps and time frames

• Youth Ambassador program design; July – August 2018
• Establish Youth Ambassador Coordinator position; July 19 – Aug 2019
• Recruit, screen and train Youth Ambassadors; Sep 2018 – July 2019
• Engage up to 4 schools, 2 sporting clubs and 2 community venues to deliver peer led group programs; Oct 2018 – July 2019
• Provide ongoing supervision, mentoring and upskilling of Youth Ambassadors, monthly booster sessions; Sep 2018 – July 2019
• Target audience 12 – 30 years old, ATSI, LGBTIQ+
Impact

• 12 Youth Ambassadors joined the project, received training in presentation and peer leadership skills, as well as in Youth Mental Health First Aid

• Youth Ambassadors have developed personal and social skills, gained confidence, are feeling less anxious, and are less self-conscious

• A lot of young people in the target audiences struggle with stress, anxiety, low moods, peer pressure and body image issues

• Impact of raising young people’s awareness of social, emotional and mental wellbeing is being achieved/continues to be evaluated

• Use of an audience response system to interact with the audience, gain instant feedback and measure impact of Youth Ambassador presentations
Next steps ...

• Practice public speaking of Youth Ambassadors in separate meetings and at Family & Friends Information nights
• Extend to other sporting communities in the local area, such as netball, basketball, soccer
• Fine tune and develop the Pop Up Hang Out delivery mode
• Recruit, foster and utilize high impact peer leaders, eg local high level playing footballers, young people representing marginalized groups, including ATSI and LGBTIQ+
• Increase the number of Youth Ambassadors to spread work load
• Develop peer mentor skills in the Youth Ambassadors
• Gain SACE accreditation for training and presenting of Youth Ambassadors
Experiences, challenges, learnings

- Recruiting, upskilling and participation of Youth Ambassadors
- Achieving active partner input via LDAT governance group
- Managing funding limits in relation to resource needs of the project
- Speak with schools and sporting clubs early in the year – plan for plenty of lead-up time and follow-up
- Young people prefer an interactive and informal approach, such as the Pop Up Hang Out
- Caution is needed when presenting about alcohol and other drug issues to young people
- Have whole of community embrace the project
Top tips

• Achieve as much community buy-in as you possibly can to achieve pro-active broad LDAT membership, participation and ownership of the project (CAP)

• It takes time to establish, run, manage and achieve tangible outcomes in your project, likely more than one year of LDAT funding

• Look at the bigger picture of alcohol and other substance use, including broader causes and patterns of addictions in your community and beyond

• Keep your view beyond the LDAT funding opportunity and cycle; look at other funding sources/partners and sustainability of the CAP
For more information . . .

Contact  Frauke Hobbs and Emma Rance
T 8531 2122
E fraukeh@mmgpn.org.au
E connections@mmgpn.org.au
A 3-5 Railway Tce Murray Bridge SA 5253
M PO Box 558
W headspace.org.au/murraybridge
F facebook.com/headspacemurraylands
The Cook, the Chef and Us

Hepburn LDAT
Hepburn LDAT: The Cook, the Chef and Us

Hepburn Health Service
Daylesford College
Hepburn Shire Council
Victoria Police
Neighbourhood Houses
Local community members

Hepburn Shire, Central Highlands Victoria
Population: 15,330
Local challenge

Reported increase in poor youth mental health
  • Increased use of alcohol and other drugs
  • School disengagement and or/study problems
  • Lack of job readiness  (Mission Australia, 2014)

Hepburn Shire strengths and challenges
  • One Secondary College
  • Thriving hospitality industry
  • Connected community
  • Strong volunteerism
  • Diverse and inclusive
  • Low socio-economic families
  • Lack of transport
  • Rural isolation
  • Cold climate
Relevant Local Data

• Early school leavers (21.1%) vs VIC average (10.3%) (2016 Census data)
• Higher average rates of psychological distress, mental health issues
• Higher average rates of low income families (DHHS, 2014; CHPCP, 2016)

Program Target Audience

• Young People

Priority group

• Yr. 9-10 Daylesford College students at risk of disengagement from learning
Solution – The Cook, The Chef & Us

Youth mental wellbeing program
• Re-engage young people at risk of school non-completion
• Utilise hospitality as learning vehicle

Partners engaged
• Andrew Dennis (Independent chef)
• Range of weekly program hosts
• School Focus Youth Service (Ballarat Community Health)
• Highlands Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN)

Community engaged
• School- teachers, students, parents & guardians
• Hospitality sector- local businesses & chefs
Protective factors we are addressing

• Education and skills development
• Peers and mentorship
• Achievement & self esteem
• Resilience & developing aspiration

Methods – steps

• Develop program plan
• Interview and select students
• Link students with mentors
• Visit range of food & hospitality settings
• Graduation
Implementation

Timing
• 2017, 2018 & 2019
• Weekly during terms 2 & 3
• Immersive industry based education experience
• Learn life long skills through hospitality lens

Experience with partners
• Intersectoral collaboration
• Sense of pride amongst partners
• Strong support and advocacy from external organisations
• Planning, operational and emotional support
• Hepburn Youth Strategic Partnership team
Experience with target audience

- Cooking and catering skills
- Self-development skills
- Leadership skills

- Responsible Service of Alcohol certification
- Safe Food Handling certification
- Barista training
- Nutritional education
- Job interview techniques & resume writing
- Menu preparation and event planning
- Community engagement & employment opportunities
Impact

Participation
• 30 students graduated in 2017/18

Feedback
• 100% identified feeling a sense of achievement during the program
• 93% discussed increases in self-confidence and assurance for a more positive future
• 80% increased social connections

Impact
• increased student engagement in learning
• enhanced employment pathways and opportunities
• reduction of risk factors that increase alcohol and other drug use
Key Learning

• Student contribution to program development

Currently measuring

• Attendance & employment
• Professional skills and competencies
• Personal skills development
• Anecdotal feedback

Next steps…

• Future sustainability of program
Top tips

1. Identify local people/organisations/businesses with a shared interest in your project goal
2. Include target groups in project development
3. Highlight project outcomes/results
4. Explore ways to continue to improve project
5. Build community capacity to ensure sustainability of program
The Cook, The Chef and Us
For more information . . .

Belinda Buck
Coordinator - Population Health
Hepburn Health Service

belindab@hhs.vic.gov.au

t: 03 5345 9162
m: 0413 291 066

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