

Mountains Youth Peer Support Project

Prevention in
Practice Conference.

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Foundation

24–25 June. Melbourne

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Lead: Blue Mountains City Council

- Mountains Youth Services Team
- Platform Youth Services

- Located in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney

Local challenge



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Local Data

- Drugs young people most likely to abuse (alcohol, cannabis, “ice”, prescription drugs)
- Young people exposed to drug use at home and/or permissive attitudes to drug use
- Social isolation due to large numbers of home schooled/distance education students (anxiety)
- Young people with trauma history (eg bushfires)
- Survey n2000 found low levels of wellbeing and resilience; Harwood results
- The importance of peer-to-peer education and support

Solution

Good networks and history of collaboration:

- YMISA/CDAT/LDAT: Partners are MYST and Platform
- Members include neighbourhood centres, DE, Health, Police, PHN, headspace, disability services



LDAT Conference 2018

- Over 30 organisations attended the LDAT conference
- Agreed on a primary prevention strategy in the Blue Mountains
- Chose to focus on young people by putting in place measures to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors



Implementation: Peer Support Project 2019

In 2018 Blue Mountains LDAT was funded by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation to:

- Train 12 young people from three high schools to become peer educators (completed)
- Co-design peer support projects and resources that utilise messaging that is appealing to young people (in progress)



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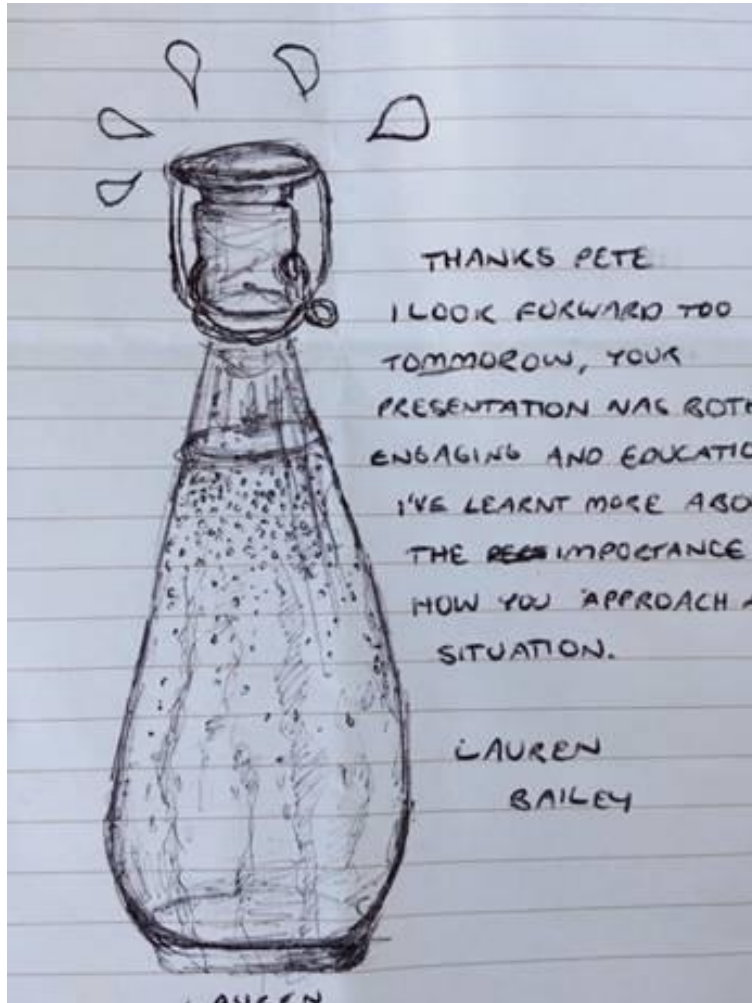
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Implementation

- After a rough start, recruitment by far exceeded expectations
- Training was over two days with renowned youth expert, Peter Slattery
- Feedback from the training was extremely positive and rated highly by participants and supporting staff.



Impact



***“If you see someone on the outer
– bring them in”***

- Peter Slattery

Youth worker and facilitator for the Mountains Peer Support Project

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Top tips

1. Ensure participants feel valued
2. Create a sense of urgency
3. Hire the bee's knees of facilitators

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For more information . . .

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Thank you

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Teaching Our Youth

T.O.Y Project

Stronger Outcomes for Youth LDAT

This project is funded by
Stronger Communities Grants
&
Local Drug Action Team Program



Supported by the City of Canterbury Bankstown and funded by the NSW Government through the Stronger Communities Fund



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Peer Educators T.O.Y Project

Partner organisations

- **Mission Australia, Humanity Matters, Bankstown PCYC, Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre, Headspace and Youth off the Streets.**

Location

- These services are located within the Bankstown part of **Canterbury Bankstown City.**

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Location & Youth Demographics



Regions of origin	
OCEANIA	37.31%
NORTH AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN	26.71%
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN	10.15%
SOUTH-EAST ASIAN	9.71%
SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL ASIAN	5.30%
SOUTHERN AND EASTERN EUROPEAN	4.64%
NORTH-EAST ASIAN	2.87%
PEOPLE OF THE AMERICAS	2.21%
NORTH-WEST EUROPEAN	1.10%

Demographic

- In the 2016 Census, there were 32,113 people residing within Bankstown ward and 6,282 young people.
- 37.1% of residents are Australian born
- The top five cultures that are born outside of Australia who currently live within Bankstown are from Vietnam (14.1%), Lebanon (6.2%), China (5.3%), Pakistan(3.1%) and Bangladesh.

Local challenge

AOD ISSUES

- The increase in AOD use by young people aged 12 years and older within the Canterbury Bankstown LGA was an issue of concern in 2015-2016.
- The common drugs of use by young people that we are working with ages 12-24 are Cigarettes, Marijuana and Alcohol.

Solution

- In 2016, local youth services established a drug and alcohol early intervention and prevention committee and identified a response.
- With the merging of Canterbury & Bankstown Councils a funding opportunity became available 'Stronger Communities Grant'.
- Funding Opportunities through LDAT

THE T.O.Y Project: PEER EDUCATORS

1. To address **Alcohol and Drug issues** that are affecting youth living within **Canterbury Bankstown** by providing a range of community awareness programs, activities and events.
2. To create **youth led AOD programs** and events to target AOD issues; by focusing on a **harm minimization** approach to **reduce substance abuse/use** behaviours.
3. To **support young people to develop leadership** and peer education skills to **facilitate their own projects** within their community; who are motivated to **make an impact** on other youth to allow them to make positive life choices.

!

Implementation

- **Project Participant Recruitment**
- **Creating individual interest and incentives**
- **Video Peer Educators Presentation (5 min)**

Commitment to the Project

- Requested a commitment for at least 1 year or more (depending on other life commitments).
- They are the pioneers of this project and have invested a lot of time to make it successful and are having fun doing so.

Ownership of the Project

- Peer educators have taken ownership of the project
- Attending fortnightly meetings, planning and preparation for all workshops
- Educators have their own Facebook Group which they use to communicate and share news, documents and info.

! Impact

- In June 2018. the peer educators held a community launch of the T.O.Y project
- Workshop delivery:
 - My Life, My Choice Conference 2017, 2018
 - Get Connected Program 2017/18: (4 workshops in 3 Schools).
 - 2018 Youth Leadership Camp at Point Wolstoncroft Sport and Rec AOD workshop delivery/ AOD Campaign Workshop
 - AOD Conference 2017 (Cultural Support Team) provide AOD awareness activities.
 - Term 4 (2017) Twilight Sports AOD workshop delivery
 - Term 1 (2018) Twilight Sports AOD workshop delivery
 - Total numbers of young people attended workshops: **Over 300**

Development of Resources AOD Program Delivery Manual (with AOD info and activities) & Video AOD lived experience.

AOD Social Media Campaign within the first fortnight of it's launch (**50 Followers**)

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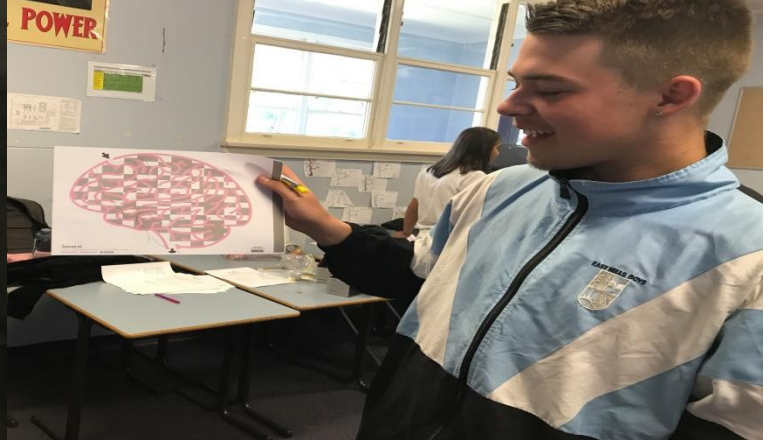
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Challenges

- Long term commitment of young people
- Securing ongoing funding
- Important to have selection criteria and conduct informal interviews to gauge the commitment of each participant
- As facilitator, continuously following up on delivery of tasks/action set out.
- Project oversight be included in someone's role
- Level of individual participation of the peer educators are very active, others seem to sometimes lose their focus and need encouragement to continue with the project.

Feedback

- Youth Participation
- Program Evaluation

Top tips

- 1. Employ a part-time paid project officer to run the project. This project could not have been successful without a supporting role especially being a pilot project. The peer educators pilot project would not be self-managed as the project officer is essential to coordination of trainings, meetings and follow on tasks to teach practical/professional skills throughout the project.**
- 2. Identify key strengths in youth participants and work to support them to improve on areas their limitations.**
- 3. Allocate roles within the group to take responsibility and ownership of the project.**
- 4. Ensure that the group has a common goal and are pro active.**

Top tips cont'd

5. Ensure they maintain regular meetings and training to increase their knowledge and practical skills.
6. Ensuring that all parties involved know their rights and responsibilities by developing a contract between young people and service.
7. Providing ongoing 'Team Building' activities, ice breakers and restorative circles to increase team work and team moral.
8. Develop and maintain key partnerships with relevant services that will support and promote your project to their clients and networks.

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For more information . . .

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