



June News

Issue Number 17

June 2010

PO Box 21241 Little Lonsdale St
Melbourne VIC 8011
www.youthmentoringvic.org.au

Welcome to another edition of the bi-monthly Victorian Youth Mentoring Alliance (VYMA) News.

CONTENTS:

- Local Member of Parliament Lobbying Kit
- Victorian State Budget
- How to Just Say No
- Meet a Program
- Innovations in Mentoring
- NAB Community Survey
- Office Space Available
- Applying for a Schools First Award
- Ideas for Funding
- Upcoming Events
- In the Sticks – Regional Updates

VYMA is supported by:



Local Member of Parliament Lobbying Kit

This month the VYMA launched a simple lobbying kit to help youth mentoring programs make contact with their local Member of Parliament.

The package includes a sample letter to assist programs in making contact as well as information about:

- Influencing Members of Parliament
- Communicating Your Message to your Local MP
- Tips for Meeting with Your Local MP

You can access the new kit at www.youthmentoringvic.org.au



State Budget

The State Budget, announced last month, has some interesting initiatives to support young people and community organisations. There has been no clear commitment to support youth mentoring specifically, however the following initiatives may impact on you and the young people you support.

- \$2 million to strengthen non-profit and community groups, by providing access to training, professional development and legal and IT assistance
- \$4.2 million to develop five football and three dance academies for Indigenous students
- \$3.7 million for six community based organisations to extend their cyber safety education programs to more school aged young people
- \$22 million to fund 55 youth workers to support young people either at risk of or caught carrying knives
- \$3.6 million to establish youth suicide community support programs to support young Victorians at risk of self harm, with a focus on gay, lesbian and young Indigenous people
- \$3.8 million over four years for refugee youth
- \$750 000 for the International Student Care service, a new 24 hour support and welfare service for international students completing their studies in Victoria



How to Just Say No



A regular topic of interest that generates passionate discussion around any table of youth mentoring coordinators is informing potential mentors that they are unsuitable for a program. Here are some tips to assist you through this sometimes tricky process.

Use your screening policies and procedures

Having a good understanding of your program's screening policies and procedures is the key to making a clear decision about potential mentors entering your program. The principle of '**do no harm**' should always be upheld when working with young people and will lead you to exercise caution when accrediting mentors.

Be up front and communicate clearly

Ensure that you communicate up front with potential mentors that you take the screening and matching process very seriously. If you inform applicants early on of your **Mentor Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy** often applicants who are not suitable will self select out of the process.

Link concerns back to written documentation

Ensure you have **clear documentation** that outlines what characteristics you are looking for (a position description) and those you would be concerned about in potential mentors (red flags). Be very clear about how you would identify **areas of concern**.

Any concerns you have must relate directly back to the **key selection criteria** for mentors in your program. This will help ensure that you are not discriminating and that your decisions are based on specific criteria that were articulate to potential mentors from the beginning.

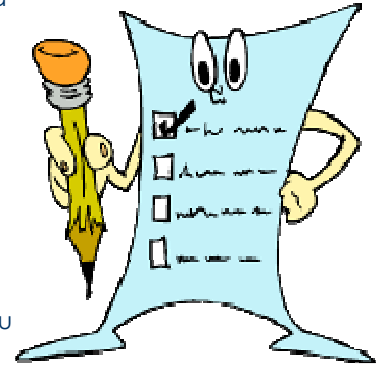
Involve others in the process

Have at least two staff members **present throughout the interview**. This is another way to gauge whether your 'gut feeling' is legitimate. This will also assist you in articulating and documenting concerns you may have. If this is not possible, arrange a follow up interview with yourself and another staff member if you have any concerns about the potential mentor.

Be prepared and respectful

It is never an easy task to communicate to someone that they are unsuitable for a position, however you have a duty of care to the young people in your program, so...

- gather your thoughts (and documentation!)
- outline your concerns
- offer the applicant another opportunity to further explain their responses (this could give you further reason to decline their application or clarify unclear responses)
- let the applicant know the reasons why you are not accepting their application. Let them know that not everyone is suitable for the role of a mentor and
- if appropriate/ possible offer any other volunteering opportunities that you feel may be more appropriate.



Don't forget, being able to clearly articulate your concerns and only accept quality applicants is only going to save you and the program further complications in the long term.

For further information about good practice in screening mentors please see VYMA Effectively Screening Mentors forum information at www.youthmentoringvic.org.au

Meet a Program

Asista Mentoring & Friendship Program – YWCA

VYMA: How long have you been around?

Asista: Since 1998.

VYMA: Who funds you?

Asista: Department of Human Services, Child Protection.

VYMA: What type of mentoring do you do?

Asista: One to one community based mentoring.

VYMA: What is your primary purpose?

Asista: To provide a positive role model, friendship and support to young women.

VYMA: Do you target a specific group of young people?

Asista: I support young women who are clients of DHS Child Protection in the North West region. I can support young women from 12-21 years old.

VYMA: How many young people/ mentors are currently involved?

Asista: 20 matches.

VYMA: What's so exciting about you? How are you different to the 'traditional' approach to mentoring?

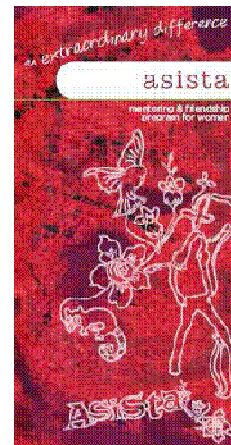
Asista: I am a female specific program that works with fantastic young women who are involved in the Child Protection system. I have strong support for mentors – including monthly meetings for supervision, debriefing and training. I also run regular community days where all mentors and mentees can get together and try fun activities.

VYMA: Tell me about any Partnerships you have that add value to your work? How do these work?

Asista: I have strong links with referring agencies to ensure the best support for young women in the program.

VYMA: What have you learnt from the journey so far?

Asista: I have learnt that patience and planning really pays off in terms of training and screening mentors, and making a good match.



VYMA: What's your biggest challenge right now?

Asista: My biggest challenge is maintaining strong matches while the young participants deal with a lot of change in their lives.

VYMA: What's a success story so far?

Asista: I recently held a doll-making workshop for matches. It was fantastic! The dolls were displayed at the "Through My Eyes" exhibition as part of National Youth Week. The young women were able to bring along their mentor, friends and family to see their work on display.



Innovations in Mentoring

RMIT University Hamilton is establishing a Community of Practice for young rural leaders in the south-west Victoria, to prepare for better managing 'the farm' in an uncertain future. **The Next Generation: Rural Leaders' Network** is developing the leadership capacity and innovative thinking of young people (aged 18 to 30) from farming, natural resource management and agribusiness.

The Network incorporates a structured training through workshops, think-tanks, community engagement, research training and mentoring by people experienced in agriculture and rural related practice in the Hamilton region.

Twenty of the region's future rural leaders were introduced to potential mentors through a speed-meet activity to break the ice. This was followed by a leadership exercise resulting in dancing, acting and more, much to the entertainment of participants.

Dr Kaye Scholfield

*RMIT University Hamilton Manager, Community Partnerships and Projects
kaye.scholfield@rmit.edu.au*

The **BRIC program** (run by the Centre for Multicultural Youth), matched mentor, Miguel, with Youth Victoria, a group of Islamic young people in Wyndham and surrounding areas, in August 2009. Just one result of this relationship has been the coordination of an incredibly successful entertainment evening held in Hoppers Crossing. The night included comedy, music and theatre by Islamic young people.

Members of the youth group found Miguel's business skills and financial and fundraising advice invaluable in helping them plan for the event and the future of the group. Although the group was unsure of how many people to expect their planning and promotion paid off - they had 900 people attended on the night! They certainly achieved their goals of raising both their profile and funds.

Alice Chew

*Project Officer - Centre for Multicultural Youth
achew@cmy.net.au*



After 18 months of planning, the **Ballarat Specialist School** is establishing its mentoring program. Disengaged students in their last three years of high school have been identified as potential participants. These young people are now being matched with two mentors each: a young student from the Australian Catholic University and a more experienced mentor from the community.

It is hoped the young people will form lasting relationships not only with their mentors but also with other mentors in the program. When the young adults leave the school at 18 these mentors will help them transition into further education, employment and the community as a whole.

Matt Copping

*Assistant Principal, Ballarat Specialist School
03 5334 1302*

National Australia Bank Community Survey

Jointly commissioned by Volunteering Australia and National Australia Bank, this survey of community organisations shows that 81 per cent of those surveyed believe the demand for their services is greater now than at any time in the past. Survey results included:

- 91 per cent of community organisations currently have volunteers assisting in their organisation.
- Close to one third of community organisations said over 75 per cent of their work is done by volunteers
- 91 per cent of the community organisations surveyed said volunteers were very or extremely important to their organisation.
- On average, 47 per cent of community organisations engage in excess of 60 volunteers per year.



For more information visit www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Office Space Available



Ladder, the AFL Players Association project to address youth homelessness, has some office space they would like to share with a like-minded organisation. Located on Hoddle Street in Collingwood the space has four desks, furnished with access to a computer server, phone and internet. There is also access to two meeting rooms, a board room and car parking space on negotiation.

Please contact Mark Bolton for further information. E: Mark.Bolton@ladder.org.au P:0425 706 316

Applying for a Schools First Award



The Schools First program provides:

- financial recognition of success in establishing effective school-community partnerships; and
- financial support to build stronger school-community partnerships.

This year 108 school-community partnerships will benefit from Schools First with over **\$5 million** committed. Any school in Australia can apply for a Schools First Award.

There are two types of Schools First Awards: Impact Awards and Seed Funding Awards. The application forms for both the Impact and Seed Funding Awards are now available on the Schools First website: www.schoolsfirst.edu.au/sf-award-application-login

Applications open on Monday, 28 June and need to be submitted online via the Schools First website by 5.00pm on Friday, 30 July.



Ideas for Funding

AEI Community Grants

Australian Ethical

Funding: Various Closes: 1 July 2010

Purpose: To donate 10% of profit to useful charitable, benevolent and conservation projects.

www.australianethical.com.au/apply-community-grant

Make the Difference: Future2

Funding: Three grants of \$10,000 may be awarded to the applications considered by Future2 trustees to be the most deserving of support. Of these three, the project considered most outstanding may be awarded a further grant of \$20,000.

Closes: 31 July 2010

Purpose: To support the financially underprivileged and to enable the financial planning profession, and others linked to it, to give back to the community from which they draw their livelihood.

www.future2foundation.org.au/public_panel/index.php

Ph: (02) 9220 4500

Gandel Charitable Trust

Funding: Various Closes: Ongoing

You must have DGR Status

Purpose: To support charitable activities by charitable organisations.

Call for an Expression of Interest form.

Ph: (03) 8564 1288

Optus Connecting Communities Grants Program

Funding: Max per grant: \$5,000 Min per grant: \$1,000

Closes: 30 July 2010

You must have DGR Status

Purpose: To provide grants to Not for Profit community organisations to help reduce social isolation for those in need and reconnect disengaged youth.

www.optus.com.au/aboutoptus/About+Optus/Corporate+Responsibility/Our+Community/Community+Programs/Connecting+Communities+Grants+Program

Ph: 1300 729 320

AMP Community Fundraising Program

The AMP Foundation

Funding: Max per grant: \$10,000 Closes: Ongoing
Purpose: AMP Financial Planners are encouraged to organise a fundraising event in conjunction with a local charity to raise money for a project that will benefit their local community. The AMP Foundation will then match half of what is raised up to \$10,000.

www.amp.com.au

Ph: (02) 9257 5334

The Myer Foundation - G4 Fund (Small Grants)

Funding: Grants are capped at \$5,000 and are generally made for a 12 month period only. The requested amount may be part of a project budget of up to \$30,000 Closes: 7 July 2010

The G4 Small Grants Program only supports small community based organisations.

Purpose: To contribute to the wellbeing of young Australians aged 12-25.

www.myerfoundation.org.au

Ph: (03) 9207 3040

Sunshine Foundation Grants

Funding: Max per grant: \$10,000 Min per grant: \$500

Closes: 1 July 2010

You must have DGR Status

Purpose: To support projects which help alleviate human suffering, attend to matters of social need, advance the frontiers of knowledge and enhance the quality of life.

www.mutualtrust.com.au

Ph: (03) 9605 9500



Upcoming Events

Supervision and Support of Mentors

- Have you ever wondered how to get the most out of supervision sessions with your mentors?
- Are you curious about how other programs balance the needs of mentors with the time and resources available to support them?
- Do you want to know what makes a good supervisor?

If you answered yes to any of these questions then this is the forum for you!

Join a panel of experienced program coordinators and mentors to explore this topic in more detail.

Date: Wednesday 14th July 2010

Time: 10:30am–2:30pm (lunch provided)

Venue: City of Melbourne Bowls Club, Flagstaff Gardens,
Dudley St, West Melbourne

Cost: FREE – This event is sponsored by the Australian Youth Mentoring Network

RSVP: To Lauren Holst on 0411 374 225 or l.holst@youthmentoringvic.org.au by the 7th of July.



VYMA Practice Network

The Metropolitan Practice Network is designed to respond to the evolving needs of practitioners in the sector. Come along to work with your youth mentoring colleagues and get support with your struggles and hear new ideas from the field. Practice Network Meetings will run quarterly throughout 2010.

Date: 24th August 3:00pm – 5:00pm (refreshments provided)

Venue: The Kulin Room, City Village, L10 225 Bourke St, Melbourne

RSVP: To Lauren Holst at l.holst@youthmentoringvic.org.au or 0411 374 225

Metropolitan Youth Mentoring Coffee Clubs

North West

Date: Wednesday 4 August 2010 Time: 3:30-5:00pm

Venue: The Lounge Downstairs, 243 Swanston Street, Melbourne

RSVP: to your host Eloise Brown (ASISTA Mentoring Program - YWCA Victoria) on 8668 8153 or at asista@ywca.net

Inner South East

Date: Wednesday 4 August 2010 Time: 3:30-5:00pm

Venue: The Elwood Lounge, 49-51 Glenhuntly Road, Elwood 3184

RSVP: to your host Allan Snashall (Bayside Youth Mentoring Programme - MacKillop FS on 9699 9177 or at allan.snashall@mackillop.org.au

Outer East

Date: Wednesday 4 August 2010 Time: 3:30-5:00pm

Venue: Yarra Ranges Youth Services 216-218 Main St, Lilydale

RSVP: to your host Amanda Wiggs (Yarra Ranges Youth Services) on 9294 6716 or a.wiggs@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

in the sticks

REGIONAL CO-ORDINATION PROJECT UPDATES

GRAMPIANS

Acting co-ordinator:

Vicki Coltman—0417 304 782

vickic@leadon.com.au

Vicki is working on:

- a professional development day and a mentoring dinner during Youth Mentoring Week
- a publication highlighting a number of mentors across the region
- three new schools mentoring programs; two in Ballarat, one in Dimboola
- a media campaign promoting positive news stories about young people and their mentors.

Grampians RCP has moved to the Lead On office in Eureka House, 11 Lydiard Street South, Ballarat.

HUME

Make Mentoring Matter

Co-ordinator: Sue Watts—5762 2880

swatts@nesay.com.au

Hume has mentor-mania—everyone is talking program models and partnerships. And programs have been actively promoting themselves in news media recently. Meanwhile newer programs have trained new mentors and are ready to roll.

Hume RCP is working hard at planning Youth Mentoring Week celebrations and business tools training.

Hume and Barwon SW RCPs are collaborating on *Images of mentoring*, a short clip project using images and quotes from young people, mentors and co-ordinators. It's a resource that can be used to explain and promote mentoring, and engage potential mentors.

BARWON SOUTH WEST

Co-ordinator: Rashmita Samrai—5561 8820

rsamrai@brophy.org.au

BSW celebrated mentors and showcased their contribution to young people and communities during National Volunteer Week.

Two new programs are kicking off soon in Warrambool. The Leaving Care mentoring program gives 16 to 18 year-olds the chance to have a mentor as they move out of care.

World Vision's Kids Hope program helps churches and primary schools partner to recruit mentors for vulnerable primary-aged children.



Bright in autumn: Hume region

Coming Barwon SW events

- Workshop for student well-being co-ordinators
Thursday 10 June, 11 am – 12:30 pm, Geelong

LODDON MALLEE

Co-ordinator: Leigh Candy—5434 3914 (new number)

l.candy@stlukes.org.au

Small numbers of co-ordinators talked their heads off at the Goldfields and Northwest network meetings during May, and the RCP is compiling a regional mentoring directory to encourage even more co-operation between programs.

Both Castlemaine SC and TAFE began mentoring programs recently and Castlemaine's community health service is planning a program for young people in the Redesdale area affected by last year's bushfire.

GIPPSLAND

Gippsland Mentoring Alliance (GMA)

Co-ordinator: Kate Boyer—5633 2868

kate.bblllen@dcsi.net.au

Mentoring co-ordinators and interested people will network and share current issues and successes, learn more about effective publicity and recruiting, and walk away with usable strategies for engaging with business at a Gippsland-wide mentoring event in July.

A successful Latrobe Mentoring Network ran last month, with plans for meetings once a term to discuss issues and devise strategies for mentoring in the Latrobe area. Interested programs and organisations are welcome to attend.

Coming Gippsland events

- Baw Baw L2P mentoring night—strategies for communicating with your learner driver.
Thursday 10 June, 7.00 pm, Warragul Community House
- Gippsland-wide event
July, TBC