Youth forums

Young people make up approximately 18% of the population living on the Mornington Peninsula. They are an important part of our community as they are the generation who will be shaping the community we will all be living in in the future. Council also sees that it is important for young people to have the opportunity to live in communities that are supportive, well designed and provide them with the best possible outcomes. For this reason it is important that young people have a voice in Council processes. With this in mind, the youth services team worked with schools and students and planned a series of youth forums to provide this opportunity. See photo spread on pages 2 and 3.

Members of the youth services team met with students in all secondary schools across the peninsula to seek their feedback to identify the top five priorities to be addressed as forum topics. The selected topics were collated across the participating schools. The topics, which all related to particular roles of Council, were discussed at the forums. Information around other nominated topics will be followed up soon and fed back to student leadership groups at a later date as part of the reporting process.

The youth services team is currently collating the information from the forums and providing it to the various Council departments. Department representatives will determine if there have been any changes in plans or practices then will arrange times to meet with student leader groups to present the information and any outcomes.

For further information about the forums or their outcomes, please contact Karl Kasbach on 5950 1642.

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Mayor’s Message

While active youth engagement at the Youth Forums has been the focus of the Council’s youth services team throughout the past month, strategic planning for these opportunities to hear our young people’s voices has taken place over the last 12 months. I had the pleasure of attending these forums and was delighted at the maturity and insight of the young participants’ contributions and ideas.

Communities That Care® is concerned with helping communities build better futures for children and young people. Harnessing the enthusiasm of our young people and allowing their voices to help shape the Mornington Peninsula of the future is one way of creating more caring communities.

- Mayor Cr Frank Martin

So, what is CTC ...

Communities That Care® (CTC) is a prevention-based long-term development program for building safer neighbourhoods where children, young people and their families are valued, respected and encouraged to achieve their potential.

CTC is about communities working together to develop local solutions to local issues. Working partnerships are developed and fostered between local people, schools, agencies, community groups and service providers to promote healthy social and personal development of our young people.

Community Action Plans are created to support and strengthen families, promote school commitment and success, encourage responsible sexual behaviour and achieve a safer and more cohesive community.

It is a process in which all members of the community are invited and welcomed to participate.

To become involved please contact the team on 5950 1642.
SNAPSHOTS OF THE YOUTH FORUMS 2012
SNAPSHOTS OF THE YOUTH FORUMS 2012

SKATE PARKS

CLEAN UP

SAFETY

MAINTENANCE

TRANSPORT
Big Backyard Project at Somerville Secondary College

A big thank you to Catherine Arnold and Catherine May, teachers at Somerville Secondary College, for enabling students to take part in the Big Backyard Project. Here’s what some students from 7A, 7B and 7C, together with Tiarna, Bailey, Chloe, Jack, Travis and Cameron, had to say about their involvement:

“The project was to paint a mural to beautify the wetlands ... and it was looking really bad with all the graffiti. The group I was in painted a koala ... the school is going to look better and for the local residents it’s going to mean that they are going to be even more proud of our community.”

“The people in our group are Cam, Matt, Berry, Jordan, Mark. I really enjoyed working with Tony because I got to learn more painting skills. I think the project will mean a lot to the community because they will be proud of us working on something together.”

“I did enjoy working with Tony because he is a professional artist. It was cool ... I got to hear some stories so, yeah, it was good ... Other schools might use it and it might make parents want their kids to come to SSC.”

“Our school did a big backyard painting and it will go in the wetlands at the back of the school. I think it’s a good idea ... that it covers all the tags on the fence so that the school looks nicer ... not saying that it’s not already. I really enjoyed the big backyard activity. My group painted a wombat ... it looks really good and all the others look great too.” - Tiarna

“The big backyard project was a very awesome experience. Tony the artist helped us make the big painting of animals ... to cover up all the tags ... it improved my painting skills and my drawing skills and I had a new experience - I used charcoal to put the outline on and then we rubbed it lightly with a cloth and went over the top of the charcoal with a permanent marker and then we painted it. Some of the year 11 people helped us. It was very nice of Tony to help us and I hope he comes back. It was awesome!” - Bailey

“Year 7s worked with some year 11 VCAL students and Tony (the artist). It will give Somerville Secondary College ... a better look when the projects will be up. We had to outline the drawings in charcoal and then rub it off lightly and then go over the outline in sharpie and then we got out the paint and started to paint in the lines ... I would like to thank Tony Sowersby so much for teaching us new techniques in drawing and letting us work on this project with him.” - Chloe

“I liked how we got to have a part of the project with the year 11s. For our part we painted a wombat with a kangaroo in the middle ... and trees around the painting as well. It was one of the best opportunities for art that I have had all year so far, and I learnt a lot. I worked with three other people as well.” - Jack

“At first it seemed really hard to draw all these pictures but then Tony turned a projector on and projected it on the board. It was donated. I was really interested in the charcoal drawing and how it just rubs off into a faint line and then we went over it with a permanent marker and then we painted it. My group painted an emu.” - Travis

“As we started ... we realised that it didn’t look like a kangaroo. But Tony said to finish and you will see what it looks like. So we continued and finished and it looked like a proper kangaroo. We added some more background stuff and ... used many different colours to make the picture look cool. Once we had finished we looked at all the different ones that other groups did. They all looked spectacular. This BIG BACKYARD PROJECT was a great idea.” - Cameron

For more information about the Big Backyard Project, contact Liz on Elizabeth.Tomazic@mornpen.vic.gov.au or 5950 1669.
Ten tips to help parents in educating young people about drugs and alcohol

Collett Smart,
registered psychologist and qualified educator

A study has found that teens with ‘hands on’ parents are far less likely to engage in risky behaviours. The ‘tough love’ style of parenting which sees a high level of warmth alongside forms of consistent discipline has proven to be the most effective parenting style in the education of young people about drugs and alcohol.

1. Maintain boundaries.
2. Teach problem solving and critical thinking skills.
3. Know where your children are.
4. Check that there is active adult supervision.
5. Allow other healthy risk taking activities.
6. Agree to a pick up your teen and their friends.
7. Decide on a code word that your teen can use if things are getting out of hand.
8. Allow for consequences.
9. Develop a wide social network.
10. Actively seek an older mentor for your teen.

Please seek professional help if behaviour is interfering with day-to-day functioning. i.e. schoolwork, or relationships having deteriorated significantly and normal support structures are no longer enough. For further information, see Family Smart – www.familysmart.com.au, Blog – www.thefamilyfactor.com. (Posted on the Generation Next website (www.generationnext.com.au) on May 29, 2012 by Dr Ramesh Manocha.)

See also: More information and/or an education campaign on the new secondary supply laws, visit www.teendrinkinglaw.vic.gov.au.

The past month has been a busy one for School Focused Youth Service (SFYS). Early in the month our region hosted the SFYS Statewide Conference where the focus was on looking at how SFYS could work in with new government policy. The following week saw the Mornington Peninsula Youth Services Network meeting which featured a short Bridges out of Poverty presentation which looks at using appropriate language and thought processes when working with disadvantaged families. SFYS was also involved with the Youth Forums (discussed on page 1). Brokerage funding is now available for the coming financial year so, if you have an innovative idea which builds on partnerships between schools and agencies to benefit vulnerable young people, give me a call on 0419 500 371 so that we can discuss whether an application for SFYS funding would be appropriate. Judi Adams, Coordinator, School Focused Youth Service Mornington Peninsula.
Winter school holidays .......... Cold?? ....
Bored?? .......... Nothing to do?? ..........
Why not check out the FREE stuff to do at Shed 11?

Did I mention that it was FREE and that there’s food provided???

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ReachUrPeak

Our new 12 week ReachUrPeak program has reached its completion. We engaged 20 Year 8 students from Dromana Secondary College during the 12 week course.

We ran a very diverse personal development program and had some fantastic outcomes. Included was an outdoor/experiential learning component which consisted of sessions such as environmental awareness at the Briars; Martial Arts Therapy; high and low ropes course; a camp; healthy cooking; a behaviour workshop and an experiential learning activities session.

A very enjoyable occasion was the parent/significant other weekend camp during which we hosted 8-10 parents. Over 60 people, including Cr Graham Pittock, attended the end of program celebration, with a Power-Point presentation run by the young people.

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Shed 11 Backyard Project

Our Shed 11 Backyard Project is well underway, with a group of young people from CGEA (Certificate of General Education Adults) involved. Recently we also had some extra hands from a couple of community members who came to help.

The group was engaged throughout first semester. During this time they designed and constructed compost bins, a native garden bed and planted some herbs into vegetable boxes.

The construction aspect of the project provided a practical opportunity to develop the group’s numeracy and literacy skills. It was also a great way for the young participants to learn new skills and enjoy time outdoors.

We are looking forward to engaging a new group of young people during second semester to progress the next stage of the project. If you would like to know more about any of the youth programs delivered by the Council, please contact the Youth Services team on 5950 1666.
Russell Ardley recently resigned from Mornington Peninsula Youth Enterprises Inc. (MPYE), an organisation that he co-initiated in 1996. Russell initially became involved in assisting the Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Team in a project involving woodwork with young people. One of Russell’s sons was involved and Russell offered his home garage as a venue for the program. Soon Russell began to share his woodwork skills with the young people. The young people sold the products that they made at the Wednesday Market in Mornington. Russell and his wife Debbie assisted the young people with their stall.

At the same time, a community youth organisation known as Young Life Inc. in Mornington was running a large scale nursery to train young people in horticulture. Young Life also commenced a program in training young people in building/woodwork skills. The shire’s Youth Team had received a grant for training young people in these skills and contracted Young Life to undertake the training. Young Life had undergone a rapid period of growth with programs statewide and, unfortunately, did not have the financial resources to sustain the work and collapsed. This created a vacuum for training of young people. Russell expressed to the Youth Team his desire to take over the Young Life site and continue the training.

The shire’s Youth Team negotiated with Young Life for the handing over of some assets and drafted a constitution and corporate plan for a proposed community organisation to be known as Mornington Peninsula Youth Enterprises Inc. Russell invited members of the community and service club representatives to a meeting at the site. He was able to present an exciting vision for the site and had an overwhelming response for forming a committee for incorporation of MPYE. Senior Sergeant Merv Williams, representing both the Rotary Club of Mount Martha and Victoria Police, was appointed as the Chairperson. Russell was appointed volunteer Site Manager.

Within a short period of time Russell enlisted dozens of volunteers to support and help train young people at the site. For the first five years Russell was an unpaid volunteer who worked at the site for a very full seven days each week. MPYE flourished and was finally in a position to employ Russell as a paid Site Manager. Due to the downturn in horticulture during the drought, Russell diversified the training to include metal work, commercial cooking, forklift driving and welcomed the community VCAL program on site.

Over the past 16 years Russell has received a number of well deserved community awards for his tireless work and leadership. He has had a significant impact into and upon the lives of hundreds of disadvantaged young people. Russell’s single minded passion was to get unskilled, unemployed young people basic skills and then jobs that could further enhance those skills. This is something that he certainly achieved many times over.

The Mornington Peninsula community has been blessed through Russell’s selfless contribution.

- David Conley

**FAREWELL, RUSSELL ARDLEY**

**MORNINGTON PENINSULA YOUTH ENTERPRISES INC.**

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**SHARING SAM’S HAPPY DAY**

Congratulations to Sam and Andy Guerin! Sam (formerly Cochrane) and Andy married on 29th April 2012 at St Johns Church in Sorrento, followed by a reception at the Cellar Bar in the Sorrento Hotel.

The happy couple embarked on a delightful 5 week honeymoon through Europe, backpacking through Spain, Italy, Paris and London. They are enjoying married life and we wish them all the best.

Sam and Andy at the Via Dell’Amore (Lovers Walk), Cinque Terre, Italy.
Parenting Support and Information

The promotion of parenting support and information opportunities is a strategy listed in the Two Bays, Mount Eliza and Hastings-Crib Point-Bittern-Cerberus Community Action Plans.

The strategy relates to the risk and protective factors of: family attachment, personal transitions and mobility as well as family opportunities for pro-social involvement. Parenting support workshops and groups, offered by Parentzone and Good Shepherd Youth & Family Services, are examples of how this strategy is addressed.

These agencies provide support to parents through information and group work including a variety of parenting programs. Parent education is an integral component of Anglicare and Good Shepherd’s work with families and is available to parents with children aged up to 18 years.

Both agencies provide support to parents on a wide range of parenting issues, including building self-esteem and dealing with conflict. The flyers below are samples of parenting workshops/groups that will be offered in a number of areas throughout Term 3:

**Parents Building Solutions**

A SIX WEEK DISCUSSION GROUP

Interactive Sessions include:

- Adolescent development: What is happening to our adolescents as they grow?
- Exploring our role as parents – keeping ourselves relevant in their lives.
- Exploring the tools of building relationships with the growing adolescent – and also with others in the family and community.
- How to talk so they will listen, and respond.
- Other issues important to you.

Where: Good Shepherd Youth & Family Service, 3/342 Main Street enter from Foam St
When: Thursdays - 10.00am - 12.00pm
9th August - 13th September 2012
Contact: Andrea Gerolemou 59719444
Email: a.gerolemou@goodshepvic.org.au

Childcare: Not Provided

**Parents Seeking Solutions**

Come and share a cuppa with other parents, as well as tips, tools and strategies for parenting...

Some of the things we discuss are: discipline strategies, dealing with feelings, looking after ourselves, fussy eaters, ages and stages, building resilience and more...

Where: Good Shepherd Youth & Family Service, 3/342 Main Street enter from Foam St
When: Thursdays - 10.00am – 12.00pm
9th August – 13th September 2012
Contact: Andrea Gerolemou 59719444
Email: a.gerolemou@goodshepvic.org.au

Childcare: Not Provided

**Mornington Peninsula Shire L2P - Learner Driver Program**

The Mornington Peninsula Shire L2P - Learner Driver Program is branching out to include the southern peninsula. Currently the L2P program, which has been very successful over the past two years, has a car based in Hastings. As the program expanded, it was identified that there was a need to provide a car in the Rosebud area. This vehicle will cater for young people who, isolated by lack of transport options, are unable to get to the program.

Now, with two vehicles, the program will be better able to support young learner drivers who have limited or no access to a supervising driver or a vehicle in which to learn to drive.

Volunteers donate their time to support the learners and supervise their 120 hours of on-road driving practice, using a vehicle provided by the council. Without volunteers’ assistance this program for disadvantaged young people would not be possible.

The L2P program is a TAC funded, VicRoads managed learner driver mentor program. Peninsula DriveSafe, the Mornington Peninsula Road Safety Strategy, generously provides funding towards the cost of a car. Other supporters include Progress Signs and Embord Me Frankston. If you would like to know more about the L2P program please contact Jackie on 5950 1692.