Communities That Care® Celebrating 10 Years

Interest in Communities That Care® (CTC) youth risk prevention on the Mornington Peninsula dates back to the 1990s, but it officially commenced in 2002 with the appointment of the first project worker and the establishment of the CTC Community Board. That makes this year the tenth anniversary of Communities That Care® in our shire.

Originally funded with a Community Support grant from the Victorian government, the program is now sustained by Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, demonstrating its ongoing commitment to improving the social and mental health outcomes for children, youth and families living on the peninsula.

Much has been achieved over this decade. Hundreds of community people have been involved in the six Local Area Groups and the development of community Action Plans across the LGA. Many successful programs have then resulted through partnerships with schools, community groups and local youth services, making a positive difference in the lives of teenagers.

With the upcoming release of data from our third adolescent health survey it will be an exciting time as community participation is again mobilized to evaluate progress and then develop new strategies and action plans at the local level.

CTC is a long term process of improving and investing in the future of our most valuable asset – young people! Your support and involvement is needed.

David Parker
Chair, CTC Board

EVALUATION

This year the Communities That Care® (CTC) team has worked to further build and strengthen the capacity of council youth programs by introducing and facilitating evaluation processes into program delivery.

This has included evaluations at the commencement and completion of youth programs to demonstrate how Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Services is achieving real change in the lives of our young people. This has assisted the Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Services team to continue planning quality programs that target risk and protective factors for each area.

An example of the new evaluation process in action was the iConnect Program hosted in Somerville. The evaluation clearly demonstrated that young people who participated felt a stronger sense of attachment to their local area and most had developed an interest in becoming involved in their local community.

For more information, please contact Karl Kasbach on 5950 1642.

The Communities That Care® team is:

Karl Kasbach, Liz Tomazic and Sam Cochrane

We can be contacted at:
Private Bag 1000, Rosebud 3939
CTC@mornpen.vic.gov.au
1300 850 600 or +61 3 5950 1000

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Authorised by the Mornington Peninsula Shire Chief Executive Officer, Dr Michael Kennedy OAM, 90 Besgrove St, Rosebud, 3939
News from Mornington Peninsula Shire’s Youth Services

Girls Night In
This program has been running for three months, taking place once a month on a Friday night with female participants from the local area aged between 13-18 years.

The current program format is very successful. It takes a more casual approach which enables the girls to commence sessions by sharing some enjoyable food and conversation prior to taking part in personal development topics that centre around specifically chosen activities.

The participants enjoy hanging out and having ‘girl time’ while taking part in informative sessions such as:

- healthy cooking
- body image, including a pamper night with homemade face masks, homemade lip balm and foot spas
- discussion around “what is body image”

It’s been a great way for local young girls to meet other girls from different schools and form friendships. Another positive aspect of this program is that it provides young participants with knowledge of the full range of services provided by the Mornington Peninsula Youth Services.

Forthcoming sessions will include: creative arts, relationships and an end of year celebration.

For more information, please contact Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Service workers Laura or Jackie on 5950 1666.

Welcome to new staff member, Tania Bernardo

Tania Bernardo, new Acting Coordinator of Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Support, has had an extensive career in both the welfare and disability sectors. In previous roles, she has provided staff support and skill development, policy and procedure improvement, quality assurance, and planning and administration that initiated cultural transformation and the development of programs and services.

Before this, Tania worked in the government sector, program and service advising; partnership project work and child protection. Tania aspires to implement best practice through change, believing that staff need to have an understanding of the relevance of good processes and why they are so crucial to improve service delivery. She believes that this approach enables staff to embrace change and take ownership of quality improvements relative to their daily tasks.

Nourish and Nurture Program

The Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Services (MPYS) and Maternal Child & Health Services (MC&H) work together to facilitate the Nourish and Nurture program. This free playgroup, based in Hastings, is for parents under 25 with children under 3 years of age. It aims to provide support to parents through information sharing and making connections with peers as well as with relevant workers. The group gives children and parents the opportunity to socialise, sing, play, go on outings, engage in loads of activities and improve links with the community and local services.

The playgroup is currently looking for new participants. New parents are especially welcome as playgroups are a great way to find support during the transition to parenthood. Please feel free to contact Cindy at Mornington Peninsula Shire’s Maternal Child and Health Services for more information. Details for the playgroup are:

WHEN: Tuesdays 1-3pm
WHERE: Pelican Park Recreation Centre
2 Marine Parade, Hastings
Phone: Maternal Child & Health Services 5950 1635 (Cindy)

Survey data launch

The CTC Healthy Neighbourhoods Schools’ Surveys have now been completed with over 3,000 students taking part.

The Centre for Adolescent Health is currently collating the data and we are looking forward to receiving the results in early 2013. A launch is being planned for February/March 2013 that will be open to all interested community members.

To register your interest, please contact Karl Kasbach on 5950 1642.

Festival for Healthy Living

coming to Rosebud in 2013 ...

The Festival for Healthy Living (FHL) is a unique mental health promotion and partnership initiative that builds the capacity of schools, families and communities to strengthen the mental healthiness and wellbeing of children and young people through the arts.

The FHL works through schools as core social centres. Whilst the focus is on children and young people, family inclusion and working with whole school communities are important priorities.

The whole school approach adopted by the FHL in its work with schools is based on the Health Promoting Schools Framework.

The model used in the Framework establishes an interconnection between three key areas in order to promote the health of the community:

- curriculum, teaching and learning
- whole school organization, ethos and environment
- community links and partnerships

Within the FHL program, students work with partner teams, comprising teachers, health professionals and artists, to explore everyday issues which affect our mental health, in a spirit of problem-solving, creativity, optimism and fun.

Specifically, the Festival aligns health promoting goals with the education initiatives of equipping young people to:

- manage themselves and their relations with others
- understand the world, and
- act effectively in that world

The FHL is auspiced by the Royal Children’s Hospital Integrated Mental Health Program.

With a history spanning more than 14 years, it is a state-wide program, structured over a 3 year model, with multiple concurrent projects in communities across metropolitan, regional and rural Victoria. It has provided a creative opportunity for schools in over 26 communities across Victoria to promote a whole school approach to wellbeing.

In early January 2012, FHL received an Expression of Interest from Peninsula Headspace to meet and discuss a proposal to conduct a FHL program across the Rosebud - Rye locality, and including Rye, Tootgarook, Boneo and Rosebud.

It was considered that the Southern Peninsula ‘would benefit greatly from a program which could contribute to building co-ordination across health and education services and introducing new initiatives for building resilience’.

This scoping report acknowledges the established and strong Southern Peninsula relationships operating with well-developed partnerships and services across the sectors that support children, young people and families.

Communities That Care®, School Focused Youth Service and the broader MPS Youth Services Team have supported the initiative throughout 2012 by providing support during data sharing and their knowledge of the Rosebud community. This support will continue through ongoing participation with the Steering Committee and various supplementary working groups throughout 2013-2014.

For more information, please contact Samantha Cochrane on 5950 1668.

VCAL class

This term saw nine students from Peninsula Training and Employment Programs, Community VCAL students, participate in a personal development program at the YLounge.

The young people engaged in topics that included relationships /communication, positive body image, Youthlaw, mental health and community engagement.

The students all participated in organising and running a ‘Biggest Morning Tea’ to raise money for cancer research. Thanks to their hard work and help from the local community business, they were able to raise nearly $300.

For more information, please contact Sue Hannah on 5986 3585.
Over the past couple of months, the School Focused Youth Service Coordinator has visited most of the Secondary Colleges on the Mornington Peninsula to speak with the wellbeing staff to see what the main wellbeing issues are that affect students in their schools. This information will complement the data gleaned through the CTC Healthy Neighbourhoods Schools’ Surveys.

Self-harm was seen as a major issue across several schools so it is beneficial that recently Frankston School Focused Youth Service was able to work in conjunction with Peninsula headspace, Peninsula Health and Orygen Youth Health to provide two days of training on this subject.

Other issues that were identified include bullying (most schools are currently well resourced in respect to anti-bullying programs); sexual behaviours; depression and other mental illnesses; student engagement with schools, teachers and peers; support for same-sex attracted students; nutrition; and gaming addiction. These issues do tend to marry with what the CTC data is showing and provide further evidence of how the two programs can work in partnership. For more information, please contact Judi Adams on 5950 1655.

Social Marketing Projects

CTC Mornington Peninsula is supporting two social marketing projects through CTC Limited. The aim of these projects is to distribute social marketing materials into pilot schools on the Mornington Peninsula. These marketing materials target adolescent alcohol consumption. The first project distributes materials to all Year 7 students and their parents and is intended to either prevent adolescent alcohol use or encourage adolescents to delay drinking until they are older. The second project is a road safety initiative and targets Years 9 – 11 students as they prepare to become road users with a harm minimisation message and aims to get adolescents to reduce their alcohol consumption.

So far brochures have been provided to Dromana Secondary College for distribution to parents of Year 7 students; Rosebud Secondary College, Balcombe Grammar School and Somerville Secondary College for both projects.

The resources targeting Year 7 and Year 9 – 11 students have been provided to the schools to be distributed within pastoral care sessions with supporting lesson plans.

Stay tuned for more information on this project as Term Four will see a photography competition and exhibition to support the messages of these projects.

For more information, please contact Karl Kasbach on 5950 1642.