

Minutes
SWMPF Working Group on
Vulnerable and At Risk Children and Young People
9.30am – 11.30am, Friday 25th August, 2017
SMYL

Chair: Simone Ryan

Participants: Judy Walls (SWMPF); Jenni Gordon (SWMPF); Yvette Little (FFSN); Denise Henden (Dep of Education); Kerry Wadsworth (FFSN); Cynthia Becher (DSS); Daniel Mooney (Community Policing); Julie Mitchell (SMYL); Felix Ross (City of Melville); Vania Dapaz (DCPFS) Joan de Castro (City of Cockburn), Alex Kepes (**Access Housing**)

Apologies: Julie Gorman (Fremantle PCYC), Michael Piu (St Patrick's Community Support Services), Sophie Doy (City of Fremantle); Rieke Rolle (Anglicare WA)

1. Thank you to Karina Chicote (Save the Children) and Jamie Barr (City of Armadale) for a valuable presentation on the Youth Partnership Project Armadale.
<http://www.youthpartnershipproject.org.au/ayip>

2. Updates from the SWMPF Steering Committee and Leadership Group

Judy informed the group that the (new) Department of Communities has agreed to provide limited continued funding for the SWMPF backbone. The amount provided is not sufficient to support all of the work that the SWMPF does and as such, we are continuing with our fundraising efforts. The latest effort has been a grant submission to the DSS. Given our financial status, the Leadership Group has taken the decision to rationalize our efforts, which has necessitated the dissolution of the Social Planning and Coordination of Wrap Around Services working groups. The mandates of these working groups have been accomplished. Former members of these working groups will be invited to join up with either of the two remaining group i.e. the Vulnerable and at Risk Young People or the Davis Park working group.

The SWMPF will be holding an annual meeting of the membership on the 13th October at the City of Fremantle Reception Room. It is anticipated that we will give a presentation of the work of the IF Project and hope that working group members will attend.

3. Update on 'Keeping Kids in School' program

Denise briefly explained the focus of this program, local business communities are asked to commit to not serving children during school hours. The idea is that truancy rates will drop in areas where children are unable to access food etc. and this will reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour. Gateway Centre in Cockburn has recently reinstated this program.

Once the local business has signed on, a representative from the local school will become a contact person for business owner. This school representative can then

keep business informed of events that are happening in the schools e.g. sports carnival days etc.

Denise agreed that she would be willing to speak about the program to a business forum out in Cockburn. Joan will be in touch with Denise in this regard.

4. Governance and management of SWMPF *Imagined Futures* Initiative: -Brokerage fund management mechanism

Comments made by the group on the brokerage mechanism were updated in the Terms of Reference. It has been suggested that for amounts over \$2 500 a subcommittee of three members of the Steering Committee will be set up to approve these applications. The Terms of Reference are being circulated amongst the SWMPF Steering Committee for approval, by 31 August.

Actions: Judy is in the process of drawing up a pro-forma funding application. Once this document has been completed, Judy will e-mail it out. This will be ready before the next meeting for those organisations already wanting to put in an application.

5. Youth Ambassadors Group – update on progress

Felix reported that the youth ambassadors will be selected from within the Resilience and Transition to High School programs. The ambassadors will initially come from the four schools with three students from each school.

The youth ambassadors will be able to give feedback on the programs and look forward and identify issues that are of importance to them. The high school students will be able to talk to the primary school kids about what to expect of the high school experience.

This will serve a dual role – the first is feedback for the project and the second is for the high school students to be mentors and share information with primary school children. Denise suggested this could form part of Transition Week.

The logistics of this group still need to be determined, for example, how often the group will meet, where the meetings will take place and the practicalities of transporting kids to meetings.

6. Caralee Enrolment Morning

This was an initiative of the Melville Council. Although only one guardian attended the event, it was still beneficial in terms of developing an understanding of what some of the barriers to enrolment might be e.g. difficulty in obtaining correct documentation such as proof of residency and guardianship, and birth certificates.

Denise stated that the DG of Department of Education has given a directive that a lack of a birth certificate should not impede the enrolment of a child in school. Schools have a legal obligation to enrol children, and if the student's previous school records showed that a birth certificate has been cited at some point, then that was

proof enough. Also, a parent or guardian should be able to fill in a Statutory Declaration regarding proof of residency. If parents are confronting difficulty, Simone should contact Denise and she would take it up with the school in question.

In terms of proof of guardianship, Vania stated that CPFS does support family members who are looking after children (eg, Nannas). Cynthia mentioned that difficulties often arise around Centrelink payments not going to the actual caregivers of the children, and families were not keen on engaging with services in case it affected the support payments. Vania mentioned that CPFS does not inform Centrelink of any changes to private arrangements for children's care (eg, if the children remain with family), only if the children are removed and placed in foster care. Kerry said that FFSN is also able to help families work through these issues.

South Lake Primary School had their enrolment afternoon on Thursday. Alana from Lakelands was there to help with enrolments (no further details available as yet). Out of a possible 29 Year 6 students at SLPS only 5 have been enrolled in high school so far. They are trying to find a solution to facilitate the enrolment of the remainder. Denise stated that if the school made the department aware of these students then they could try and connect with them.

Actions: Denise to send Judy a copy of the DG Department of Education Directive related to birth certificates

Set up a meeting regarding enrolments for Lakelands High School from South Lake with Denise, Kerry, Simone.

7. Transition Program Update

Simone provided an update on the high school transition program. The program is going well, they currently have 21 kids, down from the original 25 but this kind of drop off is to be expected. Out of these students, the best 13/14 will be chosen to become mentors in the primary school.

8. Resilience Program Update

Simone reported that they have 2 groups of 14 kids in South Lake and 14 kids at Caralee. The kids at South Lake have been doing the Ozzy Optimism program as well as some sport and cooking. At Caralee, kids have been doing the same with the inclusion of lawn bowls.

There have been great improvements at South Lake but we are also aware that there are at least three children that are involved with police outside of school.

Success in Willagee was linked to after school activities available to kids, especially through the Community Centre, and sporting activities, but the situation in South Lake is different, with no community centre across the road from the school. While there are after school activities available in the Cockburn area, transport is often a problem. Practical support might be needed to help in this area, maybe through Ottey Centre, Cockburn Youth Centre etc. Felix suggested that we should look at bringing activities to the school itself e.g. Night Fields.(Follow up?)

7. Any other business

- Reminder about the Lakelands SHS event on the 21st September. This event will provide entertainment for kids as well as host a number of agencies to deliver information.
- Alex mentioned some possible funding opportunities exist for families' educational needs though ANZ/Smith Family. She will e-mail this information to the group.
- Judy suggested that we bring business cards and brochures to the next meeting to distribute to other members.
- Joan had been approached by a group keen to volunteer. Simone suggested that she be in touch with Sue Kirkham (SLPS) as well as look into Edconnect who put volunteers into schools.
- Denise requested that we circulate the names and contact details of group members – Judy to circulate the list.
- Vania mentioned that Child Protection Week is coming up of the 6th September. Please see the flyer attached for an event in Davis Park (SWMPF project)

8. Next meeting – Friday September 29th, 9.30-11.30am will now be held at the Youth Pod, Cockburn Youth Centre, 25 Wentworth Pde, Success.