

Minutes

Meeting of the SWMPF Working Group on Vulnerable and At Risk Children and Young People

9.30am – 11.30am, Tuesday 12 May, 2015

Department of Education Regional Office

184, Hampton Road, Beaconsfield

Interim chair: Karin Mac Arthur, Community Partnership Broker, South West Metropolitan Partnership Forum

Participants: Julie Fitzgerald (Team Leader, Responsible Parenting Services, Department for Child Protection and Family Support); Denise Henden (Regional Attendance Coordinator, Department of Education); Michael Wood (Operations Manager, Operations Manager, Nyoongar Outreach Services); Rieki Rolle (Team Leader, Y-Shac Anglicare WA); Christine George (Youth Project Officer, City of Fremantle); Bobby Mizen (Youth Outreach Officer, City of Cockburn); Ian Jorritsma (Team Leader, Department of Housing)

Apologies: Russ Eldean (Youth Liaison Officer, WA Police); Paul Loseby (Manager, Headspace)

Visitor: Simone Ryan, Youth Counsellor, Palmerston

Minute taker: Karin Mac Arthur

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

The working group welcomed Simone Ryan to the meeting.

2. Palmerston proposal to seek funding to run preventative program in our 3 schools

Following the SWMPF Leadership Group meeting on 1 May, Bram Dickens, Manager at Palmerston, called Karin to discuss the possibility of running a Protective Behaviours program at the 3 schools. Following Karin's very positive reception of this idea, Simone, a youth counsellor at Palmerston, came to the meeting to get a better understanding of what the working group is seeking to do and, also, to explain what Palmerston's program might look like.

The members were very supportive of the proposal and agreed it would assist in building resilience and well-being, which one of the four project outcomes.

Simone advised that typically a program session runs for approximately 45 minutes once a week, over four to five weeks.

She was unable to say when the program might be run as this is subject to the turnaround time of the relevant funding body.

The meeting agreed that the 'super hero' resilience building theme would work well with our cohort of students. No details will be finalised until the Principals have had the opportunity to comment on the proposal.

Actions:

- Karin to send Simone the children's list of initiatives to 'make school cool' as this might help inform the program.
- Simone to send Karin an outline of the proposed program so that working group members can seek feedback from their respective school principals.

3. Approval of minutes meeting 28 April 2015

The minutes were approved without change.

4. Update on actions arising from minutes

All actions have been undertaken except the flyer on this project, which Karin will draft at the earliest opportunity. In the meantime, she referred people to the SWMPF website, which provides a comprehensive project overview: <http://www.swmpf.org.au/swmpf-projects/common-social-issue>

Michael is working on the grants register and expects to have this completed by the next working group meeting.

Bobbie advised that South Lake had been following up information that Allan Wiseman was to obtain regarding other groups that might be able to run a program to teach the children how to build their own BMX bikes.

Ian advised that he had not heard back from South Lake regarding the additional information he required to progress his sponsorship application.

Karin updated the group on the SWMPF Leadership Group's discussion on the request for funding for this project. She is optimistic that the requested funds might be forthcoming from a small group of philanthropic donors as initial approaches have been positive.

The Leadership Group recalled that funding should only go to support sustainable initiatives, with preference for capacity building initiatives,

such as linking people together who have run successful projects, fund-raisers and so on.

In this context, there was some discussion in the Leadership Group about the need to link schools in with existing programs wherever possible, rather than seek additional funding. The take away breakfast was a case in point and it was requested that this be followed up again with Foodbank.

Megan Milligan, the South Metropolitan Population Health Unit's representative on the Leadership Group, offered to support the establishment of a healthy schools' committee in each of the schools. Given the current workload of working group members, it was agreed that Karin would raise this at a later date with the relevant people.

Action:

- Karin to follow up with Allan re outstanding information for South Lake.
- Karin to provide Ian with alternative contact details for South Lake.
- Christine to confirm with Foodbank in writing as to the school's requirements and their view that Foodbank cannot meet these.
- Karin to follow up with Dee and Denise, and Bobbie and Michael in relation to setting up a Healthy Schools Committee.

5. Debrief of meeting with Principals

It was agreed that this had been a positive meeting with important feedback from the Principals that would inform the future direction of the project.

Particular attention was drawn to the concerns raised by the Principals as to the capacity of this project to improve attendance when all other attempts had failed to do so. Karin advised the group that she had communicated these concerns to the appropriate authorities following the meeting.

Another important issue raised by the Principals was the difficulties that students had transitioning from the primary to the high school environment. The group agreed that we should look in due course at enabling more orientation sessions or similar supports.

Bobbie also noted the concern raised about the time burden on an already overstretched staff of the various project initiatives.

Karin noted that we needed to be mindful of this and keep any demands on the staff to a minimum; however, as a partnership, the project would inevitably require an investment of time from all parties involved.

Action:

- Karin to place issue of supporting students to transition to high school on a future working group meeting agenda.

6. Next steps for stage 2 initiatives

The working group spent some considerable time discussing how best to proceed. It was acknowledged that the original proposal to introduce a series of targeted initiatives to respond to the different issues of each individual student would not be possible with the resources available. Some members were already feeling overloaded with the demands of this project. Ian kindly offered to join the group working on the WPS initiatives as these have been particularly time-consuming of late.

It was agreed that it would be more effective to consolidate the stage 1 initiatives and seek to deliver the other project outcomes (building resilience and wellbeing; engaging in local community activities; feel safe and supported) by building upon these initiatives rather than introducing new ones. An example would be to develop the children's sense of pride and belonging by acknowledging their achievements to the whole school.

Action:

- Karin to follow up with Ruah regarding a program being run in Armadale whereby Elders are helping to link families up with existing services. It would be helpful to get more information if the program is being run in the Fremantle region.

7. Working lunch to be organised this term – proposed theme, format and date

The group discussed the Principals' request for a working lunch to be held this term and agreed that – despite the tight timeframes - we would organise these as it was essential to maintain the project momentum.

The group had a great brainstorming session and agreed that an appropriate focus of the working lunches would be to ask the children to develop positive behaviour messages - and accompanying drawings -for posters that could then be put up around the school. The children would be provided with A3 sheets featuring their logos.

It was agreed that, despite the tight timeframes, the working lunches should be held two weeks before the end of term assemblies so that the children could each receive a certificate of merit from the Principals in acknowledgement of their work.

In order to expedite the various tasks, it was agreed that the relevant members would each contact their respective schools to lock in dates and so on.

The City of Cockburn and the City of Fremantle kindly offered to fund a working lunch each; the Department of Education will likely fund the lunch at Caralee.

Actions:

Nominated representatives to contact their respective schools asap to:

- Seek feedback and approval for proposed theme of working lunch
- Find out date of end-of-term assemblies
- Request the children be given certificates at the assemblies
- Lock in date for the working lunch
- Advise Karin of the working lunch date.

In addition:

- Karin to prepare several sheets of A3 paper for each school that will feature their respective logos
- All groups to ensure they have drawing materials for the working lunches
- Karin to advise Denise of the cost of last working lunch at Caralee
- All groups to get numbers for the lunches and place orders nearer the time.

8. Any other business

- Eleanor Jones, Social Inclusion Officer at DSR, has asked to meet with the working group. It was agreed to invite her to the next meeting.
- Dr Amma Buckley, Curtin University, who is working with Karin on the project evaluation, will also attend the next meeting to seek members' feedback on the proposed evaluation and measurement framework.

9. Date and venue of next working group meeting

9.30am, Tuesday, 16 June, Regional Office Education Department, Beaconsfield.11