

Minutes

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

9.30am – 11.30am, Tuesday 25 August 2015

Department of Education Regional Office

184, Hampton Road, Beaconsfield

Chair: Karin Mac Arthur (SWMPF)

Participants: Denise Henden (Department of Education); Russ Eldean (Youth Liaison Officer, WA Police); Dee Skuza (Community Development Officer, Youth - City of Melville); Pamela Sturgeon (Department for Child Protection and Family Support); Michael Wood (Nyoongar Patrol Outreach Services); Lara Steel (Fremantle HeadSpace); Rieki Rolle (Team Leader, Y-Shac, Anglicare WA)

Visitors:

- Debbie Moss, Case Worker, Mercy Reconnect
- Jody Reed – prospective student teacher
- Joseph Moss – prospective student teacher
- Eliza Gerlach – student social worker

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

The group was delighted to welcome Debbie, Jody, Joseph and Eliza to the meeting. They attended the meeting in response to the invitation for new community members.

The group was also delighted to welcome Lara Steel, from Fremantle Headspace, who replaces Paul Loseby. Paul has recently taken a new position with St John of God.

A warm welcome was also extended to Pamela Sturgeon, who is acting for Julie Fitzgerald who is on long service leave.

2. Volunteer to take the minutes

Karin Mac Arthur

3. Presentation on Attendance Panels – Melanie Couzens, Behaviour and Attendance Consultant

Melanie provided the group with an overview of the attendance panels set up by the Department of Education to provide advice and assistance to parents of children who have less than a 60 per cent attendance rate.

Melanie distributed an information guide, guidelines and application form to the working group (these documents are available in soft copy on the Department of Education's website). She encouraged working group members to join a panel and/or spread the word.

The panels are about creating a non-threatening environment in which parents can be supported to improve their child's attendance and avoid legal proceedings. The time commitment is approximately three hours a month.

For further information about the attendance panels – or to submit an application – please contact Melanie.Couzens@education.wa.edu.au

Action:

- Members to consider joining the attendance panels and spreading the word to suitable candidates.
- Karin to post an item on the SWMPF website inviting nominations to the attendance panels.

4. Approval of minutes meeting 21 July 2015

The minutes were approved without change.

5. Business arising from minutes

- Refer agenda items below.

6. Update on stage 1 initiatives in each of the schools

- Caralee
The SWMPF business representative attended the after-school homework program a couple of weeks ago and is hoping to raise funds among a group of high net worth individuals to keep the program going for 12 months.
- Winterfold
Nothing to update as all members of the WPS sub-group have been on leave or sick during the last few weeks.

Karin met with the deputy principal two weeks ago with Simone Ryan to get the resilience building program locked in (refer item 7 below).

- South Lake
Karin advised the group of the fantastic efforts of Rebecca Caldwell to obtain the requested sport equipment. Not only has Rebecca succeeded in obtaining the equipment from Fair Game but also transported it to the school. Huge thanks Rebecca!

Karin also advised that she had received a revised quotation from Dismantle to run a tailored bike building workshop at South Lake. This is now a more realistic figure. Karin has suggested to the Deputy Principal to put in for a grant from the City of Cockburn when she returns from leave.

Actions:

All members of the sub-groups to keep working on the initiatives requested by their respective school groups.

7. Update on Palmerston's tailored resilience building programs in each of the 3 schools

Palmerston is generously providing this initiative free-of-charge.

Simone Ryan has now commenced these programs in all 3 schools. She has divided the groups at South Lake and Winterfold into two in order to make them more manageable. Simone is therefore now running 5 sessions a week.

Each program has been informed by the stage 1 initiatives sought by each group of children.

All the schools have been asked to have a teacher in attendance at each of the sessions until the children get to know Simone.

The relevant working group members are also encouraged to attend some sessions this term to keep the connection with the children (as we are not holding a working lunch in term 3).

The program is scheduled to run for 12 months.

Actions:

- Members of the sub-groups to coordinate attendance at Simone's sessions at their respective schools - both to support Simone and maintain the connection with the working group during Term 3.
- 8. Update on strategy to support transition to high school (year 6s)**
- Dee updated the working group on the actions she, Bobbie and Rieke have undertaken to progress this. They have been in touch with all the feeder schools in their respective areas. The Year 7 coordinators are being invited to a meeting to be held on 10 September.

At this meeting the Year 7 coordinators will be invited to share their ideas on a possible event to be held in October/November.

The Year 6 members of the Caralee Idea Hunterz, the South Lake Rocketeers and the Winterfold Strikers will be asked what kind of event they would like to be held.

Year 7s will also be invited for feedback on key issues/challenges they encountered in their first year.

The working group noted the need to support children entering Year 7 without being seen to do so (ie do not smother!). Also to give them a sense of responsibility.

While this year it will only be possible to run one event during term 4, the group agreed that next year should include ideally one activity a term (could be sports) to bring Year 6s and 7s together.

Actions:

- Dee, Bobbie and Rieki to host meeting on 10 September with Year 7 Coordinators and report back to the working group on the feedback received.
- Following the meeting, Karin will ask Simone to seek feedback from the Year 6s in the 3 schools about what kind of event they would like to have to help them transition to Year 7.

9. Update on WA Football Commission programme

Dee advised that this program is already all set to go! As discussed at the last meeting, the six-week program aims to engage with at risk boys and girls aged 9 – 16 years and retain them for the duration of the program. It also seeks to encourage increased school attendance by offering fun activities after school.

The program will be held for the first time on **Wednesday, 26 August**, at Winnacott Reserve, Willagee.

Each session will run from 3.30pm – 5.00pm and will feature skill development and modified games as well as afternoon tea for all attendees. All football equipment will be supplied by the WAFC and the sessions will be run by football development officers. Kids will have access to WAFL players, both male and female, on occasions, as part of the program which will also feature an umpiring session.

The sessions provide a great opportunity to engage with these young people.

The program is scheduled to be run at South Lake in Term 4 and Davis Park/Hilton in Term 1, 2016.

Action:

Working group members – and other agency reps - are strongly encouraged to attend the sessions. The program will only be run for as long as it is seen to be widely supported.

10. Working lunches

It was agreed that a working lunch should not be held in Term 3 to allow the focus to remain on the introduction of Palmerston's resilience building program.

However, it is important that the working group maintain its connection with each of the groups. It was agreed therefore that we would hold a working lunch in each of the schools in Term 4.

Action:

- Karin to ask Simone to invite the children to give their suggestions for the theme of the Term 4 lunch.

11. Update on invitation to community members

As noted above, the working group was delighted to welcome Debbie, Jody, Joseph and Eliza to the meeting. They had joined us in response to the call for new members to contribute their ideas to the project. Attendance at the meeting gave them a better idea of what we're doing and how they might be able to contribute.

It was agreed we should cap membership of the group at 15.

Action:

- Working group members to continue to distribute the flyer among retired teachers, students and other relevant groups wherever possible.

12. Any other business

The working group agreed it would be helpful to lock in a schedule of future meetings. These would be held on the third Tuesday of the month.

The next meeting will be held therefore at 9.30am on Tuesday, 15 September, at the Education Department's regional office.

Action:

- Karin to send out meeting schedule to all working group members.