

ACTIVE RURAL COMMUNITIES

It is common knowledge that there are a long list of benefits to physical activity including boosts to general health and wellbeing.

Rural shires in the South West have been visited by Active Rural Communities Project Officer Dale Nielsen to see how rural children, young people, and their parents are faring with physical activity.

Dale has found that some of the challenges for rural communities have revolved around access; access to coaches, to trainers and volunteers.

Risk management, insurance and childcare were also possible barriers that needed to be negotiated. Funding was also needed to deliver activities. Transport could also be an issue with rural people often having to travel to activities that were not available locally.

An innovative response to these issues has been trialed by Dale and a team of helpers from the community of Dardanup. The team has shown that with some imagination and flair, rural communities can come up with their own solutions and broaden the range of recreation opportunities offered in small towns.

By linking to some willing helpers (local residents and TAFE students) and tapping into the generosity and expertise of a host of businesses and organisations such as Worsley, the Department of Sport and Recreation, the Heart Foundation and SW Women's Health and Information Centre, a six week 'kick start' physical activity program was successfully launched in Dardanup late last year.



Highlights included Hip Hop demonstrations, Dru Yoga and Pram-er-cise classes. Other activities included a family bike ride and community walk.



Although Department of Health and Ageing funds for the Active Rural Communities project will soon cease, project partners Investing In Our Youth Inc, and the WA Country Health Service-SW are interested in finding further resources to build the capacity of children and young people in rural communities to be active.

For more information, contact Dale on 9781 2374 or email Dale.Nielsen@health.wa.gov.au

This Issue:

Active Rural Communities

Chef's Long Table Luncheon Distributes Community Funds

Acknowledgements

Developments and Trends

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CHEFS LONG TABLE LUNCH DISTRIBUTES COMMUNITY FUNDS

The organizing committee of the South West iconic charity event, the Chefs Long Table Lunch will honor its commitment to local community organizations with donations totaling more than \$132,000.

As this year's major beneficiaries of the South West's biggest charity event, the City of Bunbury Surf Life Saving Club and Milligan Community Learning and Resource Centre receive \$38,000 and \$46,000 respectively.

The Bunbury Surf Life Saving Club will use the funds to purchase a new training surfboat, while Milligan Community Learning and Resource Centre will fund various programs within the Bunbury Early Years Network.

As a collaborating partner in the Milligan application, Investing In Our Youth will have a share in proceeds to support early years programs. Investing in Our Youth plans to continue to work with the Linking Education and Families steering group to further support that program and to fund the roll out of family service directories in two more communities in the South West.

Remaining Chef Long Table funds have been distributed between six minor beneficiaries.

The family of a disabled boy in Capel has received \$2,000 towards pool maintenance for his daily therapy sessions, while the Leschenault

Men's Shed was given \$10,000 for woodwork and metal work tools.

Remaining beneficiaries include:

- St John Ambulance Australind - \$19,168;
- Riding Develop Abilities - \$9,000;
- Intown Lunch Centre - \$7,000;
- Bunbury Crewsaders Dragon Boat club - \$1,400.

Applications are now open for the 2011 Chefs Long Table Luncheon and can be downloaded at www.chefslongtable.com.au



Carmen Gregg (Investing In Our Youth), Maria Craddock, (Chair, Chef's Long Table Luncheon), and Karen Collins (Bunbury Early Years) are pictured at a special event to hand over funds to Chef Long Table Luncheon beneficiaries.

All beneficiaries were very grateful for the time and energy committed by the Chefs Long Table Luncheon committee who make the event such a success. They also wished to thank the chefs, volunteers and local businesses and wineries that support the event.



SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to key supporters in 2010 including the Chefs Long Table Luncheon who make it possible for Investing In Our Youth to promote the interests of children and young people in the South West.

In 2010, along with support from the Chef's Long Table Luncheon, we would like to acknowledge the support of the South West Development Commission (information, marketing, and membership) and Mission Australia (membership).

Lotterywest have supported the development of a strategic plan – due for release in the near future.

The Department of Health and Ageing provided funding for the Active Rural Communities project.

Income has been received through consultancy opportunities thanks to partnerships with Milligan Community Learning and Resource Centre (program evaluations for the Bunbury Early Years Network and the Under 5's Healthy Together project) and ECU - research assistance to the ECU Suicide Research Project.



DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS

Driver Training Facility

A group of key stakeholders have been meeting to plan the development of a driver training service in the SW for Aboriginal and low income young people who are experiencing difficulties in meeting driving license requirements. The taskforce includes representation from the Aboriginal Challenge Employment Service (ACES), Investing In Our Youth, Roadwise, SW Population Health (Injury Prevention), Department of Transport, South West Development Commission and the Bunbury Wellington Economic Alliance.

Rising Trend in Youth Unemployment

Although recent data is not available at a South West level, there are indications that youth unemployment rates are on the rise. According to the WA Department of Commerce, Western Australia's youth unemployment rate was **19.9%** in March 2010. By comparison, two years ago, in March 2008, the WA youth unemployment rate was 9.8%.

This is concerning news. Research suggests that young people who are not fully engaged in education or work (or a combination of both) are at greater risk of unemployment cycles of low pay and employment insecurity in the longer term. Levels of participation in education and the labor market are frequently cited indicators of the well being of young people.

Why are young people experiencing greater rates of unemployment than the general population (5.3%)? In an unstable economy, young people are often the first to go as they lack experience or length of tenure. It is thought that the economic downturn has affected sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing, and that semi-skilled employees have borne the brunt of this financial downturn more than professionals. There has also been a reduction in available traineeships and apprenticeships.

Youth Justice Matters

The WA Commissioner for Children and Young People, Michelle Scott has just released an issues paper on youth justice matters at (www.ccyp.wa.gov.au).

The Commissioner notes that 'between 2003 and 2008, 96% of children and young people had little to no contact with the police, and across Australia overall offending by young people has declined in the past 10 years'.

While this is positive news, the Commissioner is calling for increased investment in diversionary programs to bring WA in line with other states. In 2007-08 the daily number of people aged 10-17 years in juvenile detention in WA was 154. In Victoria, it was 63. In South Australia, it was 55.

Sexual Health Concerns

The incidence of Chlamydia in WA has significantly increased. The number of notifications in 2009 in WA (n = 8,874) was 37% higher than the previous five-year average of 6,465.2 notifications per year.

Local Public Health Nurse, Amanda Whittle, has concerns for young people in the South West, many of whom may have Chlamydia but not know they are affected. Up to 80% of Chlamydia, cases have no symptoms.

The bacteria that cause Chlamydia can be easily treated with antibiotics. Left untreated, Chlamydia can result in infections in the cervix, uterus and fallopian tubes. The best way to protect against Chlamydia is to wear a condom.

For more information access: www.GetTheFacts.health.wa.gov.au , contact Amanda Amanda.Whittle@health.wa.gov.au or the Sexual Health Helpline on 1800 198 205

To subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter contact Robyn Golding on r.golding@iinet.net.au