

POLICE COMMISSIONER PROMOTES INVESTMENT IN YOUTH

WA Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan gave an inspiring address recently in Bunbury on the importance of supporting young people to reach their full potential.

The Commissioner spoke of the need to keep young people out of the criminal justice system.

He called for the community to invest in young people and parenting supports. The Commissioner referenced the work of Police and Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC). Although manned by police, like many organisations the PCYC require community support to operate effectively. (Agencies or businesses interested in supporting Bunbury PCYC are invited to contact Senior Constable Trevor Dolan at bunburypcyc@wapcyc.com.au).



Commissioner O'Callaghan pictured with Chair of Investing In Our Youth Prof Rhonda Oliver.

The meeting held at the Bunbury Chamber of Commerce and Industry aimed to promote the importance of investing in prevention and early intervention projects and activities and to foster closer ties between Investing In Our Youth and the business community.

Following the event, Commissioner O'Callaghan accepted an invitation to

become official patron of Investing In Our Youth.

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BE ALCOHOL AWARE

The Be Alcohol Aware project aims to utilise the skills of young people to promote responsibility in the use of alcohol. Schools and youth groups are encouraged to apply for funds to carry out community activities that involve young people in promoting alcohol awareness.

Three 'Be Alcohol Aware' community activities have been recently funded and more are awaiting approval. Collie Senior High School will work with approximately 200 year 8 and 9 students in 2011. The awareness raising will be as hands on as possible, with students given the opportunity to

measure standard drinks and develop possible scenarios and role-plays.

The South West Aboriginal Medical Service will work with a group of young women between the ages of 12 and 15 to create culturally appropriate posters to distribute to community agencies frequented by Aboriginal people such as SWAMS (medical clinic), and ACES (employment service). These young people hope that their posters will encourage not only the young people in the community but also the adults to become more 'alcohol aware'.

The City of Bunbury will support rescheduling of GWN television advertisements promoting responsibility around supply of alcohol to minors. The genesis of this idea was approved by the City of Bunbury Youth Advisory Committee. The advertisement can be accessed through the following link <http://www.bunbury.wa.gov.au/index.php?pageId=899>

Further applications for Be Alcohol Aware Community Activity Funds are encouraged. Information can be found on the Investing In Our Youth website www.investinginouryouth.com.au.



AERF PARTNERSHIP

Investing In Our Youth are looking forward to developing a productive partnership with the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation who have agreed to add value to the Be Alcohol Aware project by providing additional community activity funds, by funding a visit from the Leigh Clark Foundation, and by providing a keynote speaker for a workshop in the SW on alcohol and

youth. The workshop will be solution focused and present latest findings on young people and alcohol. We look forward to developing these ideas further with the AER Foundation.



Youth groups and schools are reminded that they can access the DVD 'Three' from Investing In Our Youth. This 28 minute video produced by the Paraplegic Benefit Foundation shows how young people's choices can impact on their future and is most appropriate for young people aged 15 and above.

BOARD MEMBER PROFILE – KAREN COLLINS

The Board of Investing In Our Youth provides strategic direction, monitors all matters to do with quality and outcomes, and are positive ambassadors for the organisation. Karen Collins has served on the IIOY Board since 2008.



Board member Karen Collins

Tell us about your background?

I live with my family in Bunbury. I have had an interest in children, youth and community education and health for most of my adult life. I believe that each one of us can make a positive difference in the future, by being informed and proactive in our approach to the youngest members of our world. For the last few years I have been in the privileged position of working with my interests in coordinating the Bunbury Early Years Network, a role that allows me to meet many people across the South West who also share this passion.

Why do you support Investing In Our Youth?

Both at a personal and professional level I see the value of having an organisation such as IIOY which is able to respond to the South West community issues around children and youth who often get overlooked. The people involved in this organisation are committed to working supportively together with others to make our community a better place.

What would you like IIOY to achieve in the future?

Continue to be a voice, assisting others in our community to make the necessary changes to practice, based on current research and knowledge, and recognise the opportunities that will emphasise the importance of early years, our youth and their families. Become an organisation that is recognised both locally in the South West and in the State as advocates, partners in research and enabling growth with an eye on investing in a bright future.

What are some of your other interests?

I have many roles in our community which combine my passions: my beautiful family, friends, water activities, camping, travel, reading, having a good laugh with delicious food and great wines. I'm involved as a volunteer Breastfeeding Councilor with Australian Breastfeeding Association for over 15 years and a Scout Leader with 2nd Bunbury Sea Scouts for over 6 years. I'm also involved in South West Women's Health & Information Centre, GP Division, In Town Lunch Centre, Choose Respect, and Chef's Long Table Lunch. Some say... I'm a compulsive networker and dragonfly mad.

R.I.P.P.A FEST IS A RIPPER EVENT

Many organisations collaborated in the successful organisation of the recent inaugural RIPPA Fest event.

The event coincides with the International Day of People with Disability held on December 3. The 2010 event was staged at Paisley Square in the Bunbury CBD.



91% of people who completed a brief survey on the event reported that they had become more aware of opportunities to include people with a disability.



The event was a catalyst for celebrating disability and promoting inclusion. This message was successfully reinforced in a media campaign leading up to and following the event.

It is hoped that this event will become an annual fixture on the calendar. The 2010 event was supported by funding from the City of Bunbury.



BOYUP BROOK'S BOLD YOUTH VENTURE

Get Unleashed in the Brook Youth Festival is a new event for 2011 to be held at the Music Park in Boyup Brook on Saturday March 19. The festival is designed to support the development of young people in their transition from independence into adulthood and will include career guidance, community outreach programs, workshops, professional development activities, and healthy lifestyle choices. The festival will also include a battle of the bands, public performances, art, FMX, BMX,

skateboarding, silent disco, and amusement rides.

Young people aged between 12 and 25 are invited to help with this event and encouraged to contact event coordinator, the Country Music Club. For more information ring Hannah on 9765 1657 or email Hannah@countrymusicwa.com.au.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cristal Global has recently committed to supporting the Investing In Our Youth organisation by becoming a corporate member.



Cristal Global Human Resources Manager, Asia Pacific, Liz Baggetta said that Cristal Global were proud to support Investing in Our Youth and their valuable contribution to youth services in our community. "Their programs and assistance are essential building blocks for the next generation," she said.

Spokesperson for Investing In Our Youth Professor Rhonda Oliver said that she was very appreciative of the community support shown by Cristal Global and particularly their proactive support for prevention and early intervention work with children and young people.

SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS

YOUTH ISSUES IDENTIFIED

Based on 192 responses to a survey of youth workers and young people across Australia conducted by the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition in 2010, a priorities list has been released of the top 5 youth issues, and top 5 youth sector requirements.

Top 5 youth issues:

1. Mental health
2. Education and training
3. Drug and alcohol consumption
4. Participation in the community
5. Employment

Top 5 youth sector requirements:

1. Funding requirements
2. Organisational sustainability
3. Partnership building
4. Policy consultation
5. Communication with government

For the full report see the AYAC website at www.ayac.org.au

STRUCTURAL REVIEW FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONS

In July 2010 Investing In Our Youth was one of many organisations that responded to a call for comment on proposed changes to the structure of regional development commissions. Responses reflected local confidence in the SWDC and satisfaction with the service provided, reinforcing the effectiveness and efficiency of the current structure of regional development commissions.

Investing In Our Youth supports the commonly held view in the SW that regions are unique and have diverse needs and that development commissions require a structure that allows them the independence to quickly and flexibly respond to emerging community needs.

A report has recently been released recommending a change in structure and governance.

The new structure calls for amendments to the Regional Development Commissions Act. Regional development commissions would come under one entity – the WA Regional Development Council. RDCs would no longer be individual statutory authorities, but would form part of the WA statutory authority. This authority would report directly to the Minister for Regional Development and provide general managerial and administration oversight to the regional offices.

The authority would endorse appointment and deployment of staff; be responsible for strategic financial resource management; endorse strategic, business and operational plans; and conduct peer assessment and evaluation. This change is anticipated to lead to reduced autonomy for regional development commissions.

The report and opportunity for further comment can be found at <http://www.rdl.wa.gov.au/Content/RD/RviewRDC.aspx> (until Feb 1).

EARLY YEARS COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

Investing In Our Youth has taken up an opportunity to work with the newly formed Community Services Leadership Group focusing on promoting early year's collaboration. The committee, convened by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, involves government and not for profit representatives in exploring ways to work collaboratively to demonstrate improvements in the wellbeing of children in WA.



STATE GOVERNMENT SHARPEN FOCUS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD

Using advocacy strategies such as letters to Ministers, a community 'postcard' addressed to politicians and policy makers, and submissions to parliament, Investing In Our Youth have been calling for increased financial commitment from the Government in the area of prevention and intervention in the early years of life.

Investing in Our Youth is heartened by recent commitment from the State government to provide funding in the next State budget for new early years facilities and services. Premier Barnett has been quoted as saying that he thinks it is important to invest in pre-school education, playgroups, and childcare, three year old kindergarten...health services for young mothers, parenting services and even justice services.

This sounds like a positive development and one that will be followed with interest by early year's champions such as Prof Fiona Stanley and WA Commissioner for Children and Young People Michelle Scott.