

E-NEWSLETTER

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YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION POSITION

We are delighted to share the good news that a position has been developed in the South West to help promote youth mental health. The position will be managed by Investing In Our Youth and is jointly funded by the South West Development Commission and the Mental Health Commission.

This funding will enable the South West to have a dedicated youth mental health officer, whose job will be to focus on raising awareness of youth mental health in the region.

The role will involve working to reduce the stigma that is sometimes associated with mental health issues, and encourage young people to seek help.

July

A key focus for the officer will be promoting the support that is available.

Mental Health Commissioner Eddie Bartnik said the partnership will enable a foundation to be laid for youth mental health services in the South West region through a capacity building, early intervention and prevention focus.

The officer, who will be based in Bunbury and is expected to be appointed soon, will play a key role in providing information about mental health, as well as advocating for the social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

The officer will also support the establishment of headspace, a youth mental health service which supports young people dealing with depression, substance abuse and other mental health issues.

SCHOOLS OF THE FUTURE UPDATE

Since May 2011 IIOY has supported a 'Schools of the Future' network that was convened to explore future alliances between schools, community and health. A fore-runner to the development of this group was a 'think tank' workshop that provided an opportunity for local principals and maternal and child health and allied health professionals to discuss mutual issues of concern in their local community and possible solutions through resource sharing, collocation and collaboration.

The group has continued to meet and has broadened the network representation to include local government, the Department for Communities, and the Disability Service Commission. A prime function of the group has been information sharing and relationship building. Investing In Our Youth is grateful for the support of the

2012

Australian Children's Trust who has given us the capacity to support these activities.



'Schools of the Future' strategies and outcomes have so far included:-

- Relocating some community and allied health workers to a location at Eaton, reducing the travel burden for families in the rapidly growing suburbs north of Bunbury
- After identifying that lack of accommodation space could be a barrier to collaborative service delivery, the group has advocated for a multipurpose room (to accommodate community and allied health and family services) to be included in new school plans at the proposed Treendale Primary School
- The group planned a 'Schools of the Future' forum that featured inspiring stories of collaborative practice in the early years. This forum was attended by many local health and education delegates and greatly increased local knowledge of possible school, health and community partnerships.
- The 'Schools of the Future' network has recently established a speech and language working party to investigate a possible model of service delivery that will involve partnerships between schools, State speech pathologists, and the

Department of Education's State Speech and Language Service. It is anticipated that other working parties will evolve to investigate and support collaborative responses to priority issues identified by the group.

HARVEY PLAY EXPO

Investing In Our Youth was pleased to be associated with the Harvey Play Expo which was held last month at the Harvey Recreation Centre.

The objective of the Play Expo was to educate families – targeting parents, parents-to-be, carers and grandparents of 0 – 5 year olds about the benefits of physical activity and the local support that is available for families.

A large emphasis was placed on *Nature Play* and how outdoor, messy play can be a fun and cheap activity which has long-term benefits to children's health and wellbeing. Nature Play CEO Griffin Longley was a very motivating guest speaker on the day.



A range of activities was available to demonstrate how easy it is to encourage the physical development of young children. The day was very well attended and judged a great success.

The concept of a Harvey Play Expo was developed in response to Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) results. The AEDI is a measure that looks at five levels of children's development. Teachers complete a check list of children in their first full time year at school. (Access a five minute video explaining the AEDI here: http://www.rch.org.au/aedi/sources.cfm?doc_id=13163)

The 2009 AEDI results for Harvey showed that over **45.5%** of children in

Harvey and surrounds were assessed



as developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains with an emphasis on physical health and wellbeing.

As a result of this concerning data, discussions at Harvey Interagency Meetings led to the development of the Play Expo concept to promote physical activity in 0-5 year olds.

The event was a collaborative effort involving Southern Country Health Service SW, Shire of Harvey, Harvey Cultural and Community Centre, Playgroup WA, Harvey Primary School, Nature Play WA, Harvey Occasional Care and Investing In Our Youth.

Financial assistance came from the Department of Education – AEDI and Alcoa. Harvey Shire provided the venue free of charge, and Harvey Fresh donated drinks.

For more information contact Hannah Thomas on Hannah.thomas@health.wa.gov.au

[a.gov.au](http://www.health.wa.gov.au)

STUDENT PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By Robyn Wilson

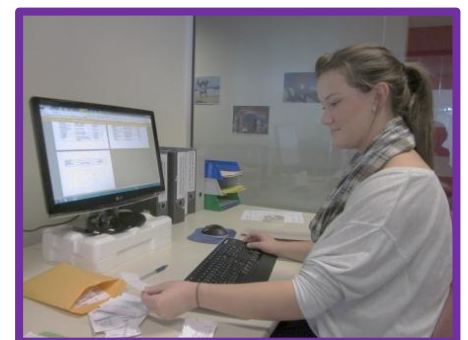
Community Services students at South West Institute of Technology (SWIT) undertake work placement as part of their training. This might take the form of volunteer work or a more traditional placement, organised and supervised by SWIT staff.

Placement gives the students invaluable insight into the Community Services sector, allowing them to put theory into practice. It tests their skills, knowledge and personal attitudes. For agencies, students can provide assistance in the running of the

organisation, by assisting with special projects, or undertaking some of the tasks of the organisation. They bring a 'fresh eye' to the agency, asking questions and exploring issues for their own learning. This can be helpful for workers, who can use this as an opportunity to re-think some of the established practices or work habits of their agency.

Work placement students require a supervisor who is willing to spend regular time with them, giving constructive feedback and instruction. Investing In Our Youth recently hosted a very successful work placement, which gave the student the opportunity to explore a number of work roles she had not considered before. As a result of this experience, the student has now changed her future study plans, so she can continue working with the client group as her career progresses. And another benefit, she has been offered a job as a result of her work placement. This often occurs as a result of placement, as students are able to prove their worth to the organisation.

SWIT would welcome any enquiries from organisations who might like to host a student placement. Students are covered by insurance by SWIT, and agency staff has the support of lecturers around any issues that might occur during the placement. If you are interested in hosting a student, please ring Robyn Wilson or Karen Barrett-Lennard on 97807321 or by email Robyn.Wilson@swit.wa.edu.au.



Morgan Tomsett was a cheerful addition to the work place in a collaborative placement arrangement between Investing In Our Youth, the Newton Moore Community Work Centre and True Colours



Not for profit organisations like Investing In Our Youth are managed by a volunteer Board. The commitment of volunteers to this important role is crucial to the effectiveness of the organisation. This month's Board member profile features Steve Denton.

Tell us about your background

Currently I am working with Parent Support, which is a service within the Department for Child Protection. We work with parents to restore their authority where their children are engaging in criminal or anti-social behaviour in the community. Prior to this I worked predominantly with youth within the Department of Education as a Social Worker at the Canning District Education Office and a Youth Transition Coordinator at the Bunbury Behaviour Service Centre. I also worked as a Child Protection Field Officer and a Caseworker resettling humanitarian refugees. Prior to my Social Work career I worked within the administration of the Courts across the state. I grew up and went to school in Bunbury, although spent my earlier years in the wheatbelt of WA. I have had the privilege to work and live across various areas of WA and meet many wonderful people across the positions I have held.

Why do you support IIOY?

I support the work of IIOY because it assists to provide a 'voice' for areas of the community which are often not heard i.e. children and the services that support their needs. I believe healthy kids and healthy services for kids will help underpin a prosperous and happy society that we can all enjoy as one generation moves to another.

What would you like IIOY to achieve in the future?

I would like to continue to see IIOY pursuing their goals in relation to 'alcohol and youth'.

What are some of your other interests?

I enjoy riding my motorbike, spending time with family and friends, being a dad, sustainability concepts (social, environmental etc.), loud music, playing around with audio/visual equipment and tinkering in the shed.

BUNBURY HEADSPACE

Plans for a headspace Centre in Bunbury are making good progress according to spokesperson June Foulds from the Koombana Health Network.

The Centre is on target to open in January at unit 1, 82 Blair Street, Bunbury.

Headspace is a federal government initiative that provides early intervention mental health and broader support to young Australians aged 12 to 25.

For more information on headspace see www.headspace.org.au.

Investing In Our Youth Annual General Meeting. 4pm October 8

CHILDREN'S WEEK OCTOBER 20-28

Investing In Our Youth is planning to give away some children's book packs to promote reading during children's week in October.

Children's Week Children's Week is an opportunity for the community to engage in a variety of activities that facilitate, support and encourage children and their families to play, learn and grow together.

We would be interested in linking in to any other children's week celebrations in the South West. Contact Carmen at iioy@iinet.net.au.

COMMISSIONER FOR A DAY

WA Commissioner for Children and Young People would like to know what children and young people think about the images and messages they see and hear on television, music videos, magazines, newspapers, the internet, radio and billboards.

The 2012 Commissioner for a Day Challenge has been launched to provide the opportunity for young people aged 10 to 15 years to present their views.

Whoever is chosen to become the Commissioner for a Day will receive an iPad, and chance to discuss their views with decision makers. Anyone thinking of entering should send an email to Chris.Stronach@ccyp.wa.gov.au

WIN A MARKETING PACKAGE

Busselton marketing agency Jack in the Box has come up with a novel way to support the community sector. They are providing a not for profit agency with the opportunity to win a marketing package, advertising space in The West Australian, and a \$5,000 cash donation.

Once applications close on the 10th of September 2012, the Judging panel will gather and begin the task of selecting 10 finalists. The successful finalists will be given the assignment to produce a 3 minute or less video to be presented to the public.

After viewing the videos, the public will have a chance to vote for an organisation. The voting will indicate to the judges the level of public support for an organisation.

To receive an application pack, visit the 'orange seed project'

www.orangeseedproject.com.au

GIRLS IN I.T. robotics workshops are happening now. Contact us for more information iioy@iinet.net.au



Our profound thanks to corporate members South West Development Commission and Cristal Global and other agencies who support our work.