

E-NEWSLETTER

New Role for Investing In Our Youth

Investing In Our Youth has been contracted to develop a Regional Children's Service Plan for the South West.

The project is an acknowledgement of the challenges faced by organisations that provide education and care services (formerly known as child care services) for children in country areas: including the impact of distance, isolation, limited funding and the reliance on community based management committees to manage these services. The purpose of the project is to develop a more strategic, long term approach to supporting sustainable models of community managed education and care services in regional Western Australia.

Investing In Our Youth are in the process of recruiting a Regional Development Officer to undertake this work.

The purpose of the position will be to:

- Produce a Regional Children's Services Plan and provide input into the development of a state-wide plan.
- Support the development and/or maintenance of Regional Children's Services interagency structures (new or existing) including developing ongoing sustainability options.
- Support the development and sustainability of regional education and care services through the implementation of agreed strategies recommended as part of the Regional Children's Services Plan.

The project is funded through the Regional Community Child Care Development Fund grant and is collaboration between the Department for Local Government and Communities, and the Department of Regional Development and Lands, and Royalties for Regions.

October

Investing In Our Youth chairperson Professor Rhonda Oliver said that it would be exciting to add to the expertise that the organisation is developing in early years matters through the Child and Parent Centre project, Schools of the Future Network, and the Youth Mental Health focus on neuroplasticity and social and emotional regulation.

For more information on this project contact Carmen Gregg on T 9721 6951 or E iioy@iinet.net.au.



Department of Local Government and Communities
Department of Regional Development

Investing In Our Youth AGM

Anyone with an interest in learning more about the work of Investing In Our Youth is welcome to attend our upcoming Annual General Meeting.

The AGM will be held at 4pm on October 14 on the Upper Level, 51-55 Forrest Ave, South Bunbury. Light refreshments will be served.

Current strategic priorities of the organisation are:

1. Create opportunities for children, young people and their families to participate fully in our community
2. Advocate for and represent the interests of children and young people in the South West Region
3. Address priorities identified by key stakeholders with a focus on prevention and early intervention
4. Plan for sustainability of the organisation

For more information contact Carmen at iioy@iinet.net.au T 9721 6951.

2013

RU OK?



R U OK? Day is a national day of action on the second Thursday of September (12 September 2013) and reminds people to regularly check in with family and friends (<http://www.ruokday.org>).

You don't have to be an expert to support someone going through a tough time. You just need to be able to listen to their concerns without judgment and take the time to follow up with them.

RUOK day was highlighted at Carey Park Primary School by the Child and Parent Centre with Annette Owen providing all staff with a home cooked morning tea (see cakes above), and encouraging everyone to take the time to check in with the people around them.

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Neuroplasticity – Learning About the Brain Early in Life

Contributed by Louise Fischer, Regional Youth Mental Health Development Officer

The brain is amazing – it's plastic! Neuroplasticity refers to the brain's ability to change itself in response to the environment and to learn from experience. The brain is the only organ able to do this. Our emotional state early in life, affects the way our brain develops. All experiences, good and not so good, shape the structure of the brain. The early years of life are a critical time for brain development.

Investing In Our Youth is excited about bringing MindUP training to the South West. MindUP is an evidence based classroom curriculum that fosters social and emotional awareness, enriches psychological well-being and promotes academic success. Through the MindUP curriculum, children learn about their brains and how different parts of their brains function.

By learning how the brain operates we can learn how this affects our emotions and therefore our behaviour. MindUP gives children a deeper understanding of how the brain processes information. MindUP is a great way in which children, aged from pre-primary through to around 14 years, can learn to regulate their emotions and research shows this knowledge will be sustained into adulthood.

Shaping Brains Project Manager Sheryl Batchelor, from the charity the Benevolent Society in Queensland, will be conducting MindUP training for teachers in the South West at the end of January next year. The training for staff from the three schools directly associated with the Child and Parent Centre (Carey Park Primary, Maidens Park Primary and Djidi Djidi Aboriginal School) will be subsidised by partnerships developed through the Benevolent Society. We are hoping to provide additional training in January for interested teachers in the broader SW region. Teachers can register their interest in MindUP training for 2014 by emailing Annette or Louise on annette.owen@iinet.net.au or Louise.fischer@iinet.net.au

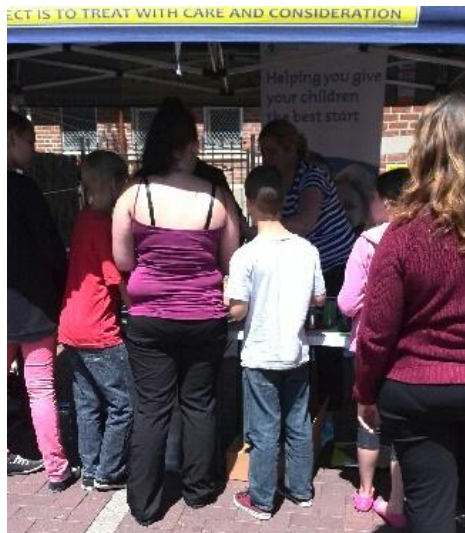
Annette Owen is the Coordinator of the Child and Parent Centre (due for completion next year at Carey Park Primary School).

According to Annette, MindUP is about learning emotional regulation through the practice of 'mindful attention' which is learning about your senses. "Evidence suggests MindUP teaches children to think about their feelings before reacting in any given situation."

Both Louise and Annette recently demonstrated some MindUP activities to a very appreciative young audience at the Bunbury Kidsfest on October 7 - see photos below.



Louise and Annette were also at Paisley Square in Bunbury on October 9 where they took the opportunity to take part in Mental Health Week celebrations.



Australind Shopping Centre Support HANDS UP 4 KIDS



Many thanks to Vukelic Holdings and their management team of Australind Shopping Centre who have pledged significant funds to the HANDS UP 4 KIDS program and have committed to repeating the donation each year for the next three years.

With this help, HANDS UP 4 KIDS will continue to make great gains. The program is currently operating in nine primary schools in the Greater Bunbury Area.

The HANDS UP 4 KIDS program involves community members volunteering their time to hear young children read aloud at school. The commitment required is only one hour per week. Anyone with an interest in finding out more about volunteering should contact coordinator Jan Akaczonk on email handsup4kids@gmail.com

Alcohol Awareness Funding Opportunities



With the support of Telethon, Investing In Our Youth still have a number of funding opportunities for youth groups wishing to coordinate an alcohol awareness activity before the end of 2014.

The Be Alcohol Aware project aims to utilise the skills of young people to increase alcohol awareness and reduce the incidence of under-age drinking.

Who can apply?

Schools, local youth groups, PCYC's, Youth Advisory Committees and a range of youth groups and agencies are encouraged to apply.

The funding is available to applicants from the South West Region

A project steering group will review applications on a regular basis. Successful applicants will be informed shortly afterward and can expect to receive funds within seven days of notification.

For how long will funding be available?

Funds must be used before December 31, 2013.

For guidelines and funding applications contact Carmen at iioy@iinet.net.au

Schools of the Future Network

Our next Schools of the Future network meeting on November 6 promises to be a very interesting one. Guests will include A/Executive Director, Office of Early Childhood Development and Learning Garry Hewitt. Garry will provide an update on *education perspectives for the 0-4 years' age group*.

Also on the agenda will be Nicola Brown who will bring us the story so far on the interface that the Disability Service Commission has with schools and what we need to know about the new National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Speech and Language consultant Gillian Penman will present on the early language Rocket 2 School program.

This 'Schools of the Future' network meeting will be held at the Withers Library – located opposite the Minninup Forum on Hudson Road (before the round-about). The meeting will run between 8 and 10 am.

Participants are welcome to give notice of any questions for presenters prior to the meeting through the iioy@iinet.net.au email.

Acknowledgements

Combined not for profit services on the Upper Level of 51-55 Forrest Avenue are seeking good quality chairs suitable for meeting rooms and other communal areas.

A big thank you goes out to the **Bunbury Community Legal Centre and Community Mediation Service** for donating surplus office furniture.

Developments and Trends

PARENTS would be fined for supplying alcohol to underage children other than their own at home under a plan to strengthen State liquor laws. Tough new "secondary supply laws" are expected to take center-stage in a wide-ranging review of the Liquor Control Act.

The Liquor Control Act committee is currently reviewing and considering matters relevant to the operation and effectiveness of the Act, having regard to the changing community needs and attitudes relating to the accessibility of liquor and related services.

The committee is expected to report to the Minister later this year.

The following excerpt has been taken from a submission to the Committee made by the McCusker Centre for action on Alcohol and Youth.

"The provisions within the current Act only relate to the supply of alcohol to minors on licensed premises and do not address the supply of alcohol to minors in private settings.

Currently in WA, anyone can provide any child with any amount of alcohol in private settings.

WA has fallen behind other jurisdictions in protecting children and adolescents from the supply of alcohol in private and other non-licensed premises. The National Health and Medical Research Council advise that for children and young people under 18 years, not drinking is the safest choice.

Further action is required to reduce young people's access to alcohol.

In the majority of Australian States and Territories, laws control the secondary supply of alcohol to minors in private settings. These laws state that only a parent, or an adult acting in the place of the parent, or with the formal approval of the parent, can supply a minor with alcohol in a private residence. Secondary supply legislation is in place in New South Wales (since 2007), Queensland (since 2009), Tasmania (since 2009), Victoria (since 2011) and the Northern Territory (since 2011).

A second offence of 'irresponsible supply' occurs in some states when a person

provides an excessive amount of alcohol or does not supervise the minor's consumption of that alcohol to ensure it is consumed safely.

The Act should include provisions to prohibit the secondary supply of alcohol to minors without the authorisation of parents, carers or guardians, and where authorised, the provisions should have regard for the irresponsible supply of alcohol to minors.

The provisions regarding the irresponsible supply of alcohol should require that alcohol may not be supplied in excessive quantities and the minor's consumption of alcohol must be supervised to ensure it is consumed safely.

There is strong community support for secondary supply laws. An independent survey of 1600 West Australian adults conducted by the Painted Dog Research Company in April 2012 (commissioned by the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth) showed: 88% of Western Australians support the introduction of laws to prevent the supply of alcohol to minors without parental permission (with only 5% opposed).

Secondary supply legislation is also supported by the WA Education and Health Standing Committee.

Appropriate provisions to prohibit the secondary supply of alcohol to minors in WA would reinforce and support the role that parents play in providing a supportive and safe environment for their children in regard to alcohol. Secondary supply legislation would assist in supporting parents and other adults who do not want to give alcohol to minors, setting a community standard regarding the supply of alcohol to young people, and influencing societal norms on underage drinking.

Secondary supply laws provide an opportunity for public education about the risks of alcohol use by children and adolescents. The introduction of secondary supply laws must be accompanied by a comprehensive, sustained public education campaign adequately resourced to ensure the WA community is well informed of the laws and the importance of delaying young people's use of alcohol."

