A DIFFERENT JOURNEY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Bayside Glen Eira Kingston Local Learning and Employment Network (BGK LLEN) is a not for profit organisation with a focus on creating partnerships and developing collaborative initiatives which aim to increase the potential of local young people (aged 10 – 19 years) to make a successful passage through school and into sustainable education, training or employment. Established in 2002, the BGK LLEN is one of 31 LLENs across Victoria.

The BGK LLEN would like to thank all the Learn Locals in the Southern Metropolitan region of Melbourne that agreed to be surveyed, interviewed or be part of the focus groups. A thank you must also be given to the Steering Group (Robyn Downie, SMR ACFE; Terry Paxino, SMR DEECD; Andrew Simmons, South East LLEN; Simone Dawson, SkillsPlus; Mary Fox, Keysborough Learning Centre) who were engaged throughout the research process to advise the researchers. The BGK LLEN would also like to thank Emma Woods who supported the administration of this project.

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Educational Transformations provides research and consultancy services in education across Australia and internationally. It was established in 2004 by Professor Brian Caldwell at the conclusion of his appointment as Dean of Education at the University of Melbourne. Brian serves as Managing Director and leads a team of consultants who provide support for a range of commissioned projects for organisations and institutions in the public and private sectors.

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FOREWORDS

FROM LEANNE MALCOLM

It is with great pleasure that I introduce *A Different Journey – Youth in Learn Locals* research report. The research undertaken by BGK LLEN and Educational Transformations was commissioned by the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council of ACFE. The strength of Learn Local organisations is in being able to develop and deliver flexible and appropriately tailored programs to meet the need of their local communities.

Many Learn Locals have developed innovative programs that are delivered to specific learner groups such as youth. The work of Learn Locals, especially in the context of working with the most at risk and vulnerable young people in our communities, is about offering a different learning journey to them to assist their re-engagement into education, training and future employment. In recent years delivery to young people across Learn Local providers has been steadily increasing.

Southern Metropolitan Regional Council of ACFE has long suspected that the numbers of youth accessing programs in Learn Local settings is significantly more than is identified in any one set of statistics. The findings from this research clearly support this assertion and provide current and relevant evidence which will enable Learn Local organisations to continue to develop and grow their programs to meet the specific needs of this learner group.

ACFE and Learn Locals will now have access to this information and it can be confidently used across a number of programming and developmental areas including the identification of 'best practice models', gaps in curriculum development and delivery, and opportunities for building partnerships and networks across the region.

I hope that you find the report findings useful in strengthening program development and delivery and in supporting young people into relevant and meaningful learning pathways.

Leanne Malcolm
Chair – ACFE Regional Council
Southern Metropolitan Region
December 2012

FROM PROFESSOR BRIAN J. CALDWELL

Educational Transformations was pleased to be commissioned conduct a study of youth education in Learn Local organisations in the Southern Metropolitan Region of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. We valued very highly the opportunity to work in partnership with Bayside Glen Eira Kingston Local Learning and Employment Network (BKG LLEN).

It is evident from this report that the Southern Metropolitan Region through its Adult Community and Further Education Board is responding to a significant need. Learn Local is one of the most important initiatives in education at this time and many Learn Local organisations are responding to the needs of young people in an impressive fashion. The study revealed that much larger numbers of young people are engaged in programs than were understood to be the case. It is of serious concern that so many are disengaged from regular schooling for so many reasons but also uplifting that so many not-for-profits and community organisations are involved in redressing the situation.

The findings demand very serious consideration by senior policy makers at all levels of government and further support from public funds as well as from the philanthropic, not-for-profit and corporate sectors. There are powerful implications for schools and the changes that are needed to ensure that students are engaged. Australia cannot hope to be a top tier nation in school education unless the findings of this kind of study are taken up as a matter of urgency.

Our Consulting Researcher and Manager of School Networks Fiona Longmuir conducted the study and we were pleased that her expertise and deep understanding of young people were brought to bear. She was partnered by Louisa Ellum (Chief Executive Officer) from the BKG LLEN and they were assisted at several points by Dr Tanya Vaughan, our Senior Consulting Researcher and Director of Impact Studies.

Professor Brian J. Caldwell
Managing Director and Principal Consultant
Educational Transformations
December 2012

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research was commissioned by the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council of ACFE, which is one of eight regional councils providing advice to the ACFE Board. Bayside Glen Eira Kingston Local Learning and Employment Network (BGK LLEN) were contracted to undertake the project and commissioned Educational Transformations as a partner and report co-author. The purpose of the research was to develop a comprehensive picture of the young people (aged from 10 to 19 years of age) who are accessing education at Learn Local organisations and to illustrate the arrangements for program delivery.

The *A Different Journey – Youth in Learn Locals* research report was carried out from 11 July 2012 to 30 November 2012. The research was informed by data collected in four overlapping phases:

1. *Data review* – comparisons of the information that ACFE held about enrolment numbers and information provided by the participating Learn Local organisations.

2. *Survey of Learn Local organisations* – an online survey distributed to all 63 Learn Local organisations in the SMR. 31 Learn Local organisations completed this survey providing a comprehensive overview of the sector and the young people who are learning through it.

3. *Focus Group Interviews* – Eight Learn Local organisations were selected to participate in focus group interviews. Those selected were representative of the range of different Learn Local providers within the region. The focus group interviews were designed to elicit in-depth information and follow up on data and issues gathered in the survey phase.

4. *Telephone Interviews* – A further eight Learn Local organisations were selected to participate in telephone interviews. These were organisations that indicated in the survey that they were either interested in moving into providing programs for young people, or had recently started providing such programs.

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

The young people accessing education at Learn Local organisations are on the whole disengaged from schools and have low levels of literacy and numeracy. This research identified that this is often the outcome of these young people not being able to successfully engage in a mainstream education environment whilst dealing with significant issues. These issues are categorised into: learning differences and disabilities; mental health challenges; substance abuse; and family background issues.

LEARNING THEIR WAY

The Learn Local sector is made up of a range of different, community based organisations (in the southern region of metropolitan Melbourne). The Learn Local organisations that participated in this research reported to have a total of 1,498 young people participating in programs at their centres. The organisations ranged from small Neighbourhood Houses with less than 25 young people engaged in their education programs to large youth focused not-for-profit organisations who offer programs for up to 356 young people.

The research found that there were approximately 70% additional young people accessing programs at Learn Local organisations than recorded in the official validated ACFE data provided for this research. The reasons appear to be a combination of young people receiving funding to participate in the programs outside of those that are recorded by ACFE and the Learn Local organisations allowing some young people to access programs unofficially.

Generally the programs that are being offered in Learn Local organisations are effective in re-engaging young people and providing them with pathways to further education or employment. However, there were strong calls for further support in the form of funding and resources to enable the educators to develop more effective partnerships, programs and pathways to support these vulnerable young people.

CONSIDERATIONS

The findings of this research have informed these considerations for action to advance the important work that is occurring in this sector and to impact more broadly across the education sector in Victoria.

RESOURCING OF YOUNG PEOPLE

1. The report highlighted very large numbers of young people in Learn Locals, largely hidden because of mixed funding sources and diverse data collection. Provision of support and broader education resources such as career support and development, sport and recreation, appropriate ICT as a learning tool, welfare and wellbeing support, literacy and numeracy support and disability support services are often not available or can be readily accessed.

    Consideration needs to be given to resourcing these young learners equitably (in the same way as their mainstream school counterparts).

RESOURCING, RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT OF LEARN LOCALS

2. The research identified a lack of recognition and support for Learn Locals in the broader education system, even though they take on many of the State's most at risk and complex young people in an educational capacity. Learn Locals must be recognised as an important contributor to the education system in Victoria. These organisations need to be in genuine partnerships with schools, DEECD Regional and Central office. Regions have a responsibility to support Learn Local providers in the same way they provide support to schools.

    Consideration needs to be given to developing mutually respectful partnerships to create workable MOUs, data collection, funding models, outcome and pathways tracking, effective referrals and transition support and professional development opportunities and recognition of staff.

FUNDING MODEL AND SYSTEMS

3. The research found that Learn Locals were accessing a multiplicity of funding streams to provide programs to the most at risk and complex young people across the region. Under the Higher Education and Skills Group (HESG) funding the uncertainty of attendance of this cohort of young people caused immense difficulty in budgeting which in turn led to difficulties with appropriate staffing and resource provision. Funding through schools was equally as difficult with payments to Learn Locals often late or indeed not forthcoming.

    Consideration needs to be made to an equitable model of funding for Learn Locals that are engaging and working with our most at risk and complex young people.

INTRODUCTION

Across the Southern Metropolitan Region (SMR) of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in Victoria, there are significant numbers of students for whom a 'mainstream' educational pathway is not accessible. Many of these students have found their way to community based, alternative learning settings, where they find the support and opportunities that they need to re-engage them with education.

Learn Local organisations work with significant numbers of these young people in a variety of ways. These organisations are varied in their structures, approaches and capabilities but they are equal in their commitment to providing programs and pathways for the students that have 'slipped through' the mainstream system. These organisations play an important role in connecting with the disengaged students in our communities and they do this with an approach that is resourceful, flexible and meaningful under challenging conditions.

This report presents the findings of the *A Different Journey – Youth in Learn Locals* research report. The purpose of the research was to develop a comprehensive picture of the young people (aged from 10 to 19 years of age) who are accessing education at Learn Local organisations and to illustrate the arrangements for program delivery.

BACKGROUND

The Bayside Glen Eira Kingston Local Learning and Employment Network (BGK LLEN) was contracted to undertake the *A Different Journey – Youth in Learn Locals* research report. BGK LLEN engaged research company Educational Transformations as a partner and co-author in this research initiative.

LEARN LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Learn Local organisations are independent community organisations. They are all not-for-profit businesses that are established to serve the needs of local communities. Each of the 320 Victorian Learn Local organisations has its own local board and management team that works with the wider community, local businesses and local, state and federal governments. Around half of Victoria's Learn Local organisations are Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). The RTO status means that they are able to deliver accredited training and offer qualifications, such as VET Certifications, and that government agencies regularly check to ensure that all accredited training is high quality and meets national standards. Those Learn Local organisations that are not Registered Training Organisations specialise in delivering pre-accredited programs such as work readiness, wellbeing, literacy and numeracy support. Many also work with other Learn Local organisations and TAFEs to offer their learners pathways into accredited certificate and diploma programs. In addition to education and training programs, most Learn Local organisations deliver a range of other services for their communities that may include childcare, employment services and community development activities.

ACFE'S ROLE

The research proposal and outline was developed by the ACFE SMR Regional Manager and the research scope and methodology was designed by BGK LLEN (see Appendix A). The outline and methodology provided guidelines for the development of the project supported by the advice of the Research Steering Group. The Steering Group consisted of: representative of the BGK LLEN and the South Eastern (SE) LLEN; a Consulting Researcher from Educational Transformations; the Regional Manager and a Regional Council member from SMR ACFE; and two representatives from Learn Local organisations.

RESEARCH RATIONALE

Learn Local organisations across the state deliver a diverse range of programs to hard-to-reach learners. Many Learn Local organisations have developed innovative programs that are delivered to specific learner groups such as youth. In recent years there has been a steady increase in programs delivered to young people (aged from 10 to 19 years old) across Learn Local providers and partnership arrangements with schools are becoming more common in Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) and Certificate of General Education for Adult (CGEA) programs.

Within SMR, it is understood that multiple funding streams are sourced for delivery by Learn Local organisations. Funding is sourced from: ACFE/Higher Education and Skills Group, under the Victorian Training Guarantee; through fee for service; and under partnership arrangements with schools, employment services and welfare agencies. The success of the Learn Local programs for young people depends on productive working relationships between education providers and the various health, welfare and community agencies which often support these young people. The evidence is clear that strong partnerships are critical to providing the safety nets that young people at risk often require to enable them to undertake and complete study. Southern Metropolitan ACFE Regional Council also suspected that the numbers of youth accessing programs in Learn Local settings is significantly more than is identified in any one set of statistics.

RESEARCH PROJECT DESIRED OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

The research aimed to identify and describe in detail youth delivery including agency partnerships across Learn Local organisations in the SMR. A comprehensive outline of youth delivery not limited to ACFE funding was aimed to be developed including documenting the focus and specific target groups. The research aim was to provide ACFE and Learn Locals with:

- A comprehensive understanding of the curriculum and focus of programs being delivered

- A picture of the relative success of different programs/curriculum in meeting the learning and qualification needs of young people in SMR

- Clarity around the pathways, successes and outcomes for young people in the programs

- Details of the demographic breakdown of young learners in Learn Local settings including sex, age, ethnicity and education level (this information is currently available but not in one combined set of data)

- Information for marketing and promotional purposes as well as to provide government with a clear understanding of the diversity and complexity of the work being undertaken by Learn Local providers

- A strategy for disseminating project findings for greatest effect to their own regional networks and partners

- A way to share 'good practice' models across the SMR (and potentially State-wide. Currently there is no concise method for identifying who is delivering programs to specific sub-groups; this results in the 'reinventing' of programs)

- Improved information about the breadth of work in the youth area being carried out by Learn Local providers (i.e. Community VCAL, VCE, CGEA, pre-accredited programs, VET, fee for service) including how pathways to and from VCAL/VCE are being developed

- A way to improve networking between Learn Local organisations with a youth focus and to support Learn Local organisations moving into youth delivery

- Information about established partnership models with 'Other Agencies' (i.e. LLENs, health, welfare, community and other education and training organisations, including schools) and how these services contribute to social inclusion.

METHODOLOGY

The *A Different Journey – Youth in Learn Locals* research report was carried out from 11 July 2012 to 30 November 2012. The research was informed by data collected in four overlapping phases as described below.

DATA REVIEW

ACFE provided data sets for 2011 and 2012. This information was reviewed and compared to the data provided directly by the Learn Local organisations to investigate the accuracy of information being collected and the reasons behind any inaccuracies.

SURVEY OF LEARN LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

An online survey instrument was designed and distributed to 63 Learn Local organisations in SMR (see Appendix B). Survey Monkey, an online survey design and distribution tool, was used to produce, distribute and collect responses. The survey was designed to collect a broad set of data directly from the service providers about the populations of Young People accessing programs at Learn Local organisations and the programs that the Learn Local organisations are offering to these Young People. These contact details were provided by ACFE SMR and respondents were contacted by email inviting them to participate.

There were 43 individual responses submitted. Seven responses were discounted from the data set because they did not answer any questions or they were incomplete duplicates of another submission. There were 36 individual responses representing 31 different Learn Local organisations. The response rate was 49%, based on LLO representation of 31 out of the 63 Learn Local organisations contacted. Full analysis of the data collected from the survey instrument is available in Appendix C. Where appropriate the data collected from the survey has been analysed and summarised to contribute to areas of this report and the overall findings of this research.

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

Eight focus group interviews at selected Learn Local organisations were carried out between 25 September 2012 and 17 October 2012. The focus group discussions ran for up to 90 minutes and were generally attended by managers and trainers from each of the Learn Local organisations (see Appendix D).

Selection of the Learn Local organisations to participate in this phase of the research was based on responses to the survey and advice provided by the Steering Group. This advice informed the researchers which Learn Local organisations were making significant contributions to the sector and ensured that there was a representative variety based on size, location and programs.

An interview schedule was developed for the focus group interviews (see Appendix E). For each of the eight focus groups the interview schedule was altered to include information provided through the survey in order to build upon it. A considered decision was made to use this schedule as a guide for a semi-structured interview approach to allow rich information and topics of particular relevance at each site to be explored. There was a scribe taking notes at each interview and these notes have been utilised for the data analysis. The interviews were also recorded which provided a resource to verify information.

The data collected from the focus group interviews is summarised in Appendix F and the full analysis of the data is available in Appendix G. The data collected from the focus group interviews has been analysed and summarised to contribute to this report and the overall findings of this research.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

Eight Learn Local organisations were interviewed by phone between 15 October 2012 and 25 October 2012. These interviews were with a manager and lasted for no more than 20 minutes. The Learn Local organisations were selected for contact in this phase of the research because they had responded through the survey that either they did not currently offer programs for Young People at their LLO although they had identified a need for such programs or they had recently started offering programs specifically for disengaged young people.

An interview schedule was developed which included three specific questions which explored what the needs of young people in their community were, what plans or strategies were being considered and what support would be beneficial in developing those plans. Appendix H provides a summary and analysis of the data from these phone interviews.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Educators from 31 Learn Local organisations from the within the Southern Metropolitan Region participated in this research project. At least one educator from each of these 31 organisations completed the online survey. Eight of these 31 Learn Local organisations were selected to participate in the focus group phase of the research and a further eight were selected for phone interview. The educators who participated in all phases of the interviews were managers and/or trainers who worked with young people at each of the Learn Local organisations.

Learn Local organisations are varied in their size, structure and purpose. Of the 31 Learn Local organisations that participated in this research nine were categorised as small neighbourhood houses, nine medium neighbourhood houses, four large neighbourhood houses, one small youth focused not-for-profit organisation, one medium not-for-profit organisation and five large not-for-profit organisations. (See Appendix I for further details of the Learn Local organisations that participated in each phase of the research.)

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

OVERVIEW

Young people who are accessing Learn Local organisations have varied and often complex backgrounds and needs. The alternative learning opportunities that are provided at Learn Local organisations meet these needs in ways that mainstream schools have not. This section of the report will provide insights into the demographic characteristics of the young people who are attending Learn Local organisations and the issues that impact on their learning as reported by their educators.

Data collected through the survey demonstrated that the young people accessing Learn Local organisations are almost as likely to be male (48%) as female (52%) and they are most likely to be from Anglo-Australian backgrounds. As seen in Figure 1.1, the educators who participated in the survey identified *Disability* as the largest identifiable cohort of students. Most Learn Local organisations reported that generally there were minimal numbers of students who identified as being from the categories included.

Data collected from the focus group interviews verified and extended these findings. The focus groups identified further categories that they felt described cohorts of students. Most of these extra cohort categories were the same as those that survey respondents added in the open-ended 'other identifiable cohorts' part of the question.
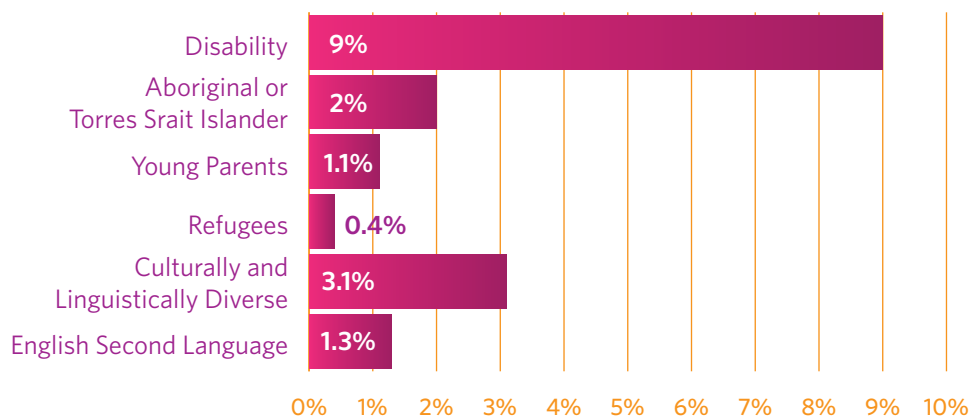
Figure 1.1 - Survey: Percentage of total student population identified by cohort

Table 1.1 - Focus Group: Cohorts identified at LLOs

Category	Number of organisations	Percentage of organisations
Mental Health	8	100%
Alcohol, drug and substance abuse	7	87.5%
Disabilities and Learning Differences	7	87.5%
Carers	6	75%
Homeless or unstable living arrangements	4	50%
Young Parents	2	25%
Aboriginal and TSI	1	12.5%
ESL and CALD	0	0%

Category	Percentage
Disengagement from regular school	94%
Expulsion from regular school	41%
Need for change of environment	47%
Need for change of peer group	24%
Bullying	47%
Wellbeing challenges (family, homelessness)	47%
Health challenges (mental health, illness)	47%
Drug and alcohol challenges	41%
Juvenile justice	35%
Literacy and numeracy challenges	65%
Refugee/CALD	12%
Significant learning difference/disabilities	18%
Another disability	12%

Figure 1.2 - Survey: Opinions of why Young People are accessing programs at LLOs

Table 1.1 illustrates how many of the eight focus groups identified that they had significant cohorts of students in each of the categories, which were based on their responses as well as the list of possible cohorts from the survey.

Further in the survey, respondents were asked to provide their opinions on the three main reasons that they felt young people were accessing programs at their Learn Local organisations from a list provided. Figure 1.2 illustrates that *Disengagement from regular school* (94%) and *Literacy and numeracy challenges* (65%) were the two most commonly selected reasons.

ISSUES EXPLORED

The issues that many of these young people are dealing with raised through the survey and focus group interviews, as illustrated above, have been categorised into the following themes for further discussion.

DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DIFFERENCES

Disabilities and learning differences emerged from the survey and the focus groups as the most significant identifiable cohort within Learn Local organisations. As illustrated in Figure 1.1, survey respondents identified nine percent of their student populations as having a disability. Focus group discussion of disability and learning differences indicated that this percentage was much higher at seven out of the eight Learn Local organisations. The reasons for this variation were clarified in some of the survey comments and through the discussions at the focus groups. It emerged that educator interpretations of Disabilities and Learning Difficulties were impacted by the following three factors:

1. Definition: respondents often reflected on flexible definitions of what is considered a disability and therefore, what they referred to in their answers. Many discussed including 'learning difficulties' and 'mental health' in their perceptions of what constitutes disability.

2. Disclosure: Participants in several of the focus groups explained that often students are reluctant to disclose their disabilities and some students disclose disabilities that have not been officially diagnosed.

3. Diagnosis: There are many students participating in these settings who are un-diagnosed, self-diagnosed or incorrectly diagnosed.

Due to these factors, the educators who participated in the focus groups reported that their estimates of the numbers of students presenting with disabilities was often based on their own observations and understandings.

"So many things fall under the category of disabilities. So we've got lots of young people with traits of autism, Asperger's that sort of thing… Learning difficulties – most, but a lot of them are not officially diagnosed or funded… Data wise we don't have many with disabilities but we do have many with disabilities… 85-90% that need additional support, they would not cope in the mainstream system." LLO 7

"100% if you look at that big umbrella of disability, then all our students. That's why the traditional schools can't deal with them." LLO 3

MENTAL HEALTH AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Mental Health challenges were identified as a significant issue throughout the research phases. The most common forms are anxiety and depression disorders. All eight of the focus groups identified mental health as an issue affecting significant numbers of the young people they work with.

"I would say my percentage would be something like 90, 90% mental illness, anxiety and depression being the most common ones." LLO 2

"Mental illness is a huge one. It's more than a learning difficulty, it is a disability." LLO 3

Throughout the focus groups, connections between the issues: Mental Health; Substance Abuse; Disabilities and Learning Differences; and Literacy and Numeracy Challenges were discussed. The cause and effect relationships were seen as difficult to distinguish and the complexity of dealing with these issues was evident.

"A lot of our young people would have mental health issues, up to 50% maybe more… And we have a lot of drug induced mental health issues as well…a lot of young people have been experiencing [drugs] from a very young age, that would have had an impact on their cognitive development." LLO 5

"Social media is a huge problem, huge, huge… If social media wasn't here today, like Facebook and all that, I wonder what the kids would be like… Things would diffuse instead of being amplified and fed off constantly, it would diffuse over night until they saw each other at school the following day… the things that they write to each other is appalling… the language and so forth that they probably wouldn't say to their face… social media is a reason why we see it so much… it's in our faces… it's bought issues to the surface and made it more prominent." LLO 7

Damage to peer relationships in the form of bullying was identified as one of the main reasons that young people disengage from school which was identified by 47% of the survey respondents (see Figure 1.2). Bullying was raised by five of the eight Learn Local organisations that participated in the focus groups as an issue that had affected significant numbers of students. The emergence and prevalence of cyber-bullying was identified as an increasing trend in the reasons that young people are disengaging with schools and turning to Learn Local organisations.

ALCOHOL, DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Seven of the eight focus groups raised alcohol, drug and substance abuse as a significant issue that many young people presented with. Methamphetamine use was identified as increasingly noticeable; however alcohol and marijuana are also very common. It was felt by some that many students 'self-medicate' and that for some young people there is a significant culture of substance abuse in their lives.

"It just seems to me that it's on the increase forever! It's never going down." LLO 2

"[They are using] heavy drugs. The concern is how they are getting access to those hard drugs, they are not cheap." LLO 5

LLO 1 reported that they are seeing students abusing energy drinks, a trend that has increased over the last year. "The kids rock up not with lunch but with a four-pack… They can't sit still, can't sleep, then they get back on the drinks in the morning. And in between we cop the adrenal exhaustion so they get all like [slumps in chair] like this, it's terrible. The same thing I guess as taking the drugs or drinking, because they can't do that in the day they replace one stimulant with another. It's a big issue."

"It comes down to that mental health – I don't think these kids now are ever themselves, if that makes sense, there's always some stimulant in their bodies. Then they are coming down or moving from one to another or whatever, I think you have very short spaces of time where you are actually seeing the true person."

To address this for their under 15 group the students are not allowed to bring any food or drink to the program, they can only eat what is provided for the day. "It's interesting to watch those kids when we have them for four days a week 9 to 3, by Thursday when they haven't had as much as what they might have had all weekend… They are hyper but by Thursday they are normal again." LLO 1

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Several issues that were raised in survey responses and focus group interviews have been grouped together under the theme of Family Background.

Carers – these students are known by the educators to have significant responsibilities for the care of family members. This was reported as an issue for a significant cohort of young people by six of the eight focus groups.

Homeless or unstable living arrangements – Students are known by the educators to be unable to reside at their family home for a substantial period. This was reported as an issue for a significant cohort of young people by four of the eight Learn Local organisations. Discussions of this issue included reference to students who: slept on the streets; 'couch surfed' (staying at a friends or extended family members house for short periods, before moving on to the next available 'bed'); or regularly stayed for long periods at one friend or extended family member's house.

Other family based issues that disrupted education – The research showed that there are many other ways that the family backgrounds of the young people have influenced their ability to engage with education. These included: financial issues; negative generational attitudes to education and employment; domestic violence; and, living with parents with mental illness and/or substance abuse issues. The educators who participated in this research described that the family influences and lack of support was, not always, but often, a significant negative impact on the young people they work with.

"Indirectly, I don't think they would consider themselves as carers but yes, mum and dad are not capable of, I guess, taking the younger siblings to school and feeding them and so on and so on, so we have many carers. They get up before class, take their younger siblings to school, pick them up feed them, cook for them. That's why we have 10 o'clock start." **LLO 4**

"At the end of the day you just send them home back to the same environment… you just get through a day and you send them off and then back they come." **LLO 1**

TRENDS AND CHANGES

In both the survey and the focus group interviews, respondents were asked to provide their opinions of trends or changes that they have noticed or are expecting, in the cohorts of young people accessing programs at their Learn Local organisation.

NUMBERS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Figure 1.3 shows that 63% of survey respondents felt that over the next two years the numbers of young people accessing their Learn Local organisation would *Increase* or *Significantly Increase*. 12% felt that their numbers would decrease significantly.

In an open-ended opportunity to provide further information on this, survey respondents reported that the main reason for increase was that schools are reducing VCAL options for students.

The influence that school and TAFE options can have on Learn Local organisations was reiterated particularly by two of the focus group Learn Local organisations who expect to have increased interest in their programs with a local TAFE campus closing.

ISSUES AFFECTING THESE YOUNG PEOPLE

Table 1.2 is a summary of the opinions of trends and changes as expressed by the educators who participated in the focus groups.

Cohorts of young people accessing Learn Local organisations are more often presenting with mental health and/or alcohol, drug and substance abuse issues.

Three Learn Local organisations reported that they felt that it is becoming more common to see younger students disengaging from schools and re-engaging in education through Learn Local organisations. One of these organisations shared stories of inquiries about several students younger than 13 but that the Learn Local organisation does not have the expertise or capacity to cater for them. Bullying was also recognised as an increasing reason that young people provided for disengagement from schools, this increase includes more reports of cyber-bullying through social media.

- **13%** Increase significantly
- **50%** Increase
- **25%** Stay around the same
- **0%** Decrease
- **12%** Decrease significantly
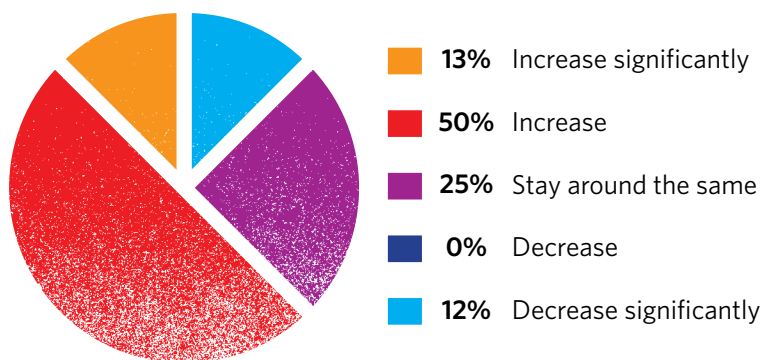
Figure 1.3 - Survey: Percentage of organisations that felt numbers of young people accessing programs would change

"[They are] more fragile. The area of problems is different to what it used to be. Lots of extensive behavioural stuff, anger management, you know can go from nought to a hundred in two seconds. Depression, that type of thing, anxiety issues. A lot more of it and a lot more intense than it used to be." **LLO 7**

Table 1.2 - Focus Group: Opinions of trends and changes in the Young People accessing Learn Local organisations programs

Category	Number of organisations	Percentage of organisations
Alcohol, drug and substance abuse	5	62.5%
Mental health	4	50%
Disengaged students coming to Learn Local organisations are getting younger	3	37.5%
Bullying leading to disengagement from schools (inc cyberbullying)	3	37.5%
TAFE changes will affect numbers	2	25%

CONCLUSIONS

'Disengagement from regular school' and 'Literacy and numeracy challenges', were identified in the survey as the main reasons that Young People access programs at Learn Local organisations. These two main reasons seem to be the outcomes of young people dealing with the underlying issues as described above. When young people experience these issues, their connections with mainstream education providers are often damaged.

Highlighted in this research was the impact that complex and interacting issues have on the educators at Learn Local organisations. These educators deal with extreme circumstances, behaviours and emotions whilst they endeavour to re-engage the young people who have been 'lost' from schools.

"They are like little onions – keep peeling and there is more that makes you cry." LLO 1

FINDINGS

Educators who work in Learn Local organisation settings report that young people accessing Learn Local programs are typically from an 'Anglo-Australian' background.

Educators who work in Learn Local organisation settings report that mental health and substance abuse are the most evident issues that are impacting the young people.

Educators who work in Learn Local organisation settings report that 'Disengagement from regular schooling' and 'Literacy and numeracy challenges' are the main reasons that young people are accessing programs at Learn Local organisations.

Educators who work in Learn Local organisation settings report that these young people are likely to have complex, interacting needs and challenges that have impacted on their capacity to participate in 'mainstream' education provision.

Table 1.3 – Focus Groups: Summary - Our Young People

	Demographics	Issues
LLO 1	Disabilities	Family background Mental Health Not valuing education Substance Abuse Learning Difficulties - Literacy and Numeracy
LLO 2	Some young parents Disabilities Carers	Learning Difficulties – Literacy and Numeracy Financial Mental health – anxiety and depression Substance abuse chronic Homelessness/ unstable living arrangements Family background
LLO 3	CALD - Maori and Pacific Islander Disability Carers	Mental Illness – Anxiety Substance abuse Family background Homelessness Domestic Violence Bullying – social media
LLO 4	CALD - Indigenous group Disabilities – learning Carers	Diagnosis and disclosure of disabilities Very low literacy and numeracy Access to mainstream secondary schooling Mental health Drug and alcohol abuse
LLO 5	Carers Disabilities – learning	Homelessness Substance abuse Mental Health Family background
LLO 6		Bullying Mental Health - depression
LLO 7	Disabilities – learning	Mental Health - depression and anxiety Substance abuse Bullying – social media Family background
LLO 8	CALD - Pacific Islander Mixed group, many second generation CALD Disabilities	Family background Learning difficulties – literacy and numeracy Mental health – depression and anxiety Substance abuse Homelessness

Trends	Data accuracy
Only accepting committed students	Close
School provision of VCAL changing	Drop outs
Students getting younger	
Changed policies lead to more committed groups	
Increase anxiety and depression	Not accurate
Increase bullying leading to school disengagement	Differing funding sources
Increase in self harm	Recording issues
Increase in substance abuse (methamphetamines)	
Increasing numbers due to expansion	
Increase in anxiety	Not accurate
More single parent families – no male role models	Difficulties uploading
Increased concerns for student safety	Differing funding sources
Increase in alcohol and drug use – Ice	Drop outs
Sex education lacking	
Gender balance changes	Not accurate
Bullying	'Floaters'
Increase in drug and alcohol abuse	Many students not captured due to school partnership
Kids getting younger	
Drug use more likely 'harder' drugs – Ice	
Local TAFE closing less options for students	
Increase in drug abuse – Ice in particular	Not accurate
Disengaged students getting younger	Support many that are not enrolled (carry)
Local TAFE closing will impact numbers	
Mental health	
Change in enrolment procedures has led to a very motivated cohort	Not accurate
	Timing of recording
	Other funding sources
Younger students	Not accurate
Mental health increasing	Other funding sources
More behaviour issues	
Mental health issues have increased	Reasonably accurate
Drug related mental health issues	

LEARNING
THEIR WAY

OVERVIEW

THE SECTOR

The young people who have been described so far in this report have many similarities but many more differences in their learning needs. The one thing that characterises them is that they have disengaged, or are at risk of disengagement, from 'mainstream' learning environments and that they have found their way to the alternate learning programs offered at Learn Local organisations. The Learn Local sector is a combination of independent, community based organisations that develop programs using a range of funding and support options.

LEARN LOCAL ORGANSATION DESCRIPTIONS

In Southern Metropolitan Region (SMR) there are 63 Learn Local organisations registered. Not all of these organisations offer programs specifically for young people. 31 of the 63 organisations participated in this research project and of these 31, 21 reported that they offered programs for young people aged between 10 and 19 years old. The Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board is the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) arm that registers, monitors, supports and contracts services from Learn Local organisations across the state.

Learn Local organisations are independent community organisations that are established to serve the needs of local communities. Each organisation has its own local board and management team. Around half of Victoria's Learn Local organisations are Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). This means that they are able to deliver accredited training and offer qualifications. Those Learn Local organisations that are not RTOs specialise in delivering pre-accredited programs. In addition to education and training programs, most Learn Local organisations deliver a range of other services for their communities that may include childcare, employment services and community development activities.

Figure 2.1 shows that 74% (23) of the participating Learn Local organisations are categorised as Neighbourhood Houses. These are local organisations that provide social, educational and recreational activities for their communities in a welcoming supportive environment. There are approximately 360 Neighbourhood Houses across Victoria. Neighbourhood Houses are managed by volunteer committees and paid staff. 26% (8) of the participating Learn Local organisations are other not-for-profit organisations. Three of the eight not-for-profit organisations are specifically youth focused.
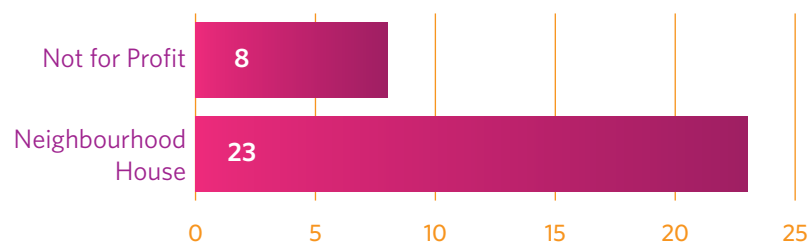

Figure 2.1 - Participating LLOs by type

As well, 52% (16) of the Learn Local organisations that contributed to this survey are Registered Training Organisations (RTO). RTOs are those training providers registered by Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) (or, in some cases, the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority) to deliver VET services. RTOs are recognised as providers of quality-assured and nationally recognised training and qualifications. Neighbourhood Houses and not-for-profit organisations can become RTOs.

The participating Learn Local organisations represented broadly across the geographical locations in the Southern Metropolitan Region, from inner city St Kilda through to the outer suburbs of Cranbourne, Pakenham and Hastings on the Mornington Peninsula. 15 of the 21 Learn Local organisations that provide youth programs, as summarised in Figure 2.2, reported in the survey that programs for young people made up less than 50% of the services they offered. The Learn Local organisations that participated in this research evenly represented large, medium and small Neighbourhood Houses and not-for-profit organisations, as shown in Figure 2.3.

The organisations reported in the survey that they had from between three and 356 students participating in youth focused programs. Table 2.1 summarises the spread of numbers of young people in the Learn Local organisations with the majority of Learn Local organisations having less than 25 young people in their programs.

NUMBERS OF YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN LEARN LOCAL ORGANISATIONS IN SMR

The SMR ACFE provided data for this research which indicated 874 young people between the ages of 10 and 19 were currently in funded places at Learn Local organisations in SMR. Respondents to the survey reported that there are a total of 1498 young people between the ages of 10 and 19 participating in programs at their Learn Local organisations. This is a significant discrepancy in the numbers with the Learn Local organisations reporting that approximately 70% more young people are participating in programs than the ACFE data had recorded. It is also noteworthy that this study involved less than half of the 63 Learn Local organisations in SMR. Although, it is reasonable to assume that the Learn Local organisations that chose not to participate in this research would have a less significant focus on providing programs specifically for young people.

Focus group interviews were used to gather further information about this discrepancy in numbers. Participants were asked to consider the numbers of young people reported in the ACFE data specifically for their organisations and compare that with the numbers that were provided in the survey. This comparison showed that 75% of the eight organisations felt that the ACFE data did not capture the full picture of the numbers of young people learning at their organisations.

Table 2.2 summarises the discussions with these organisations; it shows that there were two main reasons that the ACFE data was not accurate. They were:

Reporting issues: This included the issue of young people who are funded outside of ACFE arrangements. Particularly, there are many Learn Local organisations that receive funding from the schools to run alternative programs.

Carrying students: Often students are not officially enrolled as they may not: fit Victorian Youth Guarantee funding guidelines; demonstrate non-regular attendance; have provision for paying fees; or have an enrolling school willing to pay relevant fees for the provision of their program at the Learn Local organisation.
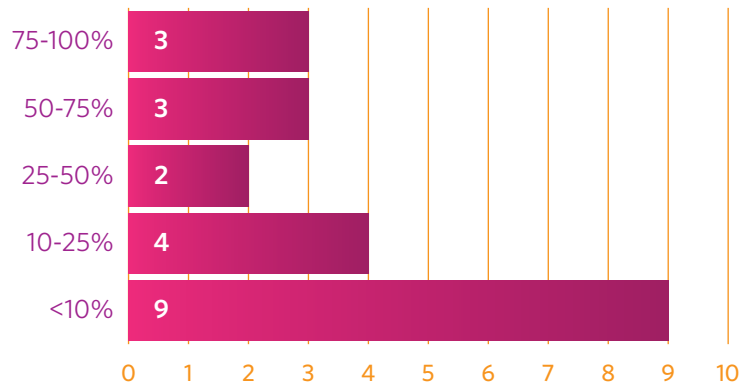
Figure 2.2 - Survey: Fraction of the total services for young people
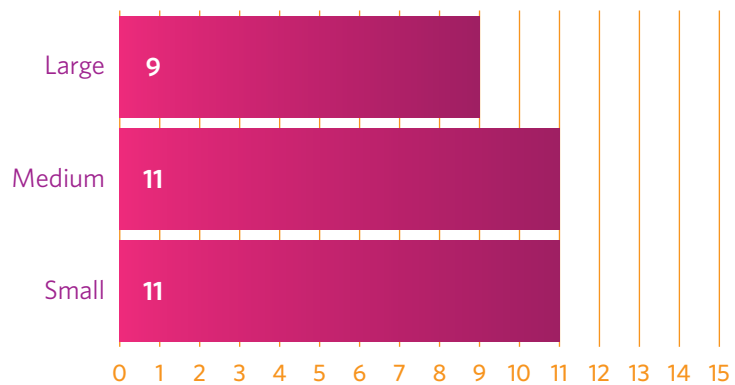
Figure 2.3 – Participating LLOs by size

Table 2.1 – Survey: Total numbers of young people accessing programs

Numbers of Young People in programs at LLO	< 25	50 - 100	100 - 200	250 - 400
Number of LLOs that reported in this category	10	3	2	3

Table 2.2 - Focus Groups: Reasons for inconsistencies in data between ACFE and LLO self report

Category	Illustrative Responses	Number of organisations	Percentage of organisations
No identifiable reason		1	12.5%
Reporting Issue	VCAL students not reported as funded by SRP (Student Resource Package) also others not reported if funding is from elsewhere.	5	62.5%
Carrying unreported kids/ floating kids	Total number of young people who access the education programs is greater, this includes students who are 'carried'; some never enrol.	4	50%

THE PROGRAMS

As described earlier, the needs of the young people who are participating in Learn Local programs are complex and re-engaging them with education that leads to successful future pathways is challenging. The programs that are offered to young people in Learn Local organisations were investigated through this research.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

There are a variety of programs offered to meet young peoples' needs in Learn Local organisations. Figure 2.4 shows the numbers of young people enrolled into the three main categories of programs offered in Learn Local organisations as reported by survey respondents. 58% of young people are accessing accredited programs include CGEA, VCAL and VET courses and 42% accessing non-accredited programs which include re-engagement courses as well as work and life skills programs.

The types of programs offered were explored in greater depth in the survey as all respondents were asked to describe in detail two programs offered for young people. Details of 29 individual programs were collected and these are available in Appendix C. Table 2.3 shows the types of programs that respondents chose to detail in this section of the survey. 65.5% of the programs were the accredited courses CGEA and VCAL and 34.5% other non-accredited programs which include the re-engagement and general skills courses.

The focus group phase of the research pursued this further and Table 2.4 shows that the reported types of programs are similar to those reported in the survey.

This combined data shows that the Learn Local organisations are offering qualifications based programs such as the Certificate of General Education for Adults (CGEA) and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL). These are alternate ways for young people to achieve educational outcomes that provide a basis for further studies (for example at TAFE), apprenticeships or traineeships or for employment. The other programs include 'engagement' programs which are offered, sometimes in partnership with schools, to support students at risk of disengagement or as a first step for disengaged youth to reconnect with learning.
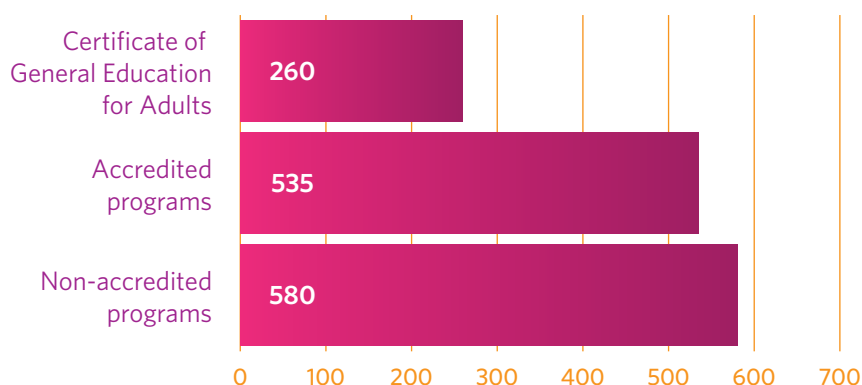
Figure 2.4 - Survey: Reported numbers of young people enrolled by course type

Table 2.3 - Survey: Programs by type from program details section

Response Option	Number of Programs	% of Programs
Certificate of General Education for Adults (CGEA)	9	31%
Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)	10	34.5%
Other	10	34.5%
TOTAL	29	100%

Table 2.4 - Focus Groups: Programs by type

Type of Program	Number of LLOs providing	Percentage of LLOs providing
VCAL	8	100%
CGEA	7	87.5%
VET courses (Cert I to III)	4	50%
Other Programs (Life skills, younger student engagement, work skills)	4	50%
Pathway programs (Pre and Post VCAL or CEGA)	3	37.5%

BOOST – BRIEF OUT OF SCHOOL TRAINING

BOOST offers a streamlined curriculum of Literacy, Numeracy, Personal Skills Development and Woodwork to 10 students each semester. This non-accredited program, offered in partnership with local secondary schools, offers individual support for learning needs, personal and social development. It also offers the opportunity for students to demonstrate their skills and to have the space and time to express themselves and feel heard in an encouraging and non-competitive environment giving them the opportunity to contribute positively in achieving goals.

PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

Learn Locals as community based, not-for-profit organisations are often reliant on connections with other organisations to enable them to offer services to their participants. Information from the survey, the focus group interviews and the phone interviews have informed this research around the types of organisations that are entering into partnerships with the Learn Local organisations to support programs specifically for young people.

Survey respondents were asked to list partner organisations for the two programs that they described. Partners were defined as 'organisations that contribute either financially or non-financially to the success of the program (e.g. offer additional programs, case management to young people).' The respondents reported that support is provided from a variety of organisations. 62% of the programs detailed had multiple partners listed. Table 2.5 illustrates the types of organisations that are entering into partnerships to support these programs. It shows that youth support organisations and schools are the most likely to work in partnership with Learn Local organisations.

Table 2.5 - Survey: Partners identified in specific program details section

Response Category	Illustrative responses	Number of Programs	% of Programs
Youth Service Organisations	Youth Connect; Taskforce; Youth Resource Centre	13	45%
Schools	Local Secondary Schools	10	34%
Local Government	Kingston LGA Youth Team	9	31%
Health Services	Southern Health; Family Life; CAMHS	6	20.5%
No Response		6	20.5%
Employment Services	Wise Employment; PTEP	5	17%
LLENs	BGKLLEN; SELLEN	5	17%
Community Groups	Rotary; Mornington Community Contact	5	17%
Educational Organisations	DEECD; VRQA	4	14%
Funding Organisations	Higher Education and Skills Group; ACFE	2	7%
Other Businesses	Skate World; Bendigo Bank	2	7%
Local Police		2	7%

LLO 3 has a partnership with a building company that builds modular houses. The construction process is all under the one roof so students get to experience many different aspects of the building process.

During the focus group interviews partnership mapping was used as a discussion tool and sought information regarding the types of partnerships that were being formed and where there were strong partnerships, weaker partnerships and defined gaps. Table 2.6 summarises these discussions and the partnership maps for each organisation are available in Appendix J.

Table 2.6 - Focus Groups: Partnership mapping summary

Strong Partnerships	Number of LLOs	% of LLOs
Schools (some)	7	87.5%
Youth and Welfare services	6	75%
Employment services	5	62.5%
Other Educational Organisations (eg. SMR, LLENs, other LLOs)	5	62.5%
Other – Victoria Police, Medical services	2	25%
Weak Partnerships	Number of LLOs	% of LLOs
Schools (some)	6	75%
Youth and Welfare services	5	62.5%
Pathways support/ Employers	4	50%
Other Educational Organisations (eg. RTOs, LLOs)	3	37.5%
Other – Victoria Police, Philanthropic organisations	2	25%
Partnerships Needed	Number of LLOs	% of LLOs
Employers	5	62.5%
Victoria Police	3	37.5%
Mental Health and Medical Support	3	37.5%
Other Educational Organisations (DEECD, RTOs)	2	25%
Sports Organisations	2	25%
LGA Youth Services	1	12.5%
Volunteers	1	12.5%

The educators at all except one Learn Local organisations reported that they had partnerships with schools and six of these reported that they had strong partnerships with some schools and weak partnerships with some schools. Support of employers, particularly those in local businesses, was raised as an area of need as educators from five Learn Local organisations reported that these relationships would provide opportunities for the young people access to work placements and develop work skills.

Through the focus group interviews and the phone interviews further information was sought about how needs could be better met through partnerships. Five of the eight Learn Local organisations who participated in the phone interviews identified that partnerships/networks would help them to develop programs for young people (see Appendix I for Phone Interviews Data Summary and Analysis). The participating educators identified support that would enhance their programs and the most commonly raised responses were more effective partnerships with: schools; Victoria Police; employers/industry; and sports organisations. (see Appendix G and Table 2.13 for further information).

PROGRAM FUNDING

Learn Local organisations access funding for programs for young people in a variety of ways. Table 2.7 summarises the sources of funding that were identified by survey respondents when describing their specific programs.

Table 2.7 - Survey: Program funding sources identified in specific program details section

Response Category	Number of Programs	% of Programs
Higher Education and Skills Group (HESG)	16	55%
Schools	9	31%
ACFE	6	21%
Fee for services	1	3.5%
Other (e.g. Youth Connections, LLNP)	4	14%

Focus group interviews provided further insight into funding arrangements currently in use. The educators descriptions of funding arrangements showed that most of the programs that are being provided for young people are funded through 'per student' monies either from HESG (which is the primary source for accredited programs), from ACFE (pre-accredited) or through arrangements directly with schools (for CGEA, VCAL and engagement programs). The ways in which Learn Local organisations were able to utilise these funds varied and there are several ways that they are able to make their limited resources work most effectively.

Discussion around funding in the focus group interviews generally focused on the challenges involved with the funding arrangements. It was raised in several interviews and is worth noting that Learn Local organisations do not have access through the standard funding sources, to funding for anything outside of the per student money. Unlike schools, they are not eligible for grants and extra allowances for things such as facilities and the Digital Education Revolution, which means that facilities and resources are covered from the per-student monies or are drawn from resources in other areas of the organisation if available and appropriate. This provides challenges with staffing as often the funding sources are enrolment and attendance based making it difficult to plan ahead.

As much as you want to plan ahead, it's planning on the run the whole time. You know you can time table for x amount of students... I am up to version 12 for this year's staff... because the kids move and then you've got people here and then you haven't. Our aim was to have two staff members at each site but we haven't had the funds so we have to have floating staff. **LLO 1**

PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Survey respondents were asked to identify the pathways that existed for young people after completion of the programs that they chose to detail. Table 2.8 illustrates the pathway areas that the respondents provided.

Table 2.8 - Survey: Pathways identified in specific program details section

Response Category	Number of Programs	%of Programs
TAFE/RTO	13	45%
Further general education	12	41%
Apprenticeships/Traineeships	9	31%
Employment	8	27.5%
Other courses at same LLO	6	20.5%
No response	5	17%
Connection with other LLOs or LLENS	2	7%

Information from the focus groups reiterated that the pathways identified by the survey respondents were those most commonly pursued by students who completed their courses. The responses can be summarised as either assisting students to move into employment or into further education.

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

As demonstrated above, there are a variety of programs provided for young people in Learn Local organisations and a variety of ways that these are supported and funded. This research shows that the work that is being done with these young people is often effective in re-engaging them with education and achieving positive outcomes in the lives of the students. Survey respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of each of the two programs that they chose to provide detailed descriptions of. Figure 2.5 shows that 72.4% (21) of the 29 programs described were rated as somewhat or very effective. Only 3.4% (1) of the programs were rated as ineffective.

Rating	Percentage
Very effective	27.6%
Somewhat effective	44.8%
Uncertain or undecided	13.8%
Somewhat ineffective	3.4%
Very ineffective	0%
No response	6.9%
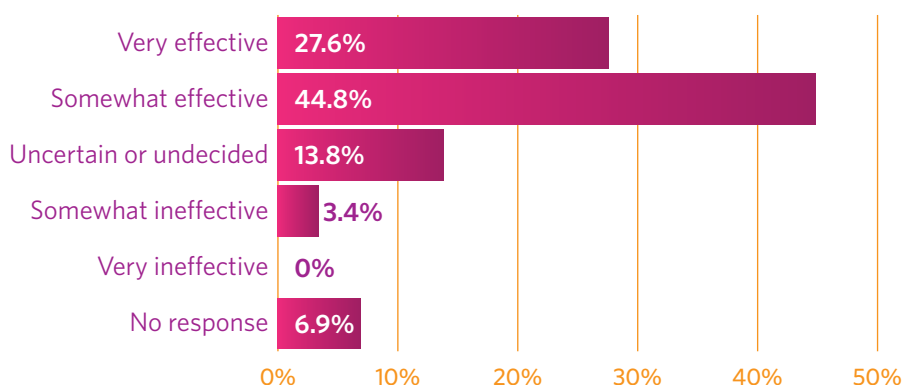
Figure 2.5 - Survey: Effectiveness ratings by percentage of programs

The educators who participated in the focus group interviews were asked to discuss what it was about their programs that contributed to their effectiveness. Table 2.9 summarises the responses and illustrates that knowing the young people is important to the success of the programs. As was described earlier, the needs of the young people who access these programs are usually complex.

Table 2.9 - Focus Groups: Factors that contribute to program effectiveness

Theme	Illustrative responses	Number of LLOs	Percentage of LLO
Teaching approaches/ engaging curriculum programs	The kids can work at their own pace; the learning can be more casual even though there is a tough curriculum; all projects are focused on the students' interests and what they want to do for their career; listen to what the kids want to learn and try to get it into the curriculum	7	87.5%
A focus on student relationships	It's because we listen and they feel they are respected here; they can be who they want and aren't judged; relationships with the students are the first priority; at the end of the day it is the connection that you have with the students and it needs to be real; treating students with dignity and respect	6	75%
Culture of LLO/ programs	The students can relax and focus on education; small atmosphere helps; students feel safe at the LLO; small enough to nurture all the students; the students become comfortable here	6	75%
Staff	Dedication of the staff toward the students; supported staff professional development; the trainers work well together; trainers are very understanding but there are also boundaries	5	62.5%

Catering for student well-being and learning needs	Try to work in with the students with their illness or situation and use flexibility and understanding; they can take a break if they are having a bad day; we are good at dealing with mental health; flexibility is built in	4	50%
Other - Environment & resources; Partnerships; Pathways	Cross boundaries and have good connections outside LLO; Give students options of pathways; Money spent on the up keep of facilities and supplies for the students	1	12.5%

In summary, the research found that an effective program will consider: appropriate teaching and curriculum approaches; focus on developing relationships with the students; and have a culture in which students feel safe and supported.

PROGRAM CHALLENGES

When providing details about specific programs, the survey respondents were asked to report what, if any, challenges there were to providing successful programs for young people. Table 2.10 summarises the challenges that the survey respondent reported.

Table 2.10 - Survey: Challenges identified in specific program details section

Theme	Illustrative Responses	Number of Programs	% of Programs
Funding	Lack of funding; we are not eligible for additional funding because we are not a school; no MIPS funding	13	45%
Student Issues	Attendances are spasmodic; engaging their interest; low literacy and numeracy skills; personal circumstances such as mental illness or homelessness	11	38%
Lack of Resources	Lack of resources including technology; not having access to sporting programs or facilities	8	27.5%
Staffing Issues	Staffing is a challenge; staffing for varying attendance	6	20.5%
Access to Extra Support Services	Finding assistance for undiagnosed learning disabilities; not having access to school nurse or psychologist	3	10%
Marketing/Promotion/ Networking	Marketing and promotion; priority by other partners to engage in participation	3	10%
No Response		3	10%

*Two of the older students who had never worked and had left school at year seven - one was a substance abuser quite heavily and the other one he had to come in or he wouldn't get his payments and he looked like he was going to be tortured. It was just a few weeks later I said to him – is it my imagination or are you enjoying doing this? You know and he got a smirk... well they both passed. The one who was on drugs he was brilliant, just brilliant. Nearly lost all his teeth through drugs and all that but he was just a lovely person too. So he stopped using the drugs about three months ago. He was quite verbal about that and they both passed. They both started work this week, one's got an apprenticeship and they both said we're getting money and we're getting out; he meant out of the culture... It was a huge, huge turn around for these guys. **LLO 3**

These identified challenges were also identified through the focus group interviews. The challenges can be simplified down to two main areas: 1) issues around funding, resources and staffing and 2) managing the complex needs of the young people they are working with.

Funding, resources and staffing challenges are clearly impacting on the quality of the programs that these organisations are able to provide. Although, as demonstrated above, there are many positive outcomes being achieved for these young people, this research shows that Learn Local organisations feel that with more support they could provide more effective programs to support these young people.

Complex needs of the young people. The students who are learning in these settings are those who could not be catered for in mainstream schools. Their literacy and numeracy skills and their attitudes of disengagement are significant challenges to manage even before considering any underlying issues.

FURTHER SUPPORT SOUGHT

This research collected information about what further support Learn Local organisations would like to receive in order to more effectively run programs for young people. This has provided a clear picture of what these educators feel would assist them to provide better programs and to connect with more students.

Tables 2.11 and 2.12 summarise the responses of survey and phone interview participants who were specifically asked to consider what further support, if any, they would like to have to develop their programs for young people.

Table 2.11 - Survey: Further support desired as reported in specific program details section

Theme	Illustrative responses	Number of Programs	% of Programs
Extra support for student needs	Support for students with learning disabilities; personal support for students with life issues; support with welfare	13	45%
No response		9	31%
More resources	Sports programs and facilities; resources; technology	8	27.5%
Additional funding	Additional funding for administration tasks; access to better financial resources to be able to employ appropriately qualified people; access to extra funding such as schools get for technology	7	24%
Pathways to employment or further education	Further assistance with employment pathways after the course	3	10%
Staff Training	Better staff training	1	3.5%
Networking	Networking with other centres	1	3.5%

*A lot of these kids would have low literacy and numeracy skills, extremely low… they come to us for 6 months and expect to get year 10… their expectations are very high… and you look at the standard of what their reading and writing is and you wonder how the hell they got out of primary school… These kids have often been non-attenders since grade five. Even if they have got the best of intentions of getting an education, it's beyond us to provide five years education in a year…. We're supposed to achieve outcomes with this cohort that they [schools] haven't done in four, five or six years, with less money and less resources and less staff and less everything. **LLO 1**

Table 2.12 - Phone Interviews: Support desired to develop programs

Theme	Number of organisations	% of organisations
Advice	5	62.5%
Partnerships/Networks	5	62.5%
Funding	4	50%
Staff resources	3	37.5%
Space/Resources	2	25%

This data and the information provided by the focus groups (as shown in Table 2.13 below) shows that Learn Local organisations identified that the types of support they seek to provide effective programs is reflective of the main categories identified as challenges above: More *funding, resources and staff* to enable them to better meet the *complex needs of the young people.*

CONCLUSIONS

There are significant numbers of young people aged between 10 and 19 who are disengaged, or at risk of disengagement, from mainstream schools accessing programs at Learn Local organisations in the Southern Metropolitan Region. These programs are usually funded by per-student monies from DEECD agencies (HESG and ACFE) or in agreement with schools. Many Learn Local organisations have developed partnerships with schools and support services in efforts to best meet the needs of these young people and provide them with constructive pathways into further education or employment.

The educators report that the programs that they offer are generally effective because they provide a relaxed, safe atmosphere with smaller groups. This enables the educators to develop the supportive and individualised relationships that these young people need. The programs that are offered are usually flexible, engaging and personalised to support the young people to re-engage in learning.

The most prominent message from the educators who participated in this research was that they deal with the challenges of the complex emotional, social and learning needs of these young people with insufficient resources and support.

FINDINGS

Educators who work in Learn Local organisations report that there are around 1,500 young people accessing programs at the centres that participated in this research. This is approximately 70% more young people than is recorded in the ACFE data that was provided for this research. Educators at the Learn Local organisations offered two main reasons for this:

1. Young people funded through arrangements with schools or on fee for service arrangements are not captured by the ACFE data

2. Learn Local organisations are 'carrying' young people. This is allowing them to attend programs without officially enrolling them.

There is significant variety in the types, sizes and location of Learn Local organisations providing programs for young people in SMR.

Programs provided are accredited courses such as the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL), Certificate of General Education for Adults (CGEA), and Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses or pre-accredited or re-engagement courses.

Partnerships play an important role in supporting programs and the complex needs of these young people. More effective partnerships, particularly with schools and wellbeing support services, would be beneficial for Learn Local organisations and the young people they serve.

Programs are funded in a variety of ways, but most commonly through per-student grants from DEECD agencies (such as HESG or ACFE) or through arrangements with schools.

Programs for young people offered at Learn Local organisations are generally effective in providing educational opportunities. Flexible approaches to learning and strong, supportive relationships with students are essential to program effectiveness.

The complex needs of young people provide challenges that are being addressed as effectively as possible in environments that have less access to funding and resources than the mainstream schools that could not meet their needs.

Table 2.13 - Focus Groups: Summary - Programs

	Types	Factors of Success
LLO 1	Under 15's Engagement VCAL CGEA VET - Business	Staff Flexible approach Good relationships
LLO 2	VCAL CEGA Work Ed VET – Business, Community Service	Partnerships Good pathways for students Good relationships High expectations Investments in the resources Staff PD
LLO 3	VCAL CEGA end of CEGA pathway program	Relationships, accept everyone Flexibility and understanding Rigorous but casual curriculum Dedicated, knowledgeable staff Small class groups
LLO 4	CGEA VCAL	Student engagement Connecting kids to the centre Hands-on, authentic curriculum Staff
LLO 5	VCAL VET – eg. Hospitality; Children's services; Engagement programs	Relationships Small classes Dedicated staff Student centred, authentic approach
LLO 6	VCAL VET – Child care; business PreCAL	Relationships High expectations and high support Engagement Committed staff
LLO 7	CGEA VCAL PreCAL	Value students Flexible, appropriate curriculum Relationships Small atmosphere
LLO 8	VCAL VET – hospitality; business; child services; vocational services	Good at dealing with mental health Small enough to connect with all Relationships Staff team Flexible, engaging curriculum

Partners	Desired support
Schools Mental Health support Employment services Victoria Police	Improved funding arrangements (with schools) Extra support for student needs (e.g. counselling) Change in perception of VCAL, not sub to VCE
Mental Health and drug use counselling Housing assistance	Improved funding – inc staff salaries Preventative counselling services Change in perception of VCAL Police partnerships Medical support Sex education
Youth agencies – Connections Psychologist	More access to psychologist, Medical Funding for diagnosing and resources Extra support with Lit and Num More from schools More connections with employers
Strong school relationship Health services Welfare and counselling services Drug and alcohol support services	Local council Victoria Police Industry/employer connections More physical space and resources
Welfare support agencies Health services Drug and alcohol counselling Philanthropic organisations	
Local council Student counselling	More funding Change in perception of VCAL
Youth services Drug and Alcohol services Employment services Disabilities support services	More resources to meet demands Regular Psychologist; health services More funding and resources Better school funding arrangements
Health services Counselling services Drug and alcohol support services Youth networks	Employment connections Victoria police Relationships with schools to return kids More resources More PD for staff

SUMMARY

The *A Different Journey – Youth in Learn Locals* research report has sought to improve understandings of this sector of education provision in the Southern Metropolitan Region of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in Victoria. The research has provided insights into the young people who are accessing education at Learn Local organisations and the programs that are offered from the perspective of the educators.

The young people who are accessing these programs typically have disengaged from mainstream schools (or are at risk of doing so) and have low levels of literacy and numeracy. These circumstances are the outcome of the discord between the complex underlying issues that many of these young people are experiencing and the capacity of the mainstream schools to continue to engage them in learning.

There are a variety of Learn Local models offering various programs to the approximately 1,500 students that were reported as accessing education at Learn Local organisations that participated in this study. Generally, the participating educators reported that these programs are successful in re-engaging the young people and providing pathways to further education or employment. However, the participating educators felt that further support of their programs was needed. The extra support sought is generally in the form of funding and resources to enable the needs of these young people to be addressed and to develop more effective programs and pathways for them.

The prevailing message conveyed by the educators in Learn Local organisations can be distilled down to one of the struggle to meet the complex needs of these young people using the funds, resources and staff that are available in this sector.

LIMITATIONS AND VALIDITY OF FINDINGS

This research was limited to collecting data from educators working in the Learn Local organisations that chose to participate in this study. Therefore, the information and opinions provided are from the perspective of the educators working in this sector.

The validity of the findings in this research is based on the data synthesis from the three phases of the study from which emerged aggregated data and common themes as reported here.

FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research to access more specific data about numbers of young people, including more detailed demographic information and breakdowns according to programs would provide further clarity about the scope of this sector, as would more detailed analysis of funding and partnership models being utilised by the Learn Local organisations. Further research investigating the sector with a multi-perspective approach, including: educators; participating young people; and possibly parents, would expand the findings of this study. A review of relevant, recent literature with the intention of connecting this research with other research findings and current policies would provide further substantiation of these findings.

FINDINGS

1. Educators who work in Learn Local organisation settings report that young people accessing Learn Local programs are typically from an 'Anglo-Australian' background.

2. Educators who work in Learn Local organisation settings report that mental health and substance abuse are the most evident issues that are impacting the young people.

3. Educators who work in Learn Local organisation settings report that Disengagement from schooling and Literacy and Numeracy challenges are the main reasons that young people are accessing programs at Learn Local organisations.

4. Educators who work in Learn Local organisation settings report that these young people are likely to have complex, interacting needs and challenges that have impacted on their capacity to participate in 'mainstream' education provision.

5. Educators who work in Learn Local organisations report that there are around 1,500 young people accessing programs at the centres that participated in this research. This is approximately 70% more young people than is recorded in the ACFE data that was provided for this research. Educators at the Learn Local organisations offered two main reasons for this:

   • Young people funded through arrangements with schools or on fee for service arrangements are not captured by the ACFE data

   • Learn Local organisations are 'carrying' young people. This is allowing them to attend programs without officially enrolling them.

6. There is significant variety in the types, sizes and location of Learn Local organisations providing programs for young people in SMR.

7. Programs provided are accredited courses such as the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL), Certificate of General Education for Adults (CGEA), and Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses or pre-accredited or re-engagement courses.

8. Partnerships play an important role in supporting programs and the complex needs of these young people. More effective partnerships, particularly with schools and wellbeing support services, would be beneficial for Learn Local organisations and the young people they serve.

9. Programs are funded in a variety of ways, but most commonly through per-student grants from DEECD agencies (such as HESG or ACFE) or through arrangements with schools.

10. Programs for young people offered at Learn Local organisations are generally effective in providing educational opportunities. Flexible approaches to learning and strong, supportive relationships with students are essential to program effectiveness.

11. The complex needs of young people provide challenges that are being addressed as effectively as possible in environments that have less access to funding and resources than the mainstream schools that could not meet their needs.

CONSIDERATIONS

The findings from this research inform considerations for action to advance the important work that is occurring in this sector and impact more broadly across the education sector in Victoria. The opportunities suggested here are informed by this research and deserve consideration if system improvement is a desired outcome.

RESOURCING OF YOUNG PEOPLE

1. The report highlighted very large numbers of young people in Learn Locals, largely hidden because of mixed funding sources and diverse data collection. Provision of support and broader education resources such as career support and development, sport and recreation, appropriate ICT as a learning tool, welfare and wellbeing support, literacy and numeracy support and disability support services are often not available or can be readily accessed.

   Consideration needs to be given to resourcing these young learners equitably (in the same way as their mainstream school counterparts).

RESOURCING, RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT OF LEARN LOCALS

2. The research identified a lack of recognition and support for Learn Locals in the broader education system, even though they take on many of the State's most at risk and complex young people in an educational capacity. Learn Locals must be recognised as an important contributor to the education system in Victoria. These organisations need to be in genuine partnerships with schools, DEECD Regional and Central office. Regions have a responsibility to support Learn Local providers in the same way they provide support to schools.

   Consideration needs to be given to developing mutually respectful partnerships to create workable MOUs, data collection, funding models, outcome and pathways tracking, effective referrals and transition support and professional development opportunities and recognition of staff.

FUNDING MODEL AND SYSTEMS

3. The research found that Learn Locals were accessing a multiplicity of funding streams to provide programs to the most at risk and complex young people across the region. Under the higher Education and Skills Group (HESG) funding the uncertainty of attendance of this cohort of young people caused immense difficulty in budgeting which in turn led to difficulties with appropriate staffing and resource provision. Funding through schools was equally as difficult with payments to Learn Locals often late or indeed not forthcoming.

   Consideration needs to be made to an equitable model of funding for Learn Locals that are engaging and working with our most at risk and complex young people.

A DIFFERENT JOURNEY — YOUTH IN LEARN LOCALS RESEARCH REPORT APPENDICES

LIST OF APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A:
ORIGINAL PROJECT METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE DOCUMENT

Researching Youth in Learn Local Organisations Research Project 2012
Project Methodology and Scope – prepared by the BGK LLEN

PROJECT LOGIC

Learn Local organisations across the state deliver a diverse range of programs to hard-to-reach learners. Many have developed innovative programs that are delivered to specific learner groups such as youth. In recent years delivery to young people across Learn Local providers in the Southern Metropolitan Region (SMR) has become steadily increasing and partnership arrangements with schools are becoming more common in VCAL and CGEA based programs.

RESEARCH RATIONALE

Within the SMR, it is understood that multiple funding streams are sourced for delivery by Learn Local organisations. Funding is sourced from ACFE, under the Victorian Training Guarantee, through fee for service and under partnership arrangements with schools, employment services and welfare agencies. As the need grows in SMR, organisations are identifying particular sub-groups of youth and developing customised programs to support their particular needs. Examples of this are 'Youth Mothers Programs', 'Pacific Islander Youth Programs' and 'Homeslessness Programs'.

The success of these programs depends on productive working relationships between edcuation providers and the various health, welfare and community agencies which often support these young people. The evidence is clear that strong partnerships are critical to providing the safety nets that young people at risk often require to enable then to undertake and complete study. Southern Metropolitan ACFE Regional Council also suspects that the numbers of youth accessing programs in Learn Local settings is significantly more than is identified in any one set of statistics.

RESEARCH PROJECT DESIRED OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

The research will aim to identify and describe in detail youth delivery including agency partnerships across Learn Local organisations in SMR. A comprehensive outline of youth delivery not limited to ACFE funding will be developed including documenting the focus and specific target group. This research will be used to provide ACFE and Learn Locals with:

- A comprehensive understanding of the curriculum and focus of programs being delivered
- A picture of the relative success of different programs/curriculum in meeting the learning and qualification needs of young people in SMR
- Clarity around the pathways, successes and outcomes for young people in the programs
- Details of the demographic breakdown of young learners in Learn Local settings including sex, age, ethnicity and education level (this information is currently available but not in one combined set of data)
- Information for marketing and promotional purposes as well as to provide government with a clear understanding of the diversity and complexity of the work being undertaken by Learn Local providers
- A strategy for disseminating project findings for greatest effect to their own regional networks and partners
- A way to share 'good practice' models across the SMR (and potentially Statewide (currently there is no concise method for identifying who is delivering programs to specific sub-groups; this results in the 'reinventing' of programs)
- Better information about the breadth of work in the youth area being carried out by Learn Local providers (i.e. Community VCAL, VCE, CGEA, pre-accredited programs, VET, fee for service) including how pathways to and from VCAL/VCE are being developed
- A way to improve networking between Learn Local organisations with a youth focus and to support Learn Local organisations moving into youth delivery
- Information about established partnership models with 'Other Agencies' (i.e. LLENs, health, welfare, community and other education and training organisations, including schools) and how these services contribute to social inclusion.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research will consist of a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods, and will be conducted by BGK LLEN team (led by CEO, Louisa Ellum and Research Manager Fiona Waugh) and a contracted researcher (for the period of the research project). The BGK LLEN will work under the guidance and support of a Steering Group. The Steering Group will be made of representatives from:

- SMR ACFE and/or Regional Council
- LLEN (not BGK LLEN)
- SMR DEECD
- Learn Locals (max two).

	Quantitative	Qualitative
Subjects	• Learn Local providers • Other Agencies • Learn Local and Other Agency management • Teaching and training staff of Learn Locals • ACFE/ DEECD (Central and Regional offices)	• Survey respondents who self-indicate interest in participating in an interview / case study write-up • Survey respondents identified by researcher as potential case-study
Instruments	• Surveys (disseminated via 'Survey Monkey' – for ease of evaluation and collection) • Collation of current data from ACFE/ DEECD	• Face-to-face interviews (where required and/or to facilitate development of Case Studies) • Focus groups • Telephone interviews (where required)
Procedure	• Collation of ACFE/DEECD data from central office • Specific draft survey questions for each stakeholder category • Draft survey questions reviewed by Steering Group • Survey questions entered into 'Survey Monkey' • Surveys disseminated • Returned surveys collated and evaluated	• As per 'quantitative' • Telephone / face-to-face interview/focus group questions developed which allow for further investigation into feedback provided via survey • Respondents indicating an interest in a follow-up interview contacted • Case Studies developed where possible
Deliverables	• Comprehensive resource outlining type, focus curriculum, method, mode and target sub-group and programs being delivered across Learn Local providers in SMR (easily accessible and updatable) • Information that identifies partnerships and services in addition to strategies that support learner retention • External document with information that can be used for marketing and promotional purposes in addition to providing government with a clear understanding of the diversity, complexity and breadth of work in the youth area being carried out by Learn Local providers • Internal report to the ACFE Board related to all the above with clear recommendations • Interactive and action-based presentation to a forum of Learn Local youth providers and other relevant stakeholders/partners.	

POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS OF PROJECT

A number of potential limitations include:

- Low response rate/eagerness to contribute for both qualitative and quantitative data collection, therefore affecting confidence in results
- Low interest by respondents in participation on interviews and focus groups
- Difficulty in accessing current data sets from DEECD/ACFE related to youth delivery in Learn Locals
- Need to extend the research period beyond its proposed timeframe if data difficult to collect within schedule scoped.

RESEARCH SCHEDULE – 2012

June	July	August
• BGK LLEN team identified • BGK LLEN to engage key researcher • Research project brief and submitted to SMR ACFE and finalized • Initial data sets requested from DEECD/ACFE • Contact details for all Learn Locals collected from SMR ACFE • Steering Group formed	• Steering Group meets with BGK LLEN research team early July • Research formerly begins • Scoping of research questions and finalising methodology and tools utilized • Quantitative and qualitative methods underway	• Research continues

September	October	November/December
• Research continues • Steering Group meets with BGK LLEN research team early September – interim report/findings discussed • Research is finalized end of September	• Research evaluated and deliverables begin to be developed in consultation with Steering Group online	• Steering Group and BGK LLEN research team meet mid-November to discuss deliverables drafts, especially the report to ACFE • Report to ACFE Board and SMR Regional Council finalized and delivered by end of November (tbc – presentation to ACFE Board/Council) • Deliverables of resource and external document for Learn Locals finalised and promoted through a forum.

APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

INTRODUCTION:

This survey is an important tool in the *Youth in Learn Local Organisation Research Project*. Your time to complete this survey is appreciated and will contribute significantly to the success of this project. We estimate that it will take approximately 45 minutes to complete this survey. You can save and come back to it at any time.

Your responses are confidential and all data will be kept securely. Any reference to individual responses in the final reports will be anonymous.

If you have any questions regarding this research project, please contact Louisa Ellum on 9584 8845 or louisa.ellum@bgkllen.org.au.

IDENTIFICATION DETAILS

Introduction:

Please provide the following information about yourself and your Learn Local Organisation (LLO).

Items:

1. Learn Local organisation name: *Text box*
2. Your name: *Text box*
3. Your position: *Text box*

PROVISION OF PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Introduction:

For the purposes of this research, Young People are defined as from the age of 10 to the age of 19.

Items:

4. In 2012 has your Learn Local organisation provided services for Young People?   *Y ☐ or N ☐*

If yes –

4a*. What fraction of the total services at your Learn Local are for Young People?*

multi choice/single answer:
- ☐ *>10%*
- ☐ *10-25%*
- ☐ *25-50%*
- ☐ *50-75%*
- ☐ *75-100%*

continue to item 5

If no -

4b-i. Do you believe that there is any need for programs for Young People at your Learn Local?

Y ☐ or N ☐

4b-ii. Do you believe that there will be a need for programs for Young People within the next two years?
Y ☐ or N ☐

End survey for those who answered No to Item 4

Thank you for your time to complete these questions. Please feel free to add any further comments here: Open Text box

DATA COLLECTION

Introduction:

Please provide information about participants in programs at your Learn Local by responding to the following questions.

Demographic Items:

    5. How many Young People (ages 10 to 19) are participating in programs at your Learn Local this year?

Number

How many of these Young People are:

    6. Male   *items 7 to 14 all number*

    7. Female

    8. English as a Second Language (ESL) learners

    9. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

    10. Refugees

    11. Young Parents

    12. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

    13. Disabled

    14. Are there any other identifiable cohorts that access your programs? Please list them and tell us how many participants would identify with that cohort.

PROGRAM NUMBERS:

In 2012, how many Young People (ages 10 to 19) are enrolled in:

    15. Non-accredited programs   *Number*

    16. Accredited programs   *Number*

    17. Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)   *Number*

    18. VET courses   *Number*

    19. Certificate in General Education for Adults (CGEA)   *Number*

    20. Please list any other educational programs offered by your Learn Local for Young People

---

CURRENT PROGRAMS:

Introduction

The following questions ask you to provide more detailed information about TWO programs that your Learn Local offers for Young People.

    PROGRAM 1:

    21. Program Name   *Text*

    22. Program Type   *List – VCAL, VET, CGEA, Other*

    23. Number of Young People enrolled in 2012   *Number*

    24. Target group   *Text*

    25. Funding source/s   *Text*

26. Partners – partners are defined as organisation who contribute either financially or non financially to the success of the program (e.g. offer additional programs, case management to Young People)
Text

27. Pathways (i.e. further education, training or employment) available after completion

Text

Please answer the following questions based on your opinions of the program:

28. How would you rate the overall effectiveness of this program?

5pt Scale: very ineffective to very effective

29. In your opinion, are there any challenges involved in offering this program for Young People? If so, please describe below: *Text box*

30. In your opinion, what further support, if any, would enable this program to be offered more effectively?   *Text box*

31. Do you believe that this program will be offered in 2013?   *Y or N*

32. If you wish to make any additional comments about this program, please do so here: *Text*

PROGRAM 2:

33. Program Name   *Text*

34. Program Type   *List – VCAL, VET, CGEA, Other*

35. Number of Young People enrolled in 2012   *Number*

36. Target group   *Text*

37. Funding source/s   *Text*

38. Partners – partners are defined as organisation who contribute either financially or non financially to the success of the program (e.g. offer additional programs, case management to Young People)

Text

39. Pathways (i.e. further education, training or employment) available after completion

Text

Please answer the following questions based on your opinions of the program:

40. How would you rate the overall effectiveness of this program?

5pt Scale: very ineffective to very effective

41. In your opinion, are there any challenges involved in offering this program for Young People? If so, please describe below: *Text box*

42. In your opinion, what further support, if any, would enable this program to be offered more effectively?

Text box

43. Do you believe that this program will be offered in 2013? *Y or N*

44. If you wish to make any additional comments about this program, please do so here: *Text*

If you would like the opportunity to provide this information about further programs that your Learn Local offers for Young People, please tick this box and we will contact you to arrange this. – *tick box*

OPINIONS - PARTICIPANTS

45. In your opinion, what are the main reasons that Young People are accessing programs at your Learn Local? Please select only three from the list. *List – Disengagement from regular school, expulsion from regular school, need for change of environment, need for change of peer group, bullying, wellbeing challenges (family, homelessness), health challenges (mental health, illness), drug and alcohol challenges, juvenile justice, literacy and numeracy challenges, refugee/CALD, disability, significant learning difference/disabilities, other*

46. In your opinion, in 2013 will the number of Young People who wish to access programs at your Learn Local change? Please use the following scale to indicate the change in numbers you predict for 2013: *5 pt Scale – Increase significantly to Decrease significantly*

47. In your opinion, what are the reasons for this? *Text*

48. Please consider the Young People accessing programs at your Learn Local over the last three years. In your opinion, are there any trends or significant changes that you could identify?

Text

_____

_____

END

Thank you for completing this survey. The information you have provided is important to the success of this research project. The research team appreciates your time and expertise.

If you wish to make any further comments please do so here: *Text box*

_____

_____

APPENDIX C:
SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS

YOUTH IN LEARN LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

RESEARCH PROJECT 2012

Item 1. Learn Local organisation name:

Item 2. Your name:

Item 3. Your Position:

Item 4. In 2012 has your Learn Local organisation provided services for Young People?

3 : 7%	
28 : 65%	Yes
12 : 28%	No
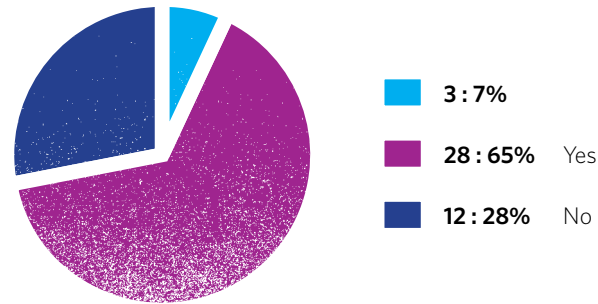
Fig 1: In 2012 has your Learn Local organisation provided services for Young People?

Item 5. What Fraction of the total services at your Learn Local are for Young People?
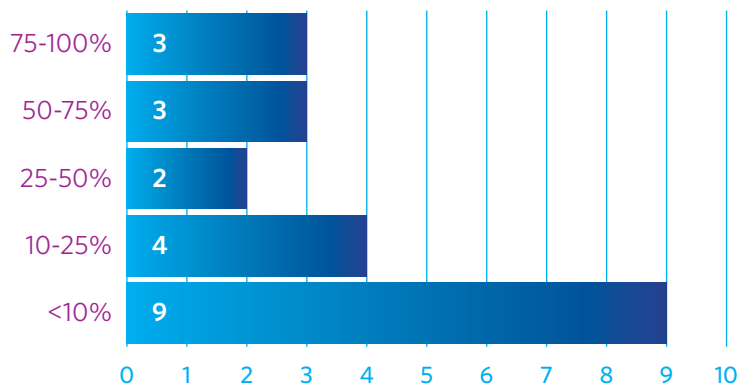
Item 6. Do you believe there is a need for programs for Young People at your Learn Local?

7 : 70%	Yes
3 : 30%	No
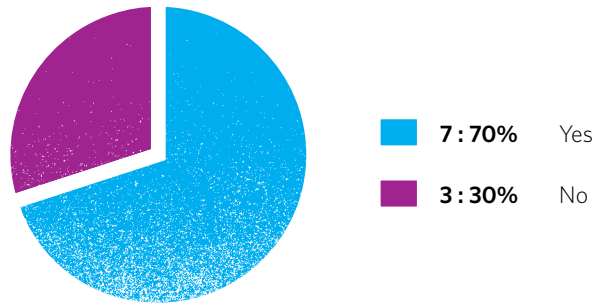
Item 7. Do you believe that there will be a need for programs for Young People within the next two years?

7 : 70%	Yes
3 : 30%	No
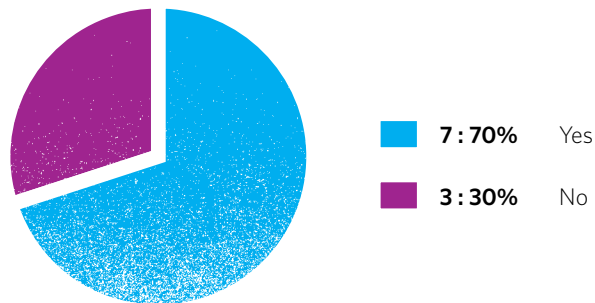
Response to Item 7

Item 8. How many Young People (ages 10 to 19) are accessing programs at your learn Local this year?

Table 1: Total numbers of Young People accessing programs

	< 25	50 - 100	100 - 200	250 - 400
Numbers of Young People in programs at LLO				
Number of LLOs that reported in this category	10	3	2	3

Total number as reported by responses to this question: 1498

Item 9. How many of these Young People are:

662 : 48%	Male
707 : 52%	Female
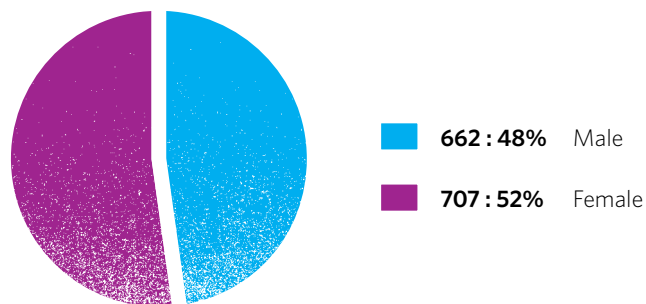
Numbers of Young People accessing programs by gender
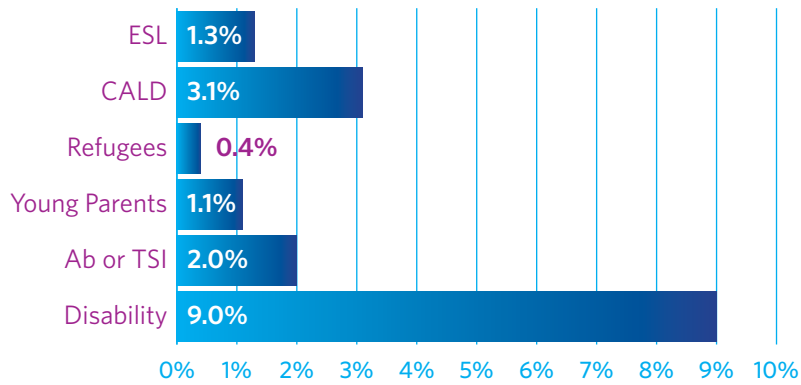
Percentage of reported total number of Young People accessing programs by identifiable cohort

Item 10. Are there any other identifiable cohorts that access your programs?

- Disengaged from education
- Mental Health issues
- Homelessness or instability in living arrangements
- Drug and Alcohol Issues

Item 11. In 2012, how many Young People (ages 10 to 19) are enrolled in:
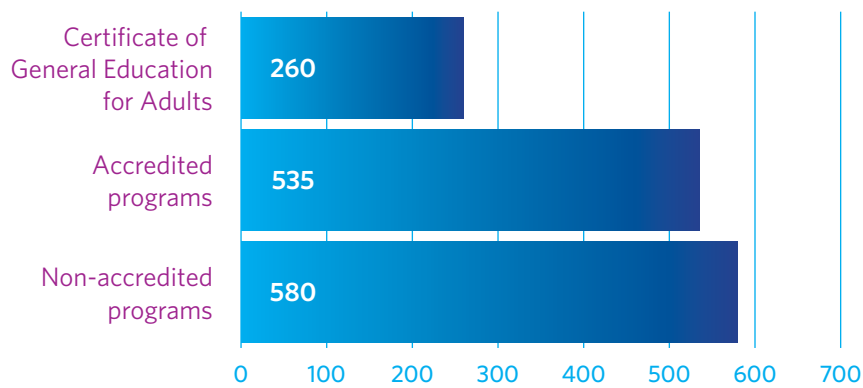
Reported numbers of Young People Enrolled by Course Type

Item 12. Please list any other educational programs offered by your Learn Local for Young People:

Two valid responses described programs focused on engagement, such as youth volunteering , or on interest, such as FM Radio operations.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIFIC PROGRAMS:
(SEE APPENDIX I FOR ITEM WORDING)

29 programs were outlined by respondents to the survey. These tables summarise each of these programs.

Program Name	Between Ages and Stages
Program Type	CGEA
Number enrolled 2012	5
Target Group	Early school leavers, school refusers
Funding Source	Skills Victoria
Partners	
Pathways	Chisholm TAFE, Chisholm TEC, move into apprenticeships
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, Very Effective
Challenges	Attendances of young people is spasmodic at times.
Desired Further support	Additional funding for administration tasks. Only receive Skills Vic funding which is delivery hours only
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	Even though our program is small it is vital for our local community and the young people we deliver to

Program Name	CGEA Introductory Course
Program Type	CGEA
Number enrolled 2012	2
Target Group	
Funding Source	HSE
Partners	
Pathways	
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, Very Effective
Challenges	Engaging and keeping their attention and interest with a diverse group of people and also because there are not enough numbers and funds to promote networking activities
Desired Further support	Networking with other centres, but made at a regional level
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	Even though our program is small it is vital for our local community and the young people we deliver to

Program Name	VCAL Foundation and Intermediate
Program Type	VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	23
Target Group	15 – 19 years
Funding Source	School partnership, Higher Educationa & Skills Group
Partners	Keysborough Secondary College, Southern Health
Pathways	VCAL Senior, apprenticeship, vocational course and employment
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, <mark>Somewhat Ineffective</mark>, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, Very Effective
Challenges	The young people enrolled in our VCAL have been disengaged from education for some time or identified as disengaged. Many had not attended school for months and even 1 - 2 years. They are wanting to re-engage in education and training but face many challenges, low literacy & numeracy skills, personal circumstances, mental illness, homelessness and dependence.
Desired Further support	Continuation of the PowWow program that was available in 2012 offering the kids intensive support in linking students to traineeships and further training and work.
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	KLC is a small organisation based on Church grounds, our VCAL offers a final chance to the most vulnerable young people in our community. As a small organisation we are not planning to expand the program.

Program Name	LEEP
Program Type	VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	67
Target Group	15 – 19 year olds disengaged
Funding Source	DEECD
Partners	Youth Connections, CAMHS, SECASA, Rotary
Pathways	TAFE, apprenticeships, employment
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, <mark>Somewhat Effective</mark>, Very Effective
Challenges	Suitable staff, financial resources, socio-economic challenges faced by youth.
Desired Further support	Better staff training, access to better financial resources to be able to employ appropriately qualified people.
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	

Program Name	CGEA
Program Type	CGEA
Number enrolled 2012	7
Target Group	
Funding Source	Skills Victoria/ LLNP
Partners	
Pathways	Other courses offered at our centre: Business, 1st Aid, Food Hygiene, Aged Care and Disability.
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, <mark>Somewhat Effective</mark>, Very Effective
Challenges	Acknowledging and seeking assistance for undiagnosed learning disabilities. Motivating them to want to learn
Desired Further support	Support for students with learning disabilities. ie. diagnosis and learning strategies from professionals in the learning disability field.
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	This program has been offered since its inception as an accredited course at our centre. While there are people with learning disabilities and people who drop out of school early, there will always be CGEA.

Program Name	Girls With Attitude
Program Type	Other – self awareness, behaviour, self esteem building, team work, skills development
Number enrolled 2012	
Target Group	Female Year 12 students from Mordialloc SC as well as female students in the CVAL LEEP
Funding Source	ACFE Capacity Grant
Partners	BGKLLEN, Youth Connect, Youth Express, Taskforce, Kingston LGA Youth Team, Secondary School Welfare Officer, Family Life
Pathways	Currently our organisation is building youth capcity so too early to answer
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, <mark>Uncertain or Undecided</mark>, Somewhat Effective, Very Effective
Challenges	Marketing and promotion. Priority by other partners to encourage participation.
Desired Further support	
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	As these programs are in pilot stages it is difficult to project outcomes, we hope that there will be positive feedback to plan for 2013

Program Name	Certificate II in General Education for Adults
Program Type	CGEA
Number enrolled 2012	3
Target Group	Dis-engaged Youth
Funding Source	Skills Victoria
Partners	Wise employment skate world Carrum Downs Youth Resource Centre Frankston
Pathways	further education VCAL, Back into school VCE, or apprenticeships
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, <mark>Uncertain or Undecided</mark>, Somewhat Effective, Very Effective
Challenges	This is the first time that we have had this program on offer at our centre. We currently only have 3 students, but at this stage we are only 2 weeks into the program and are prepared to take extra students. We found it a catch 22, could not afford to run the course with less than 4 students, but were losing students to other providers as they wanted to start straight away, not in two weeks time when we had the minimum, so the minimum was never going to be reached. We bit the bullet and began with one student that by the end of the week turned into 3 enrolled.
Desired Further support	
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	

Program Name	VCAL
Program Type	VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	12
Target Group	
Funding Source	Skills Vic
Partners	
Pathways	Further ed, training and employment.
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, <mark>Very Effective</mark>
Challenges	Attendance, participation, level of education prior to commencement is quite often very low well below year 9 or 10.
Desired Further support	Further funding for aids in the classroom, more resources and more facilities eg rec room, student room for eating etc
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	

Program Name	VCAL
Program Type	VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	10
Target Group	15 - 25
Funding Source	Skills
Partners	
Pathways	Cert II, III & IV VET courses
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, <mark>Very Effective</mark>
Challenges	Attendance
Desired Further support	Funding, Physical Space, Resources
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	

Program Name	VCAL
Program Type	VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	10
Target Group	youth who are disengaged from formal education
Funding Source	DEECD
Partners	PTEP
Pathways	
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, <mark>Uncertain or Undecided</mark>, Somewhat Effective, Very Effective
Challenges	yes , behavioural issues are not addressed
Desired Further support	personal support for students with life issues
Offered in 2013	No
Additional comments	

Program Name	Mindware – Year 9 Community Work and Volunteering
Program Type	Other - Partnership with secondary school to learn about community engagement and volunteering options in the community
Number enrolled 2012	160
Target Group	All young people at the local Secondary school in Year 9
Funding Source	School provides small contribution to food
Partners	Mt Eliza Secondary College
Pathways	Volunteering options at our Centre or support for finding positions. Help to write resumes.
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, <mark>Somewhat Effective</mark>, Very Effective
Challenges	Many young people do not know much about volunteering and it is often unfamiliar to them how to get involved themselves. Our program is an ice breaker.

Desired Further support	A computer program available to young people to find out what available and what steps they need to take to get more involved.
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	We would appreciate support to offer young people a unit of competency for volunteering that they could put on their resume to help them see their value to volunteering organisations and for orgs to see the value of a young person with some volunteering training.

Program Name	VCAL
Program Type	VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	29
Target Group	16 -20
Funding Source	Skills Victoria
Partners	SELLEN, DEECD, ACFE, Skills Vic, VRQA, VCAA, South East Youth Connections, City of Casey, YSAS, Connections, Windermere, Wesley Youth Services, DHS, Oz child.
Pathways	TAFE, SELLEN, Dandenong Valley job support network, Link employment and training.
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, <mark>Very Effective</mark>
Challenges	Lack of funding, lack of resources including technology, not having access to school nurse or Psychologist, not having access to sporting programs or facilities, no MIPS funding.
Desired Further support	All of the above
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	It needs to be recognised financially by the government like mainstream schooling. We are dealing with at risk young people and do not have access to resources required to support them fully.

Program Name	CGEA
Program Type	CGEA
Number enrolled 2012	50
Target Group	Youth 15 - 19
Funding Source	Skills Victoria
Partners	Youth Connections, OzChild Program – Shine Assist Dressed for success, Wise Employment
Pathways	Youth Pathways – pre-accredited course
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, <mark>Somewhat Effective</mark>, Very Effective
Challenges	Yes, these students require more support and this can be a challenge to financially cover the costs of additional supports required. Staffing is also a challenge
Desired Further support	Social workers, educational testing, speach therapists, further assistance with employment or a pathway after the course, housing.
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	We would appreciate support to offer young people a unit of competency for volunteering that they could put on their resume to help them see their value to volunteering organisations and for orgs to see the value of a young person with some volunteering training.

Program Name	VCAL
Program Type	VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	30
Target Group	15+ years at risk of disengaging with education
Funding Source	HESG and schools
Partners	Mornington Secondary School, Rosebud Secondary School, Mornington Peninsula Youth Enterprises, Mornington Community Contact, Hastings Neighbourhood Renewal, Peninsula Youth Services, Youth Connect and Ostara
Pathways	Other Learn Local Organisations, TAFE, Private RTOs and JSA/DES providers
Effectiveness	
Challenges	
Desired Further support	
Offered in 2013	
Additional comments	

Program Name	Brief out of school training (BOOST)
Program Type	Other – Non-accredited, trades taster course focusing on social skill building
Number enrolled 2012	20
Target Group	13 – 15 year olds, mainly male
Funding Source	School partnership
Partners	Rosebud Secondary College, Habitat restoration fund and Mornington Peninsula Youth Enterprises
Pathways	VCAL, CGEA, TAFE, apprenticeships
Effectiveness	
Challenges	
Desired Further support	
Offered in 2013	
Additional comments	

Program Name	VCAL
Program Type	VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	28
Target Group	At Risk Youth
Funding Source	Schools SRP and Skills Vic
Partners	Local schools, Yth Connections Local council Yth Services, Job Network agencies, Centrelink
Pathways	TAFE, traineeships/apprenticeships
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, Very Effective
Challenges	Getting attendance rates up, dealing with background issues/problems
Desired Further support	Support is there but more funding for greater support would be good.
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	VCAL funding has been cut by schools/DEECD/SkillsVic and it is a program that has suited an increasing number of students. It seems illogical to cut it!!

Program Name	IMPACT
Program Type	Other: Pre-VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	5
Target Group	Young people either out of school or at risk of disengagement with secondary school
Funding Source	fees, ACFE
Partners	schools, local community groups
Pathways	CGEA
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, <mark>Somewhat Effective</mark>, Very Effective
Challenges	Finding mentors/volunteers to support the young people, funding,
Desired Further support	Not sure
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	

Program Name	VCAL
Program Type	VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	198
Target Group	15 - 19
Funding Source	Some under MOU (8) the rest though Skills Victoria
Partners	- VALA - SELLEN - Youth Connect - Youth Xpress - BGKLLEN – - Youth Engagement Strategy- - Peninsula Vocational Education and Training - FMPLLEN - Peninsula VCAL Association - Peninsula Pathways Association - Peninsula Pathways for Students with a Disability Association (PPSDA)- Professional Development of staff - Bayside Youth Charter - Kingston Youth Services - Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Services - Local Police Youth Resource Officers - CGEA Champions Group - OELLEN - DEECD - Harrisons - ACFE - Local secondary schools - Local employment services groups
Pathways	Students who undertake VCAL can: - continue further training with SkillsPlus - reengage with a mainstream secondary provider - engage with further training the TAFEs or other RTOs - enter into an apprenticeship or traineeship - enter into full time employment
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, <mark>Very Effective</mark>
Challenges	The difficulty working within the non school environment can be the access and funding of resources that is available. Whilst we are registered as a senior secondary provider, in most instances, we are not eligible for additional funding as we are not a school. In other situations as we receive government funding, we are exempt from additional funding.
Desired Further support	Support in the development of infrastructure. This includes being supported as schools have been with the digital education revolution to fund new computers. In addition, support in learner or teacher aides for students with learning difficulties and support with welfare.
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	

Program Name	Introduction to Horticulture
Program Type	Other: Re-engagement program
Number enrolled 2012	25
Target Group	Disengaged young people
Funding Source	ACFE
Partners	Cardinia shire, Community Health Koo-Wee-Rup men's shed
Pathways	return to school or alternative education provider
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, ==Somewhat Effective==, Very Effective
Challenges	Attendance and location
Desired Further support	Support for Men's Shed participants
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	This program is very successful and has a waiting list

Program Name	English as a Second Language
Program Type	Other: ACFE pre-accredited hours
Number enrolled 2012	1
Target Group	CALD
Funding Source	ACFE pre-accredited
Partners	
Pathways	Pathway into our CGEA course
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, ==Somewhat Effective==, Very Effective
Challenges	Program is not specific for young people they are mixed in with older learners. We don't have the demand to offer just a youth program.
Desired Further support	
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	

Program Name	21772VIC, 21773VIC, 21774VIC
Program Type	CGEA
Number enrolled 2012	23
Target Group	15 -19 years
Funding Source	Higher Education & Skills Group & school partnership
Partners	Keysborough Secondary College
Pathways	Employment, apprenticeships, vocational education.
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, ==Very Effective==
Challenges	As we only have a group of 19 students, with varying attendance, usually 13 - 15 each day teachers are having to deliver across 3 levels in the same classroom - though there are 2 teachers in the room at all times.
Desired Further support	The program is very successful and as hand on as possible.

Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	CGEA enables the program to be flexible and tailored to meet individual students' needs.

Program Name	Boys FM Radio Operations
Program Type	Other – self awareness, behaviour, self esteem building, team work, skills development
Number enrolled 2012	15
Target Group	Males
Funding Source	ACFE Capacity Grant
Partners	BGKLLEN, Youth Connect, Youth Express, Taskforce, Kingston LGA Youth Team, Secondary School Welfare Officer, Family Life
Pathways	Currently our organisation is building youth capcity so too early to answer
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, <mark>Uncertain or Undecided</mark>, Somewhat Effective, Very Effective
Challenges	Marketing and promotion. Priority by other partners to encourage participation.
Desired Further support	
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	As these programs are in pilot stages it is difficult to project outcomes, we hope that there will be positive feedback to plan for 2013

Program Name	ESL
Program Type	Other: CSWE
Number enrolled 2012	1
Target Group	15 -19
Funding Source	AMEP
Partners	
Pathways	LLNP or CGEA
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, <mark>Somewhat Effective</mark>, Very Effective
Challenges	
Desired Further support	External networking. Resources
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	

Program Name	IConnect
Program Type	Other: Offered with the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council Youth Services to at risk students
Number enrolled 2012	30
Target Group	Secondary School aged
Funding Source	Funded by the Youth Services
Partners	as above
Pathways	It would be good to have some certificates of participation offered
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, <mark>Somewhat Effective</mark>, Very Effective
Challenges	More options for young people to participate at the Centre running programs of their own
Desired Further support	Perhaps some funding to our organisation to facilitate this. Currently the Youth Services use their own budget.
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	We would like support to offer a program each term after school to these students to help them see this space as theirs out of school hours.

Program Name	Certificate I & II in General education for adults
Program Type	CGEA
Number enrolled 2012	96
Target Group	13 - 16
Funding Source	Skills Victoria and memorandum of understanding contracts for under 15's
Partners	SELLEN, DEECD, ACFE, Skills Vic, VRQA, VCAA, South East Youth Connections, City of Casey, YSAS, Connections, Windermere, Wesley Youth Services, DHS, Oz child.
Pathways	TAFE, SELLEN, Dandenong Valley job support network, Link employment and training.
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, <mark>Very Effective</mark>
Challenges	Lack of funding, lack of resources including technology, not having access to school nurse or Psychologist, not having access to sporting programs or facilities, no MIPS funding
Desired Further support	All of the above
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	That this qualification needs to be reaccredited beyond June 2013, as it provides a crucial pathway for young people in the community who don't fit into mainstream school. We have the statistics to prove it.

Program Name	CVCAL
Program Type	VCAL
Number enrolled 2012	65
Target Group	Youth aged 15 – 19 years
Funding Source	SRP Funding from the schools
Partners	Bendigo Bank, OzChild
Pathways	MIPS
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, <mark>Somewhat Effective</mark>, Very Effective
Challenges	Yes, these students require more support and this can be a challenge to financially cover the costs of additional supports required. Staffing is also a challenge
Desired Further support	Social workers, educational testing, speech therapists, further assistance with employment or a pathway after the course, housing.
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	

Program Name	CGEA
Program Type	CGEA
Number enrolled 2012	9
Target Group	15 – 24 year olds who haven't completed Year 12
Funding Source	HESG, student fees
Partners	Youth Connect, Bayside Council, local community groups
Pathways	further education or training
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, <mark>Uncertain or Undecided</mark>, Somewhat Effective, Very Effective
Challenges	Other social, home or financial issues impacting on the young people that interfere with their learning
Desired Further support	ongoing supports from the Youth Connect program, to assist young people in meeting other needs
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	This is the first time we are running the CGEA, so not sure yet of outcomes

Program Name	CGEA
Program Type	CGEA
Number enrolled 2012	65
Target Group	14 - 20
Funding Source	Some under MOU (8) the rest though Skills Victoria
Partners	- VALA - SELLEN - Youth Connect - Youth Xpress - BGKLLEN – - Youth Engagement Strategy- - Peninsula Vocational Education and Training - FMPLLEN - Peninsula VCAL Association - Peninsula Pathways Association - Peninsula Pathways for Students with a Disability Association (PPSDA)- Professional Development of staff - Bayside Youth Charter - Kingston Youth Services - Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Services - Local Police Youth Resource Officers - CGEA Champions Group - OELLEN - DEECD - Harrisons - ACFE - Local secondary schools - Local employment services groups
Pathways	Students who undertake VCAL can: - continue further training with SkillsPlus - reengage with a mainstream secondary provider - engage with further training the TAFEs or other RTOs - enter into an apprenticeship or traineeship - enter into full time employment
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, <mark>Very Effective</mark>
Challenges	The difficulty working within the non school environment can be the access and funding of resources that is available. Whilst we are registered as a senior secondary provider, in most instances, we are not eligible for additional funding as we are not a school. In other situations as we receive government funding, we are exempt from additional funding.
Desired Further support	Support in the development of infrastructure. This includes being supported as schools have been with the digital education revolution to fund new computers. In addition, support in learner or teacher aides for students with learning difficulties and support with welfare.
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	

Program Name	Spray It
Program Type	Other: Re-engagement
Number enrolled 2012	12
Target Group	disengaged young people
Funding Source	ACFE / Youth Connections
Partners	Cheltenham Scouts
Pathways	Return to educaiton
Effectiveness	*Scale:* Very Ineffective, Somewhat Ineffective, Uncertain or Undecided, Somewhat Effective, <mark>Very Effective</mark>
Challenges	Offering a grafitti program is always difficult and you need to ensure that it is well managed
Desired Further support	
Offered in 2013	Yes
Additional comments	We would like to offer it again as it was popular

SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS RESPONSES:

PROGRAM TYPE:

Table # - Programs by type from survey details section

Response Option	Number of Programs	Percentage of Programs
Certificate of General Education for Adults (CGEA)	9	31%
Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)	10	34.5%
Other	10	34.5%
TOTAL	29	100%

TARGET GROUP:

Response Category	Number of Programs	Percentage of Programs
Disengaged or At-risk Young People	20	69%
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)	4	14%
Enrolled School Students	3	10%
No Response	2	7%
TOTAL	29	100%

FUNDING SOURCES:

Response Category	Number of Programs	Percentage of Programs
Skills Victoria	11	38%
Schools	6	21%
ACFE	6	21%
MOU	3	10%
HESG	2	7%
DEECD	2	7%
HSE	1	3.5%
LLNP	1	3.5%
Fees	1	3.5%
AMEP	1	3.5%
Youth Services	1	3.5%
Youth Connections	1	3.5%

PARTNERS:

Response Category	Indicative example	Number of Programs	Percentage of Programs
Youth Service Organisations	Youth Connect; Bayside Youth Charter; Taskforce; Youth Resource Centre	13	45%
Schools	Local Secondary Schools	10	34%
Local Government	Kingston LGA Youth Team;	9	31%
Health Services	Southern Health; Family Life; CAMHS;	6	20.5%
No Response		6	20.5%
Employment Services	Wise Employment; PTEP	5	17%
LLENs	BKGLLEN; SELLEN	5	17%
Community Groups	Rotary; Mornington Community Contact	5	17%
Educational Organisations	DEECD; VRQA	4	14%
Funding Organisations	Skills Vic; ACFE	2	7%
Other Businesses	Skate World; Bendigo Bank	2	7%
Local Police		2	7%

PATHWAYS:

Response Category	Number of Programs	Percentage of Programs
TAFE/RTO	13	45%
Further General Education	12	41%
Apprenticeships/Traineeships	9	31%
Employment	8	27.5%
Other courses at same LLO	6	20.5%
No Response	5	17%
Connection with other LLOs or LLENS	2	7%
MIPS	1	3.5%

EFFECTIVENESS:
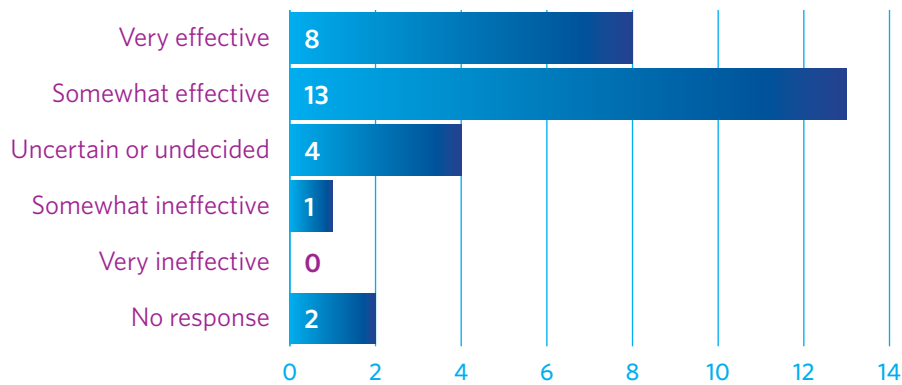
Rating	Number of Programs
Very effective	8
Somewhat effective	13
Uncertain or undecided	4
Somewhat ineffective	1
Very ineffective	0
No response	2

Effectiveness ratings by Number of Programs

Rating	Percentage
Very effective	27.6%
Somewhat effective	44.8%
Uncertain or undecided	13.8%
Somewhat ineffective	3.4%
Very ineffective	0%
No response	6.9%
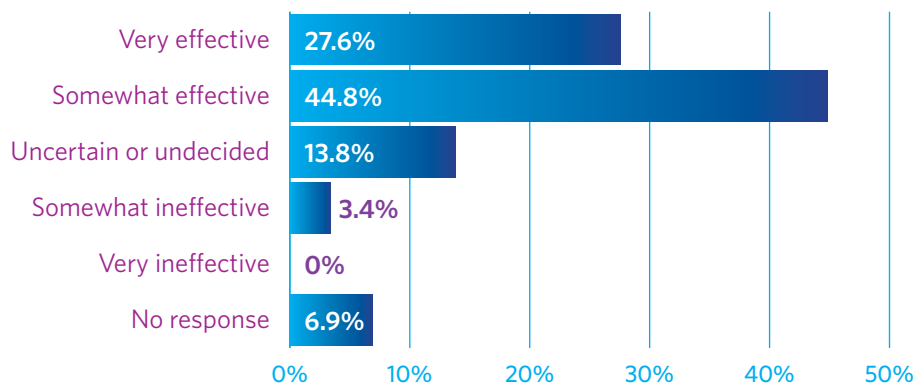
Effectiveness ratings by Number of Programs

CHALLENGES:

Response Category	Indicative example	Number of Programs	Percentage of Programs
Funding	Lack of funding; funding; we are not eligible for additional funding because we are not a school; no MIPS funding;	13	45%
Student Issues	Attendances are spasmodic; engaging their interest; low literacy and numeracy skills; personal circumstances such as mental illness or homelessness	11	38%
Lack of Resources	lack or resources including technology; not having access to sporting programs or facilities;	8	27.5%
Staffing Issues	Staffing is a challenge; staffing for varying attendance;	6	20.5%
Access t Extra Support Services	finding assistance for undiagnosed learning disabilities; not having access to school nurse or psychologist	3	10%
Marketing/Promotion/ Networking	Marketing and promotion; Priority by other partners to engage in participation	3	10%
No Response		3	10%

DESIRED FURTHER SUPPORT:

Response Category	Indicative example	Number of Programs	Percentage of Programs
Extra support for student needs	Support for students with learning disabilities; personal support for students with life issues; support with welfare	13	45%
No response		9	31%
More resources	Sports programs and facilities; resources; technology	8	27.5%
Additional funding	Additional funding for administration tasks; access to better financial resources to be able to employ appropriately qualified people; access to extra funding such as schools get for technology;.	7	24%
Pathways to employment or further education	Continuation of PowWow program; further assistance with employment pathways after the course.	3	10%
Staff Training	Better staff training	1	3.5%
Networking	Networking with other centres	1	3.5%

Item 38. In your opinion, what are the main reasons that Young People are accessing programs at your Learn Local?

Disengagement from regular school	94%
Expulsion from regular school	41%
Need for change of environment	47%
Need for change of peer group	24%
Bullying	47%
Wellbeing challenges (family, homelessness)	47%
Health challenges (mental health, illness)	47%
Drug and alcohol challenges	41%
Juvenile justice	35%
Literacy and numeracy challenges	65%
Refugee/CALD	12%
Significant learning difference/disabilities	18%
Another disability	12%
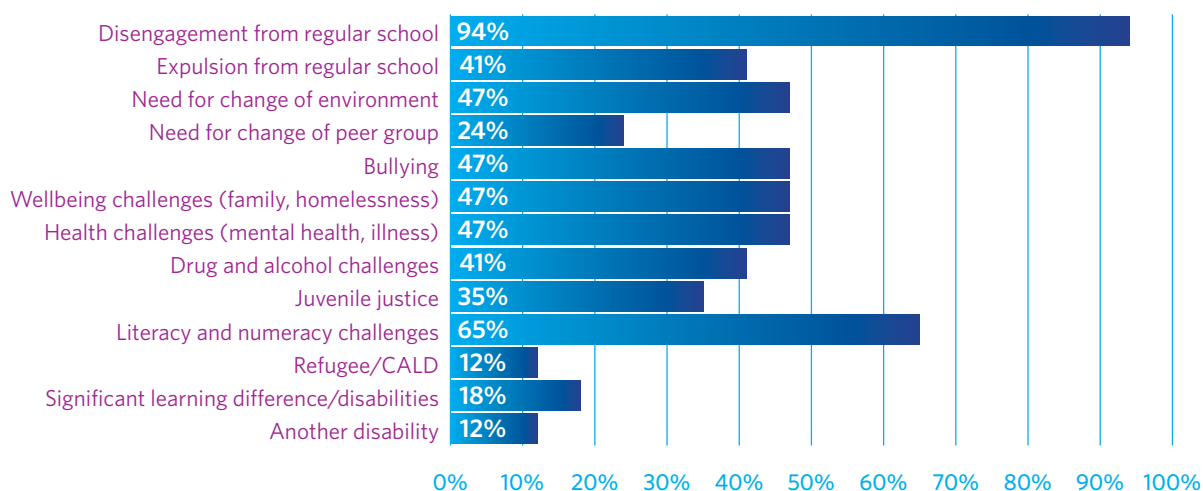
Percentage of organisations who selected each response option in answer to the question: In your opinion, what are the main reasons that Young People are accessing programs at your Learn Local?

Item 39. In your opinion, in 2013 will the number of Young People who wish to access programs at your Learn Local change?

13%	Increase significantly
50%	Increase
25%	Stay around the same
0%	Decrease
12%	Decrease significantly
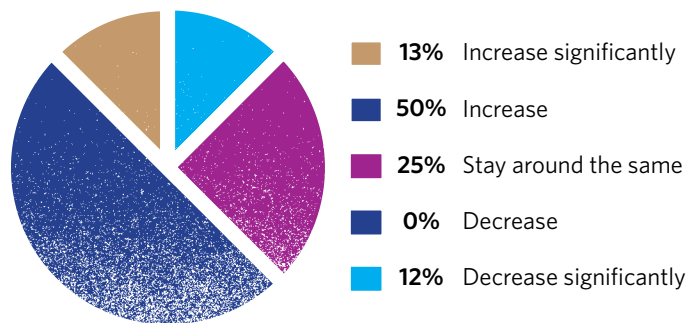
Percentage of organisations that felt numbers of young people accessing programs would change

Item 40. In your opinion, what are the reasons for this?

Response Option	No of responses	Indicative reasons
Decrease significantly	2	Fee structure restricts numbers; other resources opening locally
Decrease	0	
Stay around the same	4	Lack of resources, personnel , space to expand
Increase	8	Schools will be reducing resources to offer VCAL; organisational changes to facilitate increases; increased marketing and word-of-mouth; enhanced networks and partnerships
Increase significantly	2	New organisational focus providing for new cohorts; limited opportunities in schools

Item 41. Please consider the Young People accessing programs at your Learn Local over the last three years. In your opinion, are there any trends or significant changes that you could identify?

Response Type	No of Responses	Indicative Comment/s
Yes there are trends and changes	6	Mental health issues are more common; students attending are more engaged; increase in drug and alcohol issues
No there has been no change	4	No, exactly the same types of kids and numbers

Item 42. Please feel free to add any further comments here:

Six responses received. Two were practical comments about the study or the respondent. Four were requests or observations that might inform the research. These are included here:

We would really appreciate some training in learning more about the options we have for engaging local young people more at our Centre. We would like to know more about CGEA and the other programs for young people.

The kids we see at our centre are those who consistently, year after year "fall through the cracks" of the current school system. Clearly this needs to be addressed at a school level, before they leave.

Please bring back the VCAL co-ordination funding.

DEECD funds for students should follow student - so that when they disengage we can use that money for re-engagement programs.

APPENDIX D –
FOCUS GROUP ATTENDEES

YOUTH IN LEARN LOCALS – RESEARCH PROJECT

FOCUS GROUP DETAILS

Organisation	Date	Representatives
LLO 1	Tuesday 25 September	• Manager x 1 • Trainer x 3
LLO 2	Tuesday 25 September	• Manager x 1 • Trainer/Coordinator x 4
LLO 3	Thursday 27 September	• Manager x 1 • Trainer x 4
LLO 4	Monday 1 October	• CEO x 1 • Manager x 1 • Client Services x 1
LLO 5	Tuesday 9 October	• Manager x 1 • Trainer x 3
LLO 6	Tuesday 16 October	• Trainer/Coordinator x 1
LLO 7	Wednesday 17 October	• Manager x 1 • Student Welfare Coordinator x 1 • Pathways Coordinator x 1 • Administration x 1 • Trainer x 1
LLO 8	Wednesday 17 October	• Manager x 1 • Coordinator x 1 • Trainer x 3

APPENDIX E – FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

YOUTH IN LLOS – FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

DATA:

Intro –

One of the key desired outcomes of this research project is to identify a real picture of the numbers of Young People accessing services at Learn Local Organisations.

You were provided with the data that has come from ACFE with regard to Young People accessing your centre. Can we talk about that now please?

Questions Demographics –

1. *These numbers are somewhat different to what you provided in the survey response. Can we discuss that?* (might include more specific questions here based on survey responses for each LLO)

2. *We would like to get an even deeper understanding of the Young People you are supporting, can provide any information about these following cohorts*?(this might just involve checking that the info provided in the survey is correct, or asking for this if none was provided)

- ESL   - CALD   - Refugees   - Young Parents   - Ab or TSI   - Disabilities

3. *Are t*here any other identifiable demographic cohorts that access your LLO? (ie not 'disengaged' – this is not a demographic cohort)

4. Are there any noticeable trends or changes that you have noticed over the last two years in the demographics of Young People accessing this LLO? (might need to tailor this question to individual survey response)

5. Do you predict any changes in the demographics of young people accessing programs at this LLO over the next two years? *This might be because of an emerging group within your community or a change in circumstances that you are aware of?*

Questions Programs –

1. *How many different programs do you provide for Young People that are specifically aimed to meet learning and qualification needs?* (pre- accredited pathways to VCAL, CGEA etc and actual qualifications programs)

2. Do you offer other programs *that are designed to support broader learning and engagement needs of Young People between 10 and 19?*

OPINIONS:

Checklist of topics to be covered during the interview:

Intro:

We are interested in gathering your thoughts and opinions about a few topics that will inform this research. I have a list of topics here and we have covered most of them through our discussions. However, I would like to hear more about ....

1. *Trends in cohorts and/or numbers of Young People accessing LLO*

2. *Needs of Young People – including predictions*

3. *Effectiveness of overall Youth Program provision at the LLO to meet the needs of Young People*

4. *Reasons that Young People are accessing – including predictions*

5. *What would support more effective pathways for 'disengaged' students to re-connect with education?*

6. *What partnerships throughout the community could be valuable to support the work of the LLO for Young People?*

7. *What partnerships would be beneficial to meet specific needs?* (wellbeing/ substance issues/ mental health issues etc....)

8. *Do you network or share with any other LLOs in order to meet the needs of Young People in your community? Are there any strategies or opportunities that you can think of that could enhance those relationships with other providers?*

APPENDIX F – FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SUMMARY TABLES

Data Summary: Focus Groups for Youth in Learn Locals research project - Our Young People

	Demographics	Issues
LLO 1	Disabilities	Family background Mental Health Not valuing education Substance Abuse Learning Difficulties - Literacy and Numeracy
LLO 2	Some young parents Disabilities Carers	Learning Difficulties – Literacy and Numeracy Financial Mental health – anxiety and depression Substance abuse chronic Homelessness/ instable living arrangements Family background
LLO 3	CALD - Maori and Pacific Islander Disability Carers	Mental Illness – Anxiety Substance abuse Family background Homelessness Domestic Violence Bullying – social media
LLO 4	CALD - Indigenous group Disabilities – learning Carers	Diagnosis and disclosure of disabilities Very low literacy and numeracy Access to mainstream secondary schooling Mental health Drug and alcohol abuse
LLO 5	Carers Disabilities – learning	Homelessness Substance abuse Mental Health Family background
LLO 6		Bullying Mental Health - depression
LLO 7	Disabilities – learning	Mental Health - depression and anxiety Substance abuse Bullying – social media Family background
LLO 8	CALD - Pacific Islander Mixed group, many second generation CALD Disabilities	Family background Learning difficulties – literacy and numeracy Mental health – depression and anxiety Substance abuse Homelessness

Trends	Data accuracy
Only accepting committed students School provision of VCAL changing Students getting younger Changed policies lead to more committed groups	Close Drop outs
Increase anxiety and depression Increase bullying leading to sch disengagement Increase in self harm Increase in substance abuse (methamphetamines) Increasing numbers due to expansion	Not accurate Differing funding sources Recording issues
Increase in anxiety More single parent families – no male role models Increased concerns for student safety Increase in alcohol and drug use – Ice Sex education lacking	Not accurate Difficulties uploading Differing funding sources Drop outs
Gender balance changes Bullying Increase in drug and alcohol abuse Kids getting younger Drug use more likely 'harder' drugs – Ice Local TAFE closing less options for students	Not accurate "Floaters" Many students not captured due to school partnership
Increase in drug abuse – ice in particular Disengaged students getting younger Local TAFE closing will impact numbers Mental health	Not accurate Support many that are not enrolled (carry)
Change in enrolment procedures has lead to a very motivated cohort	Not accurate Timing of recording Other funding sources
Younger students Mental health increasing More behaviour issues	Not accurate Other funding sources
Mental health issues have increased Drug related mental health issues	Reasonably accurate

Data Summary: Focus Groups for Youth in Learn Locals research project - Programs

	Types	Factors of Success
LLO 1	Under 15's Engagement VCAL CGEA VET - Business	Staff Flexible approach Good relationships
LLO 2	VCAL CEGA Work Ed VET – Business, Community Service	Partnerships Good pathways for students Good relationships High expectations Investments in the resources Staff PD
LLO 3	VCAL CEGA end of CEGA pathway program	Relationships, accept everyone Flexibility and understanding Rigorous but casual curriculum Dedicated, knowledgeable staff Small class groups
LLO 4	CGEA VCAL	Student engagement Connecting kids to the centre Hands-on, authentic curriculum Staff
LLO 5	VCAL VET – Hospitality; Children's services; Music and Media Engagement programs	Relationships Small classes Dedicated staff Student centred, authentic approach
LLO 6	VCAL VET – Child care; business PreCAL	Relationships High expectations and high support Engagement Committed staff
LLO 7	CGEA VCAL PreCAL	Value students Flexible, appropriate curriculum Relationships Small atmosphere
LLO 8	VCAL VET – hospitality; business; child services; vocational services	Good at dealing with mental health Small enough to connect with all Relationships Staff team Flexible, engaging curriculum

Partners	Desired support
Schools Mental Health support Employment services Victoria Police	Improved funding arrangements (with schools) Extra support for student needs (e.g. counselling) Change in perception of VCAL, not sub to VCE
Mental Health and drug use counselling Housing assistance	Improved funding – inc staff salaries Preventative counselling services Change in perception of VCAL Police partnerships Medical support Sex education
Youth agencies – Connections Psychologist	More access to psychologist, Medical support Funding for diagnosing and resources Extra support with Lit and Num More from schools More connections with employers
Strong school relationship Health services Welfare and counselling services Drug and alcohol support services	Local council Victoria Police Industry/employer connections Access to sports facilities More physical space and resources
Welfare support agencies Health services Drug and alcohol counselling Philanthropic organisations	
Local council Student counselling	More funding Change in perception of VCAL
Youth services Drug and Alcohol services Employment services Disabilities support services	More resources to meet demands Regular Psychologist; health services (nurse) More funding and resources Better school funding arrangements
Health services Counselling services Drug and alcohol support services Youth networks	Employment connections Victoria police Relationships with schools to return kids More resources More PD for staff

APPENDIX G –
FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW
DATA ANALYSIS

YOUTH IN LEARN LOCAL ORGANISATIONS
RESEARCH PROJECT 2012

DATA ACCURACY

Organisations were provided with data from ACFE and asked to comment on the similarities or differences between that data and what was reported by the survey respondents.

Reporting accuracy of ACFE data

Accuracy category	Number of organisations	Percentage of organisations
Fairly Correct	2	25%
Not Accurate	6	75%

Reasons for inconsistencies in data between ACFE and LLO self report

Category	Indicative comment	Number of organisations	Percentage of organisations
No identifiable reason		1	12.5%
Reporting Issue	VCAL students not reported as funded by SRP also others not reported if funding is from elsewhere.	5	62.5%
Carrying unreported kids/ floating kids	Total number of young people who access the education programs is greater, this includes students that are 'carried' some never enrol;	4	50%

DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE BEING SUPPORTED –
IDENTIFICATION OF COHORTS.

Cohorts identified at LLOs

Category	Number of organisations	Percentage of organisations
Mental Health (disclosed and educator suspected)	8	100%
Alcohol, drug and substance abuse (educator suspected)	7	87.5%
Disabilities and Learning Differences (disclosed and suspected)	7	87.5%
Carers (disclosed and educator suspected)	6	75%
Homeless or unstable living arrangements (disclosed and suspected)	4	50%
Young Parents	2	25%
Aboriginal and TSI	1	12.5%
ESL and CALD	0	0%

ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL), CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD) AND REFUGEES:

All eight LLOs reported that there are no significant cohorts of these young people in any of the centres. Two centres reported that there has been an increase in students from Pacific Island backgrounds (LLOs 3 and 8).

YOUNG PARENTS:

Six of the eight LLOs reported that they have a small group of young parents accessing their programs. There are no more than 10 identified at any of the LLOs. Several LLOs indicated that they cater for the needs of young parents by providing some flexibility in their study, for example, leaving early from a session (LLOs 1, 2 and 3). One organisation reported that they are trying to build up this cohort and provide support for these Young People (LLO 4).

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS (TSI):

Six of the eight LLOs indicated that they have small numbers of students who identify as Aboriginal or TSI. One program (LLO 3) had a larger number (15) in 2011 and one LLO (LLO 5) had a specific connection with an indigenous community organisation and the indigenous officer at SMR.

DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES:

Seven of the eight LLOS reported that significant proportions of their cohorts presented as having disabilities. Many of these indicated that actual diagnosed and disclosed disabilities were low. It was thought that many students do not disclose that they have a disability or learning difficulty or they have issues that have never been formally identified. There is a difficulty when educators think there may be an undiagnosed issue but students are unwilling to seek or accept professional help. There was also a common discussion about defining disability and learning difficulties. Four LLOs (LLOs 1, 2, 3 and 4) discussed mental illness as a significant disability or difficulty. One organisation commented "Mental illness is a huge one. It's more than a learning difficulty it is a disability... Social and emotional included it could be 80 to 90% of the group ... 100% if you look at that big umbrella of disability, then all our students. That's why the traditional schools can't deal with them." (LLO 3)

CARERS:

Six of the eight organisations identified that they had some students that they would consider carers. Some commented that significant percentages of students would look after parents and/or siblings at some time.

MENTAL HEALTH:

All eight of the LLOs reported that mental health issues were evident in the Young People accessing their programs. This was identified as a significant issue for most of the organisations. "I would say my percentage would be 90. 90% with mental illness, anxiety and depression being the main ones" (LLO 2). The LLOs estimated the numbers of Young People in their programs affected by mental illness as anywhere from "50% or maybe more" (LLO 4) to "mental illness has spiked to at least 80% (LLO 8) to "mental health affects 100%, diagnosed and undiagnosed" (LLO 7).

Two other themes were raised in relation to mental health of the students by many of the LLOs. The first was the relationship with drug use (LLOs 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8). These comments illustrate the concerns that were raised "often the students medicate with drug and alcohol" (LLO 5), "A lot of drug induced mental health issues" (LLO 4). The second issue that was raised by two LLOs (LLOs 2 and 3) was related to the impact on the educators. "Often we are very limited. It's a referral process... to various organisations that we tap into... In terms of being equipped ourselves to deal with it, no we're not." (SP) "It is very frustrating when you can't actually help them" (LLO 3) "Our centre is very limited to what they can do to help the kids in regards to their lives outside their education" (LLO 5).

OTHER:

During the interviews the participants were given the opportunity to identify any other particular cohorts that were evident within their groups. These are the cohorts and issues that were identified by the participants. Students with drug and substance abuse issues and who are homeless were the most significant themes mentioned.

Alcohol, drug and substance abuse

Seven of the eight (LLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8)) raised drug and/or substance abuse issues at some stage of the interviews. Comments included: "Alcohol and marijuana are the most prevalent in this group"(LLO 2) "Drug and alcohol abuse is a big issue for the students at LLO (LLO 5). 98% of students are drug and alcohol affected" "It seems to me that it is on the increase forever, it is never going down... Of course with that is the documented potential for mental related illness... It's a real problem there, for some of them its an underlying problem and for some of them it's a consequence of their mental health problems."(LLO 2) "Drug abuse presents in 50% of the cohort" (LLO 4)

Homelessness

Four of the eight LLOs (LLOs 2, 3, 4 and 8) suggested that there is a consistent cohort of students who are homeless or have unstable living arrangements (such as "couch-surfing" where students regularly stay at a different places regularly). Comments included: "three out of 16 that I have got on flexible delivery because of their living arrangements. They're couch surfing or they're street sleeping" (LLO 3), "Cases of homelessness are increasing. There are kids afraid as they don't know if they have a home to go to. Some are temporarily "couch-surfing" and 25% are actually homeless." (LLO 8) "Up to 25% of students have been kicked-out of home and I have had to take some students to shelters" (LLO 2).

Family Stability

This was raised by many of the LLOs, often within discussions of other cohorts and issues as a contributing factor. Comments included: "No parental support contributes to the lack of engagement" (LLO 8) "The other part of the discussion is very poor parenting... I think it's a major contributing to all the problems" (LLO 2). "Domestic violence is quite ripe in my cohort as well. I think it happens so regularly that they can have a night where they run away and spend a couple of nights with a friend or ... an aunty or an uncle and then they just go back" (LLO 3).

Attendance:

The challenges of attendance were raised by several LLOs. These comments were linked to discussions of the other issues whereby students with challenges related to family stability, homelessness, drug and substance abuse and mental health problems all have impacted on students' attendance at times.

Energy Drinks:

One LLO (LLO 1) identified an emerging issue with energy drink abuse. They felt that many students are consuming significant amounts of these throughout the day. They felt that this consumption was having significant impact on the students' behaviour and learning in classes with many presenting as if they are tired from not sleeping well. There is also an evident cycle of being "hyped-up" from the sugar and caffeine and then almost asleep in their chairs from the "adrenal slump" that follows.

NOTICEABLE TRENDS FROM PREVIOUS TWO YEARS AND PREDICTED

The groups were asked to consider any changes in the cohorts and the needs of students attending programs in the past two years and also to predict what issues will be impacting on their programs into the future.

Opinions of trends and changes in the Young People accessing LLO programs

Category	Number of organisations	Percentage of organisations
Alcohol, drug and substance abuse	5	62.5%
Mental Health	4	50%
Disengaged students coming to LLOs are getting younger	3	37.5%
Bullying leading to disengagement from schools (inc cyberbulling)	3	37.5%
TAFE changes will affect numbers	2	25%

ALCOHOL, DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE:

Five LLO's (LLOs 2, 3, 4, 5 and 8) identified this in answer to this question as a concerning trend in the Young People accessing their programs. They all referred particularly to the increase in the use of methamphetamines (Ice). Most of these five discussed drug abuse in general as more of an issue than alcohol "Drugs is a more prominent issue than alcohol" (LLO 5)

DISENGAGED STUDENTS COMING TO LLOS ARE GETTING YOUNGER:

Three LLO's (LLO 1, 4 and 5) reported that they felt that students are presenting as disengaged from schools at a younger age. One (LLO 4) specified that they felt they are seeing more students from the ages of 12 to 15 years. Another LLO (LLO 5) felt that drug use was an influence in this as the Young People seem to be becoming involved in drug use younger "13 years old seems to be the standard age for drug abuse". LLO (LLO 1) reflected on the younger students and the different relationships with the school/s, "Under 15s group of students get more support from schools. The school still has hope that these kids will change, whereas the others are very moulded in their ways". One LLO (LLO 5) identified that younger student numbers are increasing significantly because of social issues and the fact that there is no local secondary college. The potential to disengage from schooling is exacerbated by the effort that is required to attend a mainstream secondary college.

MENTAL HEALTH:

Three of the LLOs (SLLOs 2, 7 and 8) discussed mental health as an increasing issue in answer to these questions (it should be noted that all the LLOs expressed concerns about mental health issues at some point in the interviews). Again depression and anxiety were highlighted as most commonly presenting.

BULLYING LEADING TO DISENGAGEMENT FROM SCHOOL (INCLUDING CYBERBULLYING):

Three LLOs (LLOs 2, 5 & 7) raised bullying as a significant contributing reason for students disengaging with schools. One LLO (LLO 7) explained the impact of the cyber aspects as such "Facebook and other social media presents a significant amount of issues. Issues don't defuse overnight like they did before social media arose. They seem to write horrible things to each other that they wouldn't say to another's face. "

TAFE CHANGES WILL AFFECT NUMBERS:

Two LLOs (LLOs 4 and 5) suggested that upcoming closure of the local TAFE no longer offering VCAL programs will significantly impact numbers that need to access programs. One of the LLOs (LLO 5) regularly accepts students above their capacity already because they feel a "moral and ethical" obligation to provide for these students who have nowhere else to go to. The impacts of the TAFE closure on the LLO will very challenging to manage in a way that enables the programs to provide the best education possible for the students.

OTHER TRENDS NOTICED:

There were many other issues that were raised by one of the LLO groups that are worth noting. These were:

- More single parent family backgrounds (LLO 3)
- Financial management issues of families (LLO 3)
- Behaviour issues have increased (LLO 7)
- Self harming (LLO 2)
- Sexually less educated (LLO 3)
- Increased concerns around student safety in their homes and communities (LLO 3)

HOW MANY DIFFERENT PROGRAMS ARE PROVIDED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

Type of Program	Number of LLOs providing	Percentage of LLOs providing
VCAL	8	100%
CEGA	7	87.5%
VET courses (Cert 1 to 3)	4	50%
Other Programs (Life skills, younger student engagement, Work skills)	4	50%
Pathway programs (Pre and Post VCAL or CEGA)	3	37.5%

FACTORS OF SUCCESS IN PROGRAMS OFFERED:

Response Category	Indicative examples	Number of LLOs	Percentage of LLO
Teaching approaches/ engaging curriculum programs	The kids can work at their own pace; The learning can be more casual even though there is a tough curriculum; all projects are focused on the students' interests and what they want to do for their career; Listen to what the kids want to learn and try to get it into the curriculum	7	87.5%
A focus on student relationships	It's because we listen and they feel they are respected here. They can be who they want and aren't judged; Relationships with the students are the first priority; At the end of the day it is the connection that you have with the students and it needs to be real; Treating students with dignity and respect	6	75%
Culture of LLO/ programs	The students can relax and focus on education; Small atmosphere helps; Students feel safe at the LLO; Small enough to nurture all the students; The students become comfortable here.	6	75%
Staff	Dedication of the staff toward the students; Supported staff professional development; The trainers work well together; Trainers are very understanding but there are also boundaries.	5	62.5%
Catering for student well being and learning needs	Try to work in with the students with their illness or situation and use flexibility and understanding; They can take a break if they are having a bad day; We are good at dealing with mental health; Flexibility is built in	4	50%
Other - Environment & resources; Partnerships; Pathways	Cross boundaries and have good connections outside LLO; Give students options of pathways; Money spent on the up keep of facilities and supplies for the students	1	12.5%

PARTNERSHIPS IN EXISTENCE:

Type of Organisation/Support	Number of LLOs with this type of partnership	Number of LLOs with this type of partnership
Welfare and support services (e. Taskforce, Headspace)	6	50%
Schools/ TAFEs	4	50%
Health agencies (e.g. Southern Health)	4	50%
Youth services (e.g. Youth Connections)	3	37.5%
Other LLOs/LLENs	3	37.5%
Victoria Police/Youth justice services	2	25%
Disability services (e.g. Oakwood)	2	25%
Other (Councils, First Stop)	2	25%

DESIRED PARTNERSHIPS/SUPPORT

Type of Organisation/Support	Number of LLOs with this type of partnership	Number of LLOs with this type of partnership
More effective partnership with DEECD/Schools	4	50%
More effective partnerships with Victoria Police	3	37.5%
More effective partnerships with industry and organisations that provide pathways to work	3	37.5%
Partnerships with schools or sport organisations that can provide sporting facilities	3	37.5%
More effective partnerships with housing support services	2	25%
More effective partnerships with organisations that can provide access to regular counselling and welfare services	2	25%
Partnerships with health/medical services	2	25%

Comments of Note:

One LLO (LLO3) made the noteworthy comment that many partnerships with external service providers are often ad hoc and inconsistent and that one of their desired improvements would be to establish more reliable and consistent partnerships that offer real benefits to students particularly in the areas of mental health/well being and welfare services.

OPINION COMMENTS:

Networking with other providers was raised by five LLOs (LLOs 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8). Most felt that it is useful " It would be very worthwhile for trainers" (LLO 6), "We need to further develop networks" (LLO 8). However all five LLOs felt that there significant barriers to developing effective networks, particularly "We need more networking but there is no time/funds available. Whatever we dedicate to networking is time taken away from the kids."

Participants from all of the eight LLOs who formed the focus group interviews were offered the opportunity to express opinions on topics of importance to their settings. Often much of this was part of discussions for the sections above. Recorded below are some of the comments that were raised that are not necessarily already covered by the above analysis:

LLO 1 – "The schools get funding for computers and interactive whiteboards etc for the students but none of this comes with the students when the school sends them to us. We are expected to fund all these extras. There needs to be some guidelines on how the funding going to school is spent. We need enough funding to support the program and the students learning effectively. A liaison officer would be a good idea. The old African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child" applies but often it seems these kids only have us."

LLO 7 – "A concern is that registration to operate as an RTO is getting very expensive, going from $600 to $10,000 per year"

LLO 5 – "We unfortunately feel that we can never say that we are meeting 100% of the students needs. There is always more that we would like to be doing. We are filled to capacity so there is not much room to expand. We would like more room for the kids to meet all the needs of re-engagement and get the kids to value education more. We can only meet needs within the current capacity. There is always more to be done but with limited resources it is hard"

LLO 2 – "It's hard because we sound like we are being negative but there is so many positives. We wouldn't be here if there wasn't those as well and as frustrating sometimes that the youth area can be it's so rewarding as well and funny and there are so many good things and it can improve lives."

LLO 2 – There isn't a lot of good money in this for staff. If you want to be paid really well you don't work for an RTO. But to have good teachers you have to pay good teachers... It's disadvantaging the kids when in fact this is where we need the best teachers."

APPENDIX H – TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS SUMMARY TABLE AND DATA ANALYSIS

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS – DATA SUMMARY:

	QUESTION ONE Can you tell me about the needs of the young people in your community and the kinds of programs that you would like to be able to offer at your LLO if you could?		QUESTION TWO Do you already have any ideas, plans or specific strategies in place to offer any of these programs within the next two years?	QUESTION THREE Ideally, what support would you like to have access to, to enable your organisation to develop and offer these programs to young people within the next two years?
	Needs	Program Ideas	Strategies	Support required
LLO A Centre Manager	Connection Engagement Creative outlet	Arts project/ mural	Networking Approached SC	Advice on logistics and programs
LLO B Centre Manager	Engagement Bullying Absenteeism	***Does offer** 2012 - CGEA - CertIII 2013 - CGEA	Connecting with schools and agencies Develop a project based program – urban art; creative – Promoting: DVD on this program	PD for Staff Logistical support for development Advice - referral services – informing parents
LLO C Centre Manager	Engagement Art focus Connection	program design for computers animal husbandry game design	Focus on provision of: safe, supportive environment staff that young people can relate to ways for them to connect	Advice Funding Staff Partnership with another RTO
LLO D Coordinator	Engagement Links to employment Welfare support	Drama group Works skills courses (RSA/ Food handlers)	Interested staff member driving the ideas	Advice and information about programs Connection to appropriate staff Partnerships/ Networking (schools, TAFE, Youth Orgs, Employment)
LLO E Education Manager	Creativity -No school pathway in Arts available beside VCE	***Does offer –** CGEA and will offer VCAL in 2013 visual arts certificate	VCAL will be offered in 2013 will have an art focus Already networking	Grants and funding Resources Space Partnerships with schools

LLO F Manager	Hands on learning	***Does offer** – pre-accred programs		Space to run programs Funding
LLO G Education Managers	Diverse needs Learning support	***Does offer** – CGEA and IMPACT program engagement	Continue with current program Develop program for those students at lower levels	Partnerships /Networking Pathways Funding Publicity
LLO H Manager	Engagement Welfare support Life skills Connection	Lead agent in a program called 'Youth Foundation' Y-PACK -youth leadership Mentoring program for Secondary	Developing partnership with local Youth Info Centre. Focus on pre-accredited/ foundation level programs Will be demand-driven focused and ideally in partnership Networking with local providers	Partnerships Support and advice on logistics and mental health issues

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS – DATA ANALYSIS:

Needs of Young People in Community

Response Category	Number of organisations	Percentage of organisations
Engagement	5	62.5%
Connection	4	50%
Creative/Artistic opportunities	3	37.5%
Welfare support	3	37.5%
Learning support	2	25%
Employment/Life skills	2	25%

Support desired to develop programs

Response Category	Number of organisations	Percentage of organisations
Advice	5	62.5%
Partnerships/Networks	5	62.5%
Funding	4	50%
Staff resources	3	37.5%
Space/Resources	2	25%

APPENDIX I – PARTICIPATING LEARN LOCAL ORGANISATIONS DETAILS

PARTICIPATING LEARN LOCAL ORGANISATIONS DETAILS

Research ID	Type	Size	Other organisational information	Research phase participation
LLO a	Neighbourhood House	Small		Survey
LLO b	Neighbourhood House	Medium	RTO	Survey
LLO c	Neighbourhood House	Medium	RTO	Survey
LLO 8	Neighbourhood House	Medium	Delivers youth programs RTO	Survey Focus Group
LLO d	Neighbourhood House	Large	Delivers youth programs RTO	Survey
LLO e	Neighbourhood House	Medium		Survey
LLO B	Neighbourhood House	Small		Survey Phone Interview
LLO 6	Neighbourhood House	Large	Delivers youth programs RTO	Survey Focus Group
LLO f	Neighbourhood House	Small		Survey
LLO g	Neighbourhood House	Small		Survey
LLO 7	Neighbourhood House	Large	Delivers youth programs RTO	Survey Focus Group
LLO h	Neighbourhood House	Medium		Survey
LLO 3	Not for profit organisation – Youth focus	Medium	Delivers across a number of LGA's Delivers youth programs RTO	Survey Focus Group
LLO 1	Not for profit organisation	Large	Delivers across a number of LGA's Delivers youth programs RTO	Survey Focus Group
LLO 4	Neighbourhood House	Medium	Delivers youth programs RTO	Survey Focus Group

Research ID	Type	Size	Other organisational information	Research phase participation
LLO G	Neighbourhood House	Large	Delivers youth programs RTO	Survey Phone Interview
LLO 2	Not for profit organisation	Large	Delivers across a number of LGA's Delivers youth programs RTO	Survey Focus Group
LLO 5	Not for profit organisation – Youth focus	Large	Delivers youth programs only. RTO	Survey Focus Group
LLO F	Not for profit organisation – Youth focus	Large	Delivers across a number of LGA's Delivers youth programs only RTO	Survey Phone Interview
LLO i	Neighbourhood House	Medium		Survey
LLO A	Neighbourhood House	Small		Survey Phone Interview
LLO j	Neighbourhood House	Medium		Survey
LLO C	Neighbourhood House	Small		Survey Phone Interview
LLO k	Not for profit organisation	Medium	RTO	Survey
LLO l	Neighbourhood House	Small		Survey
LLO m	Neighbourhood House	Small		Survey
LLO H	Neighbourhood House	Small		Survey Phone interview
LLO n	Not for profit organisation - Disability	Large	RTO	Survey
LLO o	Not for profit organisation	Small		Survey
LLO D	Neighbourhood House	Small		Survey Phone Interview
LLO E	Neighbourhood House	Medium	Delivers youth programs. RTO	Survey Phone Interview

APPENDIX J – PARTNERSHIP MAPS AND ANALYSIS

FOCUS GROUP: LLOS PARTNERSHIP MAPS

LLO 1

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS
- Schools (some)
- Centrelink
- Job Services

WEAK PARTNERSHIPS
- Youth services and agencies
- Schools (some)
- TAFE

PARTNERSHIP NEEDED / GAPS
- Victoria Police
- Work placements with local business

LLO 2

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS
- Schools (some)
- JSAs/Centrelink
- Youth Connections and agencies
- SMR DEECD/ LLENs/ LLOs

WEAK PARTNERSHIPS
- Counselling and support
- Schools (some)
- Victoria Police

PARTNERSHIP NEEDED / GAPS
- Medical practitioners
- Work placements with business
- Support with mental health

LLO 3

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS
- Schools (some)
- JSAs/Centrelink
- Youth services and agencies

WEAK PARTNERSHIPS
- Counselling and support
- Schools (some)
- LLOs/ RTOs
- Work placements with business

PARTNERSHIP NEEDED / GAPS
- Medical practitioners
- Work placements with business
- Support with mental health

LLO 4

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS
- Medical health and support services
- LLO/ RTOs
- Centrelink/ JSAs
- School (one)

WEAK PARTNERSHIPS
- Pathways and referral agencies
- Industry support
- Housing support

PARTNERSHIP NEEDED / GAPS
- Sporting grounds and equipment
- Victoria Police
- DEECD
- LGA youth services

LLO 5

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS
- RTOs/ LLOs/ education organisations
- Centrelink/ JSAs
- Welfare and charity organisations
- LGA youth services
- Victoria Police

WEAK PARTNERSHIPS
- Beginning to build philanthropic partnerships

PARTNERSHIP NEEDED / GAPS
- Work placements with local business
- Other RTO partnerships to broaden scope of support

LLO 6

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS
- Strong partnerships
- LGA youth services
- Schools (some)

WEAK PARTNERSHIPS
- Schools (some)
- Other LLOs/ education providers

PARTNERSHIP NEEDED / GAPS
- Work placements with local business

LLO 7

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS
- Schools (some)
- SMR DEECD
- Welfare, youth agencies and services
- RTOs, TAFEs, LLENs

WEAK PARTNERSHIPS
- Pathways support
- Schools (some)
- Work placements with local business
- Victoria Police

PARTNERSHIP NEEDED / GAPS
- Sports equipment and access to organisations
- Pyschologists and health /medical access

LLO 8

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS
- Schools (some)
- LLENs, ACFE, LLOs
- Welfare and support agencies

WEAK PARTNERSHIPS
- Schools (some)
- Housing
- Pathways and career development

PARTNERSHIP NEEDED / GAPS
- Victoria Police
- Work placements with local business

Focus Groups: Partnership map summary

Strong Partnerships	Number of LLOs	% of LLOs
Schools (some)	7	87.5%
Youth and Welfare services	6	75%
Employment services	5	62.5%
Other Educational Organisations (eg. SMR, LLENs, other LLOs)	5	62.5%
Other – Victoria Police, Medical services	2	25%
Weak Partnerships	Number of LLOs	% of LLOs
Schools (some)	6	75%
Youth and Welfare services	5	62.5%
Pathways support/ Employers	4	50%
Other Educational Organisations (eg. RTOs LLOs)	3	37.5%
Other – Victoria Police, Philanthropic organisations	2	25%
Partnerships Needed	Number of LLOs	% of LLOs
Employers	5	62.5%
Victoria Police	3	37.5%
Mental Health and Medical Support	3	37.5%
Other Educational Organisations (DEECD, RTOs)	2	25%
Sports Organisations	2	25%
LGA Youth Services	1	12.5%
Volunteers	1	12.5%

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