



Report to the Board of  
Tomorrow:Today Foundation  
From the  
Education Program  
Community Advisory Committee

# **Improving Benalla Student Outcomes**

October 31, 2008

FINAL REPORT  
Improving Benalla Student Outcomes

Report to the Board of Tomorrow:Today Foundation\*  
From the Education Program Community Advisory Committee

\* Tomorrow:Today Foundation is Benalla district's Community Foundation, formed and run by local people to provide funds for local community projects. Our purpose is to enable the people of Benalla and district to create a stronger, more resilient and prosperous rural community.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Education Program Community Advisory Committee was formed by Benalla district's Tomorrow:Today Foundation to investigate, debate, define and make recommendation to the Board regarding the design and cost of projects to make up an Education Program that would improve Benalla student outcomes.

The Committee finds that in relation to education, Benalla has a number of problems that are either the consequence of social disadvantage, or that increase levels of social disadvantage. These problems include a growing number of children starting school without the range of skills necessary to move forward with learning, reducing levels of literacy and numeracy in the early school years, low levels of wellbeing amongst the student population, a disproportionately high level of school leaving prior to Year 12, a concentration of Year 12 completers without tertiary qualifications in low-skilled occupations that are the least secure, and an inability for families to financially support the transition of children to higher education or training.

The Advisory Committee does not believe that a single project will result in Benalla's children choosing to stay in education or training until, and beyond, Year 12. The regional office of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and its schools are actively adapting and challenging the trends. Flexible arrangements across training providers such as Goulburn Ovens TAFE are being explored, and endeavours such as the Local Learning & Employment Network continue to enable improved outcomes for a number of Benalla's young people. The Committee finds that it is the impact of social disadvantage **at home and in the community, as well as at school** that is limiting our children's life chances. The combination of attitudes, wellbeing, early success in literacy/numeracy, financial constraints and positive role models all have a role to play in a young person's decision to stay on, or turn away from education. A long term (10 year) whole-of-community program should simultaneously focus on achieving a sustainable impact on (1) school readiness and early year's issues and (2) wellbeing of Benalla's children and young people. A substantial third issue is the financial constraints on children and families that results in a reduced expectation of transitioning to higher education or training. Whilst most of the response to the issue of proportionally low level of post-school qualifications probably sits with public policy, direct cash support via scholarships or other means should also be investigated as an option for supporting at least some of Benalla's students as they move away from home, transition to tertiary education, and achieve higher education qualifications.

### Vision

By 2030, the education and training completion rates for Benalla's 17 – 24 year olds will equal or exceed the Victorian average for non-disadvantaged districts.

### Program Goals

- All Benalla's children commence school ready to learn
- Allowing for the full range of individual abilities, the range of literacy and numeracy ability in the Benalla cluster of schools is considered average when compared to the Victorian average for other school clusters
- Most of Benalla's children have a medium to high level of wellbeing
- Year 12 or equivalent completion rates for Benalla to equal or better the State average.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **The Advisory Committee recommends that –**

1. An Education Program is developed to challenge the impacts of social disadvantage on student achievement. It should recognise that achievement at school is influenced by the community, the home and the school.
2. The Education Program should have a substantial project dedicated to ensuring that all Benalla's children commence school *ready to learn*.
3. An objective should be significant improvement in children's and teenagers wellbeing.
4. A community volunteer project that helps engage the most disadvantaged families in community life is resourced.
5. A Mentoring Project is implemented as part of the Education Program.
6. An objective should be that Benalla's children decide to stay in full time education and training, or apprenticeships/traineeships connected to employment, at least until completion of Year 12 (or equivalent); and attainment of post-school qualifications be strongly supported.
7. Tomorrow:Today Foundation release the findings from this report to enable collaboration across organisations and agencies
8. A full impact evaluation is undertaken from the commencement of the Program to help identify targeting issues, aid continual improvement, and assess progress towards change.

## **Background**

Benalla is significantly disadvantaged in comparison to the rest of Victoria; rating in the “top 40” of 726 postcodes. The report by Tony Vinson, released last year, noted **“it is difficult to deny the centrality of limited education and its impact on the acquisition of economic and life skills in the making and sustaining of disadvantage in Australia.”** (p.96) This statement resulted in a discussion with the Director of Education in this region; who welcomed the involvement of Tomorrow:Today Foundation, and noted that the time was ‘ripe’ for a partnership between government and philanthropy in Benalla district to achieve agreed outcomes. Local government formed a cross-agency forum to respond to the Vinson report, and this forum welcomed a specific education-focused investigative approach from Tomorrow:Today Foundation.

Two literature reviews were undertaken internally in late 2007 to help inform the Board of Tomorrow:Today:

- Education and Social Disadvantage
- The Role of Philanthropy in Public Education.

The Board then moved to form the Education Program Advisory Committee to investigate, debate, define and make recommendation to the Board of Tomorrow:Today Foundation regarding the design and cost of projects to make up an Education Program.

## **Committee Membership, Critical Friends and Program of Meetings**

Membership was drawn from active members of the Benalla and district community spanning education and other fields of community development.

Liz Chapman (Convenor)	David Dore
Cr. Pat Claridge	Louise Levy
Wayne Weaire	Stuart Brain
Barbara Alexander	Sue Oakley
Heather Leary	Brady Green
Joanna Mason	Helen Mitchell
Glenys Graham	

Six meetings were held from June to October 2008. The membership listing is provided in more detail, as is the program for each meeting, in the appendices. One meeting was an all-day workshop with visiting specialists. These specialists and others formed an important reference group of ‘critical friends’ that the Committee and the Convenor called on throughout the investigation for information, advice and/or guidance. Their services, all provided at no cost, have proven invaluable. The Advisory Committee wishes to thank and acknowledge these individuals for their time and consideration. It should be noted that these specialists have not been privy to the Committee’s deliberations, and have not been asked to review or endorse the Committee’s conclusions.

Merilyn Gander  
Dept. Ed. & Early Childhood Dev.

Prof. Richard V. Teese,  
University of Melbourne

Sue Watts  
Make Mentoring Matter, Hume Region

Dr Mark Vicars  
Victoria University

Prof. Nicola Yelland,  
Victoria University

Prof. Michael E. Bernard,  
University of Melbourne

Josh Levy  
Foundation for Young Australians (in  
alliance with the Education  
Foundation)

Gail Timmers  
NE Tracks LLEN

## **Key Findings & Recommendations**

### Overview of the Issues

Early school leaving is the strongest predictor of social disadvantage. A sound education is instrumental in reducing social disadvantage.

There are both social and economic reasons for all Australians to complete their education or training. Nationally, economists state that productivity and Gross Domestic Product increases when the rate of retention to Year 12, or in apprenticeships, is increased. Regionally, we know that high levels and wide distribution of secondary education is a key factor in regional economic strength.

Socially, we know that lack of qualifications, non-completion of secondary education, basic numeracy and literacy problems are all strongly correlated with unemployment, poorer health and relationship breakdown.

The Advisory Committee was deliberate in its focus on *improving Benalla student outcomes to improve individual life opportunities*. The Committee strongly endorsed the view that a good basic education would look different for different people – for some it would mean completing Year 12 and successfully transitioning and completing tertiary studies; for others it would mean leaving school at 16 for apprenticed employment – the important requirement being the successful completion of education or vocational training.

Whilst our investigations have not been able to be exhaustive, we have found that Benalla has a number of problems that are either the consequence of social disadvantage, or that increase the levels of social disadvantage, including:

- *early school leaving of local population*

Benalla's young people have a disproportionately high level of school leaving prior to Year 12. Whilst most students who leave school in Year 10 and 11 do so for apprenticeships or

TAFE courses, there is still a significant proportion who leave without transitioning to other forms of education or training –

- Year 10 leavers are the most likely early leavers to move into further education and training such as apprenticeships (around 70%).
- This declines for Year 11 leavers, with almost 50% either ‘looking for work’ or working part time or full time
- By Year 12, most who leave during the school year are either looking for work (20% of Year 12 early leavers), working part time (20%) or working full time(15%)

The Advisory Committee believes that it is these early leavers – Benalla’s young people who leave without transitioning to an apprenticeship or further training – who should be targeted.

- *Incomplete education (17-24 year olds)*

It is not yet clear what impact the ‘gap’ year is having on the transition from high school to further education such as University or TAFE. We do know that in 2007, **70%** of Victoria’s Year 12 completers commenced tertiary education or training (universities, apprenticeship/traineeships, vocational education from minimum Certificate IV). In Benalla, only **55%** made the transition – and in 2008 this figure dramatically dropped in Benalla to just over **37%** of Year 12 completers. When asked reasons for deferring study the most frequent Victoria-wide response was “not ready”. The most frequent response in Hume Region was “Awaiting Youth Allowance”.

It should be noted that across non-metropolitan areas most of those who have a ‘gap year’ do seem to be taking up their tertiary offers in the following year. However early indications are that there does appear to be a disproportional loss of rural young people with low socio-economic status. This then is a cause for concern for Benalla’s young people.

The Advisory Committee has not been able to identify research to inform it regarding district or regional completion rates of tertiary education.

- *Unskilled workers and low mean taxable income*

Recent data demonstrates that Year 12 completers without tertiary qualifications are concentrated in occupations that are low paid, part-time or casual, and the least secure. Of Benalla’s 2007 Year 12 completers that did not go on to tertiary education, around 12 % were looking for work or inactive. The remainder are all employed in full time or part time work. However all employment – full time or part time – is in unskilled jobs: sales assistants, check out operators, store persons and counter hands.

The Advisory Committee does not believe that a single project will result in Benalla’s children choosing to stay in education or training until, and beyond, Year 12. Benalla’s schools have been adapting and responding to meet student needs within the school system for a number of years, and by all accounts they are doing a sound job. However it is the impact of social disadvantage at home and in the community, as well as at school that is limiting our children’s life chances. The combination of attitudes, wellbeing, early success in literacy/numeracy, financial constraints and positive role models all have a role to play in a young person’s decision to stay on, or turn away from education.

**The Advisory Committee recommends that an Education Program be developed to challenge the impacts of social disadvantage on student achievement. It should recognise that achievement at school is influenced by the community, the home and the school.**

### Learning to Love Learning

Committee members relayed anecdotal stories of a growing number of children in Benalla starting Prep without a range of skills necessary to move forward with learning. Attempts to quantify these stories were not wholly successful as cluster level data and school assessments are designed to answer different questions<sup>1</sup>. We know from the research on disadvantage and learning that this could be expected to be the case, and we also know that the cluster-level data is showing us that there has been a (small) decline in Prep to Year 2 levels of literacy over the last three years in Benalla generally. A learning gap at Prep level can grow to 8 years by the end of secondary school<sup>2</sup>. In Australia, students in the lowest quartile of wealth distribution are twice as likely to score badly in reading tests as any other student. This matters - research from England demonstrates that those who reach the expected standard of numeracy and literacy by age 11 have a 70% chance of getting the qualifications at 16 they need to head towards higher education. For those who do not reach the same threshold at 11, their chances of the same at 16 are 12%.

Other worrying information includes the high number of mothers and toddlers who do not engage with the Maternal and Child Health Service. Whilst there is close to 100% engagement with Maternal & Child Health services in the first few months of a newborn's life, attendance drops away from that point to a stage where little over 50% attend in Benalla for assessment at age 3½, which is a crucial assessment for early identification of developmental problems.

Starting school ready-to-learn was seen as being made up of two parts:

- (1) School readiness<sup>3</sup> – the skills and maturity to deal with others, to focus and not be easily distracted, to learn to tolerate other children (even the ones that you may not like), to follow instructions and directions from the teacher, and to work independently at times. Children who are not at this level may struggle with peers, and have difficulty in communicating and in tuning in to teacher directions or tasks of learning. Such struggles and difficulties can lead to ambivalence towards school and learning. There is a growing body of international and Australian research that suggests that those who enter school without such skills are at increased risk of eventually dropping out of school. There is also a body of research that correlate school readiness specifically with school achievement.

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<sup>1</sup> School-level literacy and numeracy assessments of students on commencement at Prep are not sufficiently informative for our purposes. The initial assessment is for teachers to understand what the child can and can't do – so a child who is 'ready to learn' but has not yet been introduced to reading would probably rate fairly low in a literacy assessment, despite the fact that they may have had a family environment rich in language, participation, and belonging. The school-based assessments answer the teachers' questions about how to respond to the student's needs. They do not answer our question about readiness to learn.

<sup>2</sup> C.Pianta presentation to the cross-agency Education Task force group 2.9.08

<sup>3</sup> This definition taken from an article prepared by Kathy Walker for KidsLife  
[http://www.kidslife.com.au/article.asp?ContentID=school\\_readiness](http://www.kidslife.com.au/article.asp?ContentID=school_readiness)

- (2) Pre-literacy and numeracy – an early childhood rich in conversation, observation, story telling and sense of belonging sets the scene for children to learn to read and write, and become numerate. (It does not imply that children should be taught their numbers or letters prior to commencing school.) A positive start in Prep, Grade 1 and 2 establishes confident and interested learners.

**The Committee believes that the Education Program should have a substantial project dedicated to ensuring that all Benalla’s children commence school *ready to learn*.**

There are a number of examples of literacy development projects that have successfully developed the foundation skills of language, literacy and numeracy in specific localities. “Salisbury Reads” is such a program in Adelaide’s northern suburbs, a region of considerable educational disadvantage. The program has 7 elements, coordinated through Salisbury Library Services. The Little Big Book Club provides new parents with a board book, a DVD *Lets read* and library information. The public library or the local child and youth health service provides the connection to the new parents. A partnership with The Advertiser newspaper is considered crucial to the success of the project. Another element is a “Lapsit Program” – a 4 week project where parents are the focus to promote reading, singing nursery rhymes and doing action songs with their young child in an informal familiar environment. Salisbury Library runs story time projects for children under 5. An in-house training program has been developed for staff that focuses on early childhood literacy development. The libraries have developed parenting and early literacy kits for loan to community groups, carers and parents.

Another project that has been successful in Canada is the “Mother Goose” project. It is a group experience for parents and their babies and pre-school children focusing on the pleasure and power of using rhymes, songs and stories together. The program is preventative in nature. The parents gain skills and confidence, which can enable them to create positive family patterns during their children’s crucial early years and give their children healthy early learning experiences with language and communication. Each group of parents and children (birth to 2-2½ or 2 – 4 years) meet with two teachers once a week for ten weeks at a time. The atmosphere is relaxed, with time for visiting and an hour for teaching.

In summary, there are a number of successful projects that could be adapted for Benalla’s families. The Advisory Committee believes that a partnership with Benalla Rural City and its developing library project will be crucial to the success of this component of the Education Program.

### Challenging and Reversing Under-achievement

Social-emotional wellbeing is a condition essential for achievement. In seeking to identify the wellbeing of Benalla students, the Committee learned that –

- From a lay perspective, the problem with low levels of wellbeing can be described as children “under-achieving”. This is quite different from *low* achievers who may try their best but not have the cognitive ability to achieve to a high standard. *Under*-achievers lack the aspiration to learn, overcome problems and do well. The primary author of a recent research report on Australian student wellbeing believes that given Benalla’s level of

disadvantage, it is expected that at least 50% of Benalla's young people have low levels of wellbeing<sup>4</sup>.

- An opinion survey is conducted annually in all Victorian government primary and secondary schools. Whilst the opinions and attitudes of *teachers* and *parents* compare favourably on a state-wide basis, the Benalla *student* surveys consistently rank in the (low) first and second quartile in all categories (Wellbeing, Teaching & Learning, Student Relationships).
- In tracking the transition of school leavers to employment or further education, Hume Region stands out for having the highest percentage of early school leavers that report leaving school early because they lost interest in school work and disliked school/teachers.

The presence or absence of wellbeing<sup>5</sup> is due to a combination of environmental factors across and within the community, home and school; as well as individual factors such as cognitive ability and personal resilience. It is possible to positively affect young people's wellbeing by improving environmental factors in the community, the home, and the school.

Support for appropriate voluntary projects that encourage children and their families to donate time and energy for community benefit is an important element in community capacity building. Many of the projects that will form the Education Program will rely on building relationships. The Advisory Committee believes that with appropriate levels of resourcing for coordination etc., a substantial volunteer project would open or improve relationships, communication and connectedness between schools, community groups and families; and be one component in improving the wellbeing of Benalla's children. Such a project should prioritise engagement with the most disadvantaged families.

**The Advisory Committee believes that an Education Program should have as an objective significant improvement in children's and teenagers' wellbeing.**

**The Advisory Committee recommends that a community volunteer project that helps engage the most disadvantaged families in community life be resourced as part of the Education Program.**

### Supporting Post-Compulsory Education

The Advisory Committee believes that a reconnection to community and a 'significant other' is a powerful way to bridge the year/s of indifference and dislocation felt by many teenagers. Mentoring is a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee. Various mentoring projects have been investigated,

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<sup>4</sup> M.Bernard - Workshop presentation, Benalla 22.08.08

<sup>5</sup> Wellbeing issues in each category are described in the appendices.

such as the Big Brothers Big Sisters program which operates in a number of countries, including Australia. There appears to be a solid case for developing and implementing a mentoring project in Benalla that has different components to appeal to the different and varied needs of Benalla's children and adolescents.

The main component would train and match volunteer adults with adolescents with the aim of "listening with empathy, being objective and non-judgemental, sharing experiences and learning from both successes and failures"<sup>6</sup>. Another stream could extend Tomorrow:Today's current "Slingshot" Mentoring Project where former Benalla students that have had success in their career are matched with current students with an interest in pursuing the same professional direction. This makes tangible to students that their education in Benalla can lead them anywhere and allows them to find out the stepping stones to the career they think that they would like to have. A third stream that has had outstanding results in England and appears to respond to Benalla's issues should be investigated for its adaptability. The "Buddy Reading Project" has trained disaffected or disadvantaged teenagers to support primary school children in their reading. The project has been externally evaluated and some of the many key successes noted as –

- Engagement in reading of buddy partners and buddies was enhanced and there was a positive impact on reading attainment;
- Secondary pupils developed an understanding of the reading process and gained skills in supporting developing readers;
- The project impacted positively on communication, behaviour and social skills;
- Some secondary pupils developed mentoring approaches with family members, thus potentially enhancing their family relationships;
- Secondary pupils enjoyed having a positive experience in school and it re-orientated those who felt excluded to school life, particularly pupils in Pupil Referral Units
- The project encouraged secondary pupils to consider further education and training and employment

A 3-stream approach to mentoring in Benalla sits comfortably with the experience of Hervey Bay, Queensland; where a substantial project has run now for a number of years (see appendices for information on Hervey Bay Mentoring Project).

Experience from other mentoring programs would suggest that creating a mentoring program that is integrated within both the primary and secondary school systems, and within the context of other approaches that are already operating in the town, such as work traineeships and the evolving Skillsbank will improve the effectiveness of any additional mentoring program that is developed.

**The Advisory Committee recommends that a Mentoring Project be implemented as part of the Education Program.**

Whilst learning to love learning, improving wellbeing, and connecting young people to the community and a mentor can be expected to improve student retention to Year 12, the reality is that Benalla families are generally not in a position to financially support their children beyond Year 12 as they ideally transition to higher education or vocational training. The vast

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<sup>6</sup> Workshop presentation August 2008

majority of families in Benalla are unable to meet the costs of supporting young adults with tertiary education and living-away-from-home expenses.

Some young people will choose to have a gap year before they commence tertiary studies and this has dramatically increased in Benalla's case, attributable to the need for students to demonstrate financial independence from their family and qualify for Youth (studying) Allowance. This is discussed earlier. Other areas of concern include the number of hours per week that tertiary students are working – again it can only be predicted that Benalla's young people are in the high-end category of working over 11 hours/week whilst in full time tertiary study.

The regional office of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and its schools continue to adapt. Flexible arrangements across training providers such as Goulburn Ovens TAFE are being explored, and endeavours such as the Local Learning and Employment Network continue to enable improved outcomes for a number of Benalla's young people. Whilst most of the response to the issue of proportionally low level of post-school qualifications probably sits with public policy, the Advisory Committee recommends that direct cash support via scholarships or other means be investigated by Tomorrow:Today as an option for supporting at least some of Benalla's students as they move away from home, transition to tertiary education, and achieve higher education qualifications.

**An objective of the Education Program should be that Benalla's children decide to stay in full time education and training, or apprenticeships/traineeships connected to employment, at least until completion of Year 12 (or equivalent); and that attainment of post-school qualifications be strongly supported.**

## **Making it happen**

At its last meeting the Advisory Committee discussed the goodwill across agencies to use this report to help improve student outcomes. Already there are examples where advisory committee members have taken opportunities to apply their new knowledge to activities. This is to be encouraged as the challenges to realising the goals described below will be substantial. Collaboration between and across the range of interests and institutions is possible, and the Advisory Committee believes that Tomorrow:Today has provided great impetus.

**The Advisory Committee recommends that Tomorrow:Today Foundation release the findings from this report to enable collaboration across organisations and agencies**

**The Advisory Committee recommends that a full impact evaluation is undertaken from the commencement of the Program to help identify targeting issues, aid continual improvement, and assess progress towards change.**

## **Conclusion, Vision & Goals**

The Advisory Committee believes that philanthropy has a crucial role to play in improving Benalla student outcomes. Tomorrow:Today Foundation's role should be to challenge the impacts of social disadvantage on education and life long learning. The goals for the Education Program should include:

All Benalla's children commence school ready to learn

Allowing for the full range of individual abilities, the range of literacy and numeracy ability in the Benalla cluster of schools is considered average when compared to the Victorian average for other school clusters

Most of Benalla's children have a medium to high level of wellbeing

Year 12 or equivalent completion rates for Benalla to equal or better the State average

We believe that with adequate financial and human resourcing change can be achieved to either realise or substantially realise these goals. Such a substantial program is essential if Benalla district is to have a positive future.

We believe that such a program would require 10 years of active philanthropic resourcing, in addition to partnership resourcing arrangements across public education, local and state authorities and community organisations.

The Advisory Committee's vision is that as a result of the Education Program –

By 2030, the education and training completion rates for Benalla's 17 – 24 year olds will equal or exceed the Victorian average for non-disadvantaged districts.

**A final note –**

Tomorrow: Today's use of the title "Education Program" has been simple and useful to date, and now needs to change. We wish the Board well in finding a simple Program title that accurately communicates the bold and intense potential of this initiative.

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## **Appendices**



## Education Advisory Committee 2008

Liz Chapman <b>(Convenor)</b>	5763 3214	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Director, RuralPlan Pty. Ltd.</li> <li>- Director, Tomorrow:Today Foundation</li> <li>- Director &amp; Vice-Chair, Goulburn-Ovens TAFE</li> </ul>
Pat Claridge		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mayor, Benalla Rural City</li> <li>- Commerce sector, Benalla</li> <li>- former teacher</li> </ul>
Wayne Weaire		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chair, Tomorrow:Today Foundation</li> <li>- Executive Director, Delatite Community Health Service</li> </ul>
Barbara Alexander		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tomorrow:Today Foundation- community development</li> <li>- Chair, Benalla &amp; District Memorial Hospital Board</li> </ul>
Heather Leary		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Principal, Benalla 31 Primary School</li> <li>- Development and Implementation of the “You Can Do It” schools program</li> </ul>
Joanna Mason		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VCAL Class of 2008</li> <li>- NESAY Youth Leadership</li> <li>- FCJ Breakfast Club organising committee</li> </ul>
David Dore		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- farmer</li> <li>- community development (performing arts)</li> </ul>
Louise Levy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pathways Coordinator, North-east Local Learning &amp; Education Network (LLEN)</li> <li>- Individual learning processes</li> </ul>
Stuart Brain		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior Education Officer, Dept. Education &amp; Early Childhood Development, Hume Office</li> </ul>
Sue Oakley		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vice Principal, Benalla College</li> </ul>
Brady Green		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VCE Class of 2007</li> <li>- Sport &amp; Recreation Trainee, Benalla Secondary College</li> </ul>
Helen Mitchell		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active in Retirement</li> <li>- community development (health &amp; welfare)</li> </ul>
Glenys Graham		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maternal &amp; Child Health Nurse, Benalla Rural City</li> </ul>

## Education Program Advisory Committee Program of Meetings & Dates

Proposed Date	Agenda
<b>Tuesday June 17 2008</b> <b>4.30pm</b> BPACC Yellow room (meeting room 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction &amp; Welcome</li> <li>- Advisory committee functioning and the task at hand</li> <li>- Philanthropy's role in public education: lessons from elsewhere</li> <li>- Confirm meeting dates/themes</li> </ul>
<b>Thursday July 10</b> <b>4.30pm</b> Delatite Community Health Service, Coster Street. Board room.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What does the data indicate re where Benalla students sit when compared to like schools or the State across literacy, numeracy, successful completion of VCE, etc.?</li> <li>- Discussion &amp; clarification: What does available evidence indicate are the biggest issues for Benalla students?</li> </ul>
<b>Thursday August 14</b> <b>4.30pm</b> Venue: Dunlop Campus Benalla College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What does the data indicate re the transitions of Benalla's young people from school to work or further study?</li> <li>- Discussion: Given the data and information discussed over three meetings, what student outcomes could we seek to improve?</li> </ul>
Workshop 10am – 4.30pm Benalla campus GO TAFE (Board room WO13) <b>Friday August 22</b>  Lunch and teas provided	What's already happening in schools and in communities? - Briefings from guest experts and specialists: * Mentor Programs- what's hot and what's not * pre-literacy programs for 0 – 5 year olds * New literacies * School based family programs to improve the social-emotional health of children * others as determined - Facilitated discussion – from what has been heard, what are considered to be the crucial program elements that could help improve Benalla student outcomes?
<b>Thursday September 4</b> <b>4.30pm</b> Delatite Community Care Coster Street. Front meeting room.	From what has been presented over the course of 5 Advisory Committee meetings, what are the main issues, claims or concerns that members believe should come to the fore when shaping Benalla's philanthropic program? Draft paper to be prepared following the meeting for circulation and discussion during October.
<b>Thursday October 30</b> <b>4.30pm</b> Venue: Benalla 31 Primary School library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Program recommendations to the Board of Tomorrow: Today Foundation to be confirmed</li> <li>- Costing issues and priorities</li> <li>- Where to from here?</li> <li>- Close</li> </ul>

# Factors that Contribute to Young People's Social emotional wellbeing

## Environment

### Community

- Positive adult-young person relationships
- High expectations communicated for achievement and behaviour
- Opportunities for positive peer interaction
- Places/activities that accommodate young person's interests
- Opportunities for young person to contribute to community
- Provision for safety of young person
- Communication of values and social-emotional capabilities

### Home

- Positive parent-child relationship
- High expectations communicated for achievement and behaviour
- Provision of activities that accommodate interests of young person
- Providing child with responsibility and involvement in decision making
- Interest and involvement in child's education
- Providing child with motivation (internal,external) for what is being learned
- Communication of values and social-emotional capabilities

### School

- Positive teacher-student relationships
- High expectations communicated for achievement and behaviour
- Provision of classes and activities that accommodate interests of student
- Providing students with responsibility and involvement in decision making
- Being sensitive to students gender, culture and home background
- Providing motivation (internal,external) for what student is learning
- Communication of values and social-emotional capabilities in classes and activities
- Provision of quality academic curriculum and pedagogy that provides multiple opportunities for student to be successful

## Person

### Cognitive

- General intellectual abilities
- Meta-cognitive thinking skills
- Cognitive style
- Cognitive, language and non-verbal abilities
- Pre-requisite academic knowledge

### Social-Emotional

- Resilience (rational attitudes and coping skills supporting emotional regulation and behavioural control)
- Positive social orientation (social skills and values)
- Positive work orientation (work confidence, persistence, organisation, cooperation)

## Hervey Bay Mentoring

Utilising and enhancing Hervey Bay’s community capacity to support young people and children at critical transition points in their lives with the ultimate intention of increasing their experiences of meaningful social inclusion.

Mentoring of young people and children is a strategy for meeting the needs of our youth by creating an interface between the education sector and the community.

The Education Sector is the domain where collective and individual needs of young people and children are most readily determined

The community offers the capacity to respond appropriately and effectively to the needs of its own community members including children and young people

The Education Sector must play a driving role in the implementation and ongoing management of any mentoring of young people and children, and develop a truly collaborative relationship with community members.

Phase	Target Group	Mentor Source	Purpose of Relationship	Ongoing Implementation
1	Students at risk of prematurely disengaging from education	Retired community members	Support young people to retain engagement in education or have a successful transition into employment or training	Mentoring link an option for all 15 – 17 year olds including young people attending alternative programs
2	Targeting young people requiring career based support	Professionals	Support young people to develop and meet their employment pathways and goals	Career-based mentor link as part of an xx option for all students
3	Primary school aged children	Young people / students and existing community based mentors	Support children to develop their networks and social skills to ensure the development of effective mechanisms for coping with change	Mentor link an option for all primary schools

All school-aged young people within Hervey Bay will have the option of accessing a mentor/s to enhance their chance of maintaining their engagement in learning activities

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