

Newsletter No. 1

March 2002



SO..... WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?...or better still.....WHAT'S NEXT?

Coolum High School has a notice on the school bill board on David Low Way.....*"It takes a whole village to raise a child"*. This sums up much of what was reported in the recent survey of Youth Commitment participants. People want to make a difference for young people and their community in very real and personal ways.

As you know, we have been busy setting up the planning for the Youth Commitment and drafts of the Strategic Plan and Action Plans will be available for the first combined working group meeting in April. These documents will also form an integral part of the discussions with governments.

Work in next school term will focus on:

- A "kit" for participants to apply to their networking, with youth commitment information, key contacts, and good stories and examples of ways that people have been able to make a contribution.
- Youth participation in discussions about the Education reforms
- More detailed work on destination surveys with schools
- Promotions about businesses who are working well with young people

MENTORING

There has been considerable interest from many organisations across the Sunshine Coast in developing and sustaining mentoring programs for young people.

A small team has assembled, at the instigation of some persistent work by Laretta Gall from Integrated Youth Service to investigate ways in which mentoring can be established and supported. Our first task has been to conduct a quick scan of existing mentoring projects; this data will be collated and used to identify examples of good practice as well as gaps.

Annie Dares from CSIT has been helpful in pursuing information on training courses for mentors which are currently being delivered by TAFE in NSW. The Gold Coast Youth Commitment Project has been successful in negotiating the delivery of this course by their local TAFE.

Further information contact Laretta Gall (IYS – 5444 5495), Sue Griffiths (NYS – 5442 4277) or Annie Dares (CSIT – 5459 3530)

SO WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE SAY?

The Data Crunchers (one of the Youth Commitment working groups) are especially concerned that they design a process that allows young people to have a say about the idea of connecting and creative ways of assisting young people to make contact with the services and agencies available in the community.

A focus group is being held on 26 March to begin the conversations we need to have with young people.

FLAME

FLAME (Flexible Learning and Alternative Mobile Education) operates out of the old Noosa Youth Service building three days per week. FLAME is staffed by Melissa Radke

(specialist behaviour management teacher) and two youth workers, Angus Brown and Peter Teakle. FLAME provides an opportunity for young people from the four local government high schools who are at risk of being disconnected from mainstream schooling to remain connected to their school and complete their education. Melissa coordinates a busy program combining literacy and numeracy work with community based learning experiences.

A current project, organised by FLAME students, is aimed at raising much needed funds to purchase resources for FLAME. The students have negotiated the donation of a custom built surfboard from local surfboard manufacturer, Mike St John of Shotgun Surfboards, and have been busy selling tickets to spectators of the Noosa Surfing Festival. Tickets are also available at Noosa Youth Service. Call in!

Further information on FLAME, contact Melissa Radke at Noosa Youth Service on 5442 4277.

ENGAGING EMPLOYERS WORKING GROUP

The National Youth Commitment is more than just a slogan. It calls on all sectors to focus on finding innovative ways to nurture young Australians through their "transition" from school to the world of work.

A significant part of this has to be the way the Commitment Project attracts employers to firstly commit to the ideals, and then to partnerships to enable our younger generation to find pathways into productive and dignified work.

The Engaging Employers Working Party has been tackling a range of issues this implies... from finding ways to engage young people in the process, to identifying barriers to employers interested in helping to develop the nations workforce, to seeking solutions to those policy and practical impediments. In its

regular initial meetings, attended by employers, a councillor, service providers from the employment agencies, and an educator, the group has developed strong working relationships based on mutual respect for the different perspectives brought to the table.

It has identified these main strategies to get some "runs-on-the-board", and to pave the way for the network to expand.....

- A "Commit for a day" promotion to business
- Work with Noosa Council to develop an award for businesses supporting young people
- A young peoples forum to encourage their input to the Education Departments reforms
- Invite research and develop proposals to assist small business to train and employ young people

BREAKFAST TALK

Mike Hutcheson and Robyn Goldsmith attended breakfast on 12 March with Network Noosa Business Group Inc.

There was interest from the businesses in this network to participate, and they were able to join in telling their own personal stories about their children leaving the area due to a lack of training education and employment opportunities locally.

Mike has also lined up a breakfast presentation about the Youth Commitment to the Rotary Club on 11 April.

date claimers

16 April Meetings with Jack Dusseldorp and State Government Ministers Foley and Bligh

18 April Youth Commitment Combined Meeting of all working groups