

A WINDOW INTO THE FUTURE. LESSONS FROM THE JOBS PATHWAY PROGRAMME.

A Report to the Dusseldorp Skills Forum by Peter Kellock,
in association with Colin Bruce.

August 2000

This paper is published in three sections:

- Executive Summary
- Analysis and Findings
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FOREWORD

There are times when it seems that the enormity of the “problems” confronting us as a society is such that we bog ourselves down in a quest for the 'big solution'. This report hints at something quite different.

The Jobs Pathways Programme is a success story. It is the story of a relatively simple idea picked up by one Commonwealth (Labor) Government and extended by another Commonwealth (Coalition) Government. It is the story of how practitioners (teachers, community workers, local employers, group training operators) seized the idea and with very modest funding have created something quite unique: a program that combines a preventative service delivered within schools with a case-management safety net service once students have left school. It is the story of what creative and enterprising community organizations of all sorts can do for young people given the chance.

Like all good stories this one has had its ups and downs and we find in the telling a good few lessons: not just about this particular program but also about ways in which we can better support communities to really make a difference for their young people.

The Dusseldorp Skills Forum commissioned this report from Peter Kellock of the Asquith Group. A number of others –inside and outside of government- have contributed to it. Others participated in consultations on the draft convened in Melbourne and Sydney. We are grateful to them all but particularly to the many JPP providers who generously supported the task through the provision of information, their time and their experience.

I strongly commend this report to you and would welcome receiving any comments or observations you might have upon reading it.



Jack Dusseldorp,
Chair
Dusseldorp Skills Forum

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was commissioned to seek ways of strengthening the support for young people in the school to work transition. The Jobs Pathways Programme (JPP) is an important model of government funded assistance for young people moving from school to the labour market. After five years since its inception, the evolution and expansion of the programme offer potential insights into the transition process.

Research on comparable international approaches indicates that a distinctive feature of the Jobs Pathways Programme is to combine a preventative service delivered within schools with a case-management safety net service once students have left school. Most other programmes investigated focus on either one or the other, but not both. This appears to be a positive feature as long as the dual focus of the service is made clear.

However, it is also apparent that JPP operates without a strong supporting framework. There is no establishing legislation, formal agreements with other stakeholders, or entitlement to access the service on the part of young people, unlike some of the overseas models. JPP is dependent on clients being referred to the service through a variety of intermediaries.

The study shows that JPP is increasingly being delivered within schools, and increasingly concentrates on preventing younger students leaving school.

JPP depends on providers developing good relationships with schools through key personal contacts to be able to effectively access clients. School staff are in a position to determine whether young people access the service, and the level of the service they will receive. This can range from every student in a senior school being assisted by JPP to schools in which there is no JPP presence.

JPP providers develop a wide range of options and strategies to encourage young people to remain at school or to assist them to become ready for employment. The type of organisation delivering the service has some impact on the kind of options that are available to young people. While all providers present a range of options, training providers tend to identify more varied vocational training options, Group Training Companies identify more relevant pre-apprenticeship courses, and so on.

A strength of JPP is the profile of staff attracted to the programme. Many come from the employment services sector, and from a range of industry positions. Once they are working in close contact with schools, students and teachers regard them as a valuable asset.

The monitoring and support provided to young people is a highly positive feature of JPP. There are concerns that the period of follow up is too limited, particularly for younger clients who may have only a short tenure in initial jobs. JPP providers support some young people well beyond the funding period. They are also frequently asked to assist

students younger than 15 years of age. Reflecting international research that indicates that transition occurs over an extending period of time, JPP providers have found it necessary to commence supporting many young people before they reach the compulsory school leaving age. Some clients also need support beyond an initial six month period after leaving school.

Where relevant data is available, there is evidence that JPP is having a significant positive impact on successful youth transition to employment and other non-tertiary study outcomes in particular regions. In States where there is a requirement to track exiting student outcomes over a period of time, the contribution of JPP to lower rates of youth unemployment is evident. The difficulty is that JPP not only operates without a regulatory framework or formal protocols with the education system; it also operates without the assistance of supporting information systems.

Data existing in both the secondary and tertiary education systems that could be used to identify eligible clients is not accessed. JPP is primarily dependent on the judgement of school staff for referral. Information on the numbers assisted by JPP projects is also not able to be obtained.

Five years of funding for JPP using an 'open' model of seeding various initiatives has led to a diverse set of approaches developing.

There are examples of good practice found as a result of the surveys and case studies used in this study. Doubtless there are many other commendable approaches which were not researched. Among the examples were innovative approaches using industry mentors to support students; reports on student destination being regularly provided to schools; development of alternative and vocationally focused programs for 'at risk' students; and integration of JPP services with work placement and school-based New Apprenticeships.

However, it was also evident that the innovative and developmental work was not being widely circulated between the agencies delivering JPP services. The competitive and short-cycle funding approach helps to shape an environment in which such information is not shared. Good practice remains localised and poorly promoted.

The flexibility that has characterised the development of JPP to date could now be strengthened as a program and consolidated as a model. There is a need for a balanced approach that maintains the capacity of providers to flexibly respond to local needs while establishing a more consistent approach to providing access to the programme and to delivery.

In order to strengthen JPP as a form of comprehensive assistance to young people making the transition to work, the study reached the following conclusions.

The lack of a strong framework for a transition safety net service is evident. The main role of the Commonwealth Government is currently that of contracting JPP services. But given the number of sectors involved in the transition process, the breadth and

complexity of the agencies and services which together provide the pathways, and support for young people in transition, more is required. The environment is fragmented, crowded and relatively poorly coordinated at present.

JPP operates across these arrangements without a strong mandate, and depends on fragile relationships with schools to access clients. The current arrangements do not represent a national safety net that can guarantee a young person support when they require it.

The establishment of a national framework to coordinate across education, training and employment sectors is urgently required. Such a framework needs the support of Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and employer groups.

A national body established by agreement between governments to develop a national framework for transition arrangements in Australia is required. These arrangements could be established under similar arrangements to the ASTF, or more formally constituted as a joint government authority.

This body would develop a framework for transition arrangements that would provide a more adequate safety net for young people. The framework requires the following elements:

- **The routine collection and exchange of information resulting from student tracking from post-compulsory schooling through to secure employment, training or higher education.**

- **Formal protocols developed between governments to establish a framework of referral for students at risk of leaving school early to a recognised transition service.**

- **Performance benchmarks including skills profiles required for transition service providers**

- **The development of a national careers information and guidance system that can equip all students in secondary schools with knowledge and information on pathways, options, and include information on workplace requirements.**

- **Regular evaluation of the impact of transition services.**

This framework then needs to be implemented at a local level through a series of formal agreements between schools, training providers, community agencies, and enterprises.

Contracting transition providers

To date, the funding available for JPP has been of a developmental nature, and has seeded some innovative approaches producing good outcomes. The innovation needs to be encouraged and the outcomes promoted more widely.

Current approaches to obtaining JPP services leads to apparent anomalies in student access. Students in some regions have very limited access, while in other regions the service is reasonably comprehensive. Benchmarks on the cost of delivery of transition services and preventative services are needed to reduce current variations in coverage of JPP from one region to another, so that all young people who need assistance can access the transition service.

The current submission-based process creates a highly competitive environment between JPP providers which affects their capacity to collaborate, share information and improve their service based on the collective experience of delivering JPP. These processes can also create competition between agencies at the local level. Organisations that may bid against each other for JPP services then subsequently need to collaborate to achieve outcomes for young people. The annual funding (and re-funding) process also undermines the confidence of schools in establishing a strong dependence on the JPP service.

Funding for the transition service should be on a basis that promotes collaboration, openness and transparency within a region, through a process managed at a regional level.

Services should be established for up to three years (subject to performance based on strong service benchmarks and accountabilities) and ensure equity of access for young people.

Resources should be provided to facilitate local collaboration between agencies and stakeholders before development of the local proposal. Agreement on the optimal service provider or consortia in a region is likely to lead to stronger relationships between schools, JPP providers, employers and other relevant agencies. Area Consultative Committees could be used to manage or contract the facilitation stage.

To ensure that all young people who do not intend to proceed to tertiary study can access JPP, additional resources are required for the programme. New sustainable resources should be directed towards establishing JPP as a comprehensive national transition programme. Provision needs to be established on funding allocated to regions based on the population of eligible young people. Additional weightings can be made for factors such as travel in regional locations, local youth unemployment rates, and rates of transition to higher education.

Additional resources are required to ensure all young people in need can access JPP. Funding requirements need to be identified on a population basis, take local factors

such as unemployment rates and transition to higher education into account, and allocate funds to regions where decisions on provision can be made.

Once organisations or consortia are contracted to provide JPP services, their capacity to learn from each other would be enhanced by strengthening their national forum, which is currently the National JPP Network. The capacity of the National Network to distribute information, coordinate responses and promote good practice is currently limited by a lack of resources.

An allocation of core funding to support the operation of the National Network would allow this forum to function as a point of information distribution and communication for JPP providers. An alternative option would be to explore an alliance or merger with similar associations such as Jobs Australia.

The National JPP Network should be adequately resourced by government to provide information, coordinate issues and promote good practice on behalf of, and between, JPP providers.

There appear to be three functions being performed by the JPP providers under the current arrangements. The first is providing information and case management to potentially all students who are leaving school seeking employment. The second is providing a range of interventions to assist predominantly younger "students at risk" remain at school or move to alternative education and training environments. The third is involvement in identifying general careers advice, assistance in curriculum delivery, and establishing other vocational options within schools.

More clearly defining components of the service will assist both providers and stakeholders to obtain a clearer understanding of the service, and provide a stronger basis for funding and delivery of the programme. The components should be delivered by the same agency or consortia nominated as a result of the locally agreed collaborative process.

It is important that a consistent platform of service is established that guarantees a safety net assistance for those leaving school, while still allowing local flexibility to respond to particular needs in preventing young people from leaving school.

Service benchmarks need to be developed for the preventative and placement aspects of the transition service as two distinct elements. This would encourage providers to develop creative preventative approaches while separately providing the safety net services.

The transition process is generally taking a longer period of time for young people to complete. Some young people, particularly those at risk, need more time to make a secure transition. JPP providers continue to support some young people for extended periods of time beyond the limits of their contract. An effective transition system needs to be able to meet the requirement to support some young people for extended periods of time.

An effective transition service needs to provide support for high risk individuals up to 12 months after leaving school, and to work with students younger than 15 on preventative approaches.

JPP could be immediately strengthened by integrating the service with other services directly related to school to work transition. Parallel activities that directly or indirectly assist young people to successfully make a transition from school to work or other equivalent post-school outcomes would be the optimal linkage. Integrating arrangements within a region could help the main stakeholders, schools and employers, access a range of related services through the one agency or 'gateway'.

Combining the information, assessment, referral and support functions of JPP with arrangements for work placement, and part-time New Apprenticeships in schools would make sense both for schools and employers. JPP providers would be able to work with students over an extended period of time, and employers would have one point of contact to deal with for a number of school requirements.

It would be important that the service continues to be provided by staff from outside the school with the appropriate profile of skills and experience.

Integration with these school-based services offers the advantages of a less competitive funding regime, and greater continuity of service provision.

Integration of JPP with other services provided in schools preparing students for transition to employment, such as work placement and part-time apprenticeships, would strengthen access to the service within schools. Integration would need to ensure that positive current features of the service, such as the skills profile of staff, were maintained.

The role played by JPP providing the vocationally related component of careers information services could be formalised as current arrangements for providing information in schools often appears inadequate. If funding for transition services is allocated through regional partnerships, a careers service could also be purchased for young people in and out of school. This service would be most effectively provided by a combination of school and transition service personnel. The requirement for a careers service that is knowledgeable about all the pathways available to young people, and can advise young people as effectively about workplace requirements as tertiary education requirements, is likely to require a number of organisations to be involved.

The capacity to provide career services should require that staff should meet defined skills and qualification profile requirements.

Local co-ordination of transition services should include contracting a comprehensive careers and guidance system for students.

The new national transition body could host an annual conference that include both State and Commonwealth transition programmes, and serve as a national forum to discuss and profile good practice. Content could also be provided in electronic and printed form in regularly produced newsletters or booklets under a funding allocation made by the Commonwealth.

An Annual National Conference, providing a discrete forum within the conference, could profile examples of good practice selected by a nomination process. Presentations made could be subsequently documented and circulated to schools and providers in booklets, newsletters, or on the web.

Duplicated effort by many JPP providers developing materials and resources is an inefficient use of funds and limits development of the programme. The competitive environment does not encourage the widespread distribution of resources. The basic information and work readiness tools used in JPP are remarkably consistent across the programme, and JPP providers could opt to use centrally commissioned resources or make their own arrangements.

Core materials and resources for use by JPP providers could be commissioned by the national body and developed through other agencies including providers. This would help to establish a set of resources for the programme.

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PART B: CASE STUDIES

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PART B: Case Studies

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ASI GROUP TRAINING COMPANY New South Wales 93 schools
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Australian Sports Industry Group Training Company provides JPP in three adjacent regions of the south west and outer south west of metropolitan Sydney covering Liverpool, Campbelltown and Parramatta, and some surrounding metropolitan areas such as Bankstown, Galston and Blacktown. The 93 schools covered by this JPP broker cover a large geographic area and there are estimated to be over 54,000 students in those schools within the eligible age range in the current programme.

The regions have an average school retention rate of 84%, while the youth unemployment rate varies from 20% in Parramatta (against a State average of 24.5%) up to 34% in the Liverpool/Fairfield area. Parts of the region have a high number of students from non-English speaking backgrounds, particularly concentrated in Granville, Fairfield, Bankstown and Liverpool. One High School visited in the region has 800 enrollments, many NESB students, and 17% of students going on to university.

The Australian Sports Industry (ASI) Group Training Company operates from a comfortable two story converted house in Parramatta. The JPP programme also has a small separate office in Liverpool situated in three rooms and meeting/training room facilities, but is co-located with ASI Group Training in the Parramatta office. The Campbelltown service is provided on an outreach basis.

The ASI Jobs Pathways Programme was established in 1996. ASI had been active in placing young people and school students into sports traineeships, and were already involved with many schools in the region, particularly those that turned out a lot of sporting students. ASI saw the Jobs Pathways Programme as a logical extension of their existing services, and relationships with schools and with employers.

Despite the co-location of JPP with the Group Training headquarters at Parramatta, the service appears to operate with a large degree of autonomy from ASI Group Training in terms of outcomes and targets. ASI Group Training provides JPP with a substantial amount of administrative support and there is regular contact on referrals for vacant positions. None of the staff employed by the JPP programme have a background or previous employment in Group Training.

ASI employ six staff for the Jobs Pathways Programme and provide additional clerical support from the Group Training operations. The Program Manager, Sue McGuinness oversees both the offices in Liverpool and Parramatta. There is a site manager for Parramatta (Pam Kapnopoulos) and a site manager for Liverpool and Campbelltown (Sharon Hampton). Although the consultants generally take care of the schools in their region, there is cross-over as the consultants assist each other in various activities.

The six JPP consultants and programme manager, all female, have a mixture of CES and employment services backgrounds, and employment experience in various industries (water, banking, general secretarial). Sue McGuinness, the Manager, says that JPP staff are recruited for their flexibility, and to provide a wide background in occupations and experience across the team.

The JPP programme coordinators appear to spend a lot of each day in their cars driving from school to school over a large part of the western suburbs of Sydney. With 93 schools in their brokerage, staff are frequently out visiting their schools.

According to Sue McGuinness...*"the service we provide very much responds to the individual needs of the school and the student. The needs of schools differ. Depending on the type of school, we have to use different language, present things in different ways, but the fundamental message is the same"*.

Students access JPP services in one of three ways.

The first is as a result of the JPP staff going to a school to talk with small groups about the JPP service, and to help the schools to identify potential school leavers. Most young people are contacted directly through these school-based presentations.

A smaller number of young people access the service through key schools staff, such as the careers adviser or counsellor, ringing JPP requesting assistance for "difficult kids."

The third means of access is students who come to JPP without the school's involvement, as a result of hearing about it from peers, parents or through referral from other agencies. For appointments, clients usually attend the ASI office that is nearest to their home.

The ASI JPP also has strong links with the Campbelltown District Full Service Schools Programme, which covers 18 of the schools within the region. For these schools, both the Full Service Schools team, as well as the school staff, refer students to JPP.

The Full Service School Programme invites JPP staff to run "Career Workshop" sessions for secondary students in some of the 18 schools, held either at the school or at the South Sydney Institute of TAFE. JPP provided about six of these sessions last year, and expect to provide up to ten more this year. These day-long seminars are designed for students from years 10 to year12. With about twenty students in each session, these are run when the Full Service Schools programme has a group ready.

Following these sessions, students can then decide if they want to register with JPP. One of the staff members with the Full Service Schools indicated that... *"ASI are very supportive of the 18 schools that we are dealing with. They structure their service to fit what our team wants them to do. The schools see JPP as stand-alone, not really as a part of the ASI Group Training Company."*

The ASI Jobs Pathways Programme is flexible in the services that are provided. Despite this flexibility, ASI cannot obtain access to students in a few schools, because some principals have not approved involvement with JPP. *"What gets done depends on the school,"* admits Sue McGuinness. *"We have some schools that aren't interested in us; they are often schools with a strong academic orientation."*

As a result of the combination of paths by which young people access JPP, the profile of clients is strongly influenced by the schools and how they want to use the service. *"This year, most of our work is being done with students at year 10 level"* according to Sharron Hampton, the site manager of JPP at Liverpool.

ASI's approach is to concentrate on the students at risk of leaving school, rather than the general year 12 students preparing to move to employment. However, some schools are still referring all their year 12 students to JPP.

Most services provided by ASI are through providing group talks, career workshops, and individual counselling and referral to other programmes or employment. ASI consider that their services have not changed much over the past few years, but that now the variety of outcomes achieved for young people are acknowledged.

Staff are involved in careers work with year 11 students in at least one Catholic College. The argument is that they are assisting with general vocational preparation for students early in year 11, because waiting until end of year 12 is "too late". As a reason for such involvement, Sue McGuinness says that ...*"students need to know early that employers will look at the number of days the student's record indicates absences from school."*

JPP directs many young people into literacy and numeracy programmes, particularly through Centrelink, to access the government funded literacy programmes. Staff estimate that approximately thirty eligible young people would have been referred from the Parramatta Office and between sixty and eighty from the Liverpool Office to funded literacy programmes. Pre-apprenticeships access programmes that contain elements of vocational literacy training are also used to provide literacy training for young people.

As well as referring young people to TAFE training in the region at various institutes in the south west of Sydney, ASI also make extensive use of industry-based training available in the region, such as a 10 week pre-apprenticeship bricklaying course. Conducted at the Brick Industry Training School, young people completing the programme are subsequently guaranteed an apprenticeship.

ASI is a valuable resource for JPP and frequently provide JPP staff with a list of vacancies and opportunities in New Apprenticeships and Access Programs. Clients are also referred to a variety of other Group Training Organisations, sometimes in response to a vacancy advertisement.

The JPP programme obtains job vacancies from a number of sources. They access them directly from the Job Network information system, use newspaper websites, have repeat

business from employers through the ASI Group Training network, and use the Yellow Pages. Employers frequently call the ASI JPP staff seeking to recruit young people.

There is no apparent shortage of jobs, according to Sue, but the JPP staff consider that often for the young person it is in their best interests to go into further training or education rather than some of the jobs on offer. As a particular strategy, if a younger person has definitely decided to seek employment rather than continue at school, the JPP staff concentrates on placing exiting year 10 students before the results of the year 12 exams come out. This gives younger students a chance to compete for jobs before the year 12 students hit the job market.

They do not refer students directly to Job Network providers, but advise the young person to register with Centrelink, so that they can independently go to the Job Network with Jobseeker ID.

Sue and Sharron note that ..."*employers are really reluctant to take on kids who have never worked, even part-time. This is an important stepping stone towards employment.*" The JPP staff encourage students to seek part-time work as a strategy to help them gain subsequent employment after they leave school.

Each JPP staff member maintains contact with their clients by telephoning twenty clients each day (which results in about fifteen contacts being made). "*In theory, every couple of weeks we have turned over the entire group of people we are working with*" according to Sharron.

BALLARAT GROUP TRAINING

- **Victoria**
- **61 schools**

Ballarat Group Training operate two separate JPP contracts which, together, cover the Central Highlands Wimmera and Barwon South Western Regions of Victoria's west. The Barwon South Western contract has only recently been taken over by Ballarat Group Training, while the Central Highlands Wimmera has been operating for several years. These are principally rural areas with the large regional centres of Ballarat, Horsham and Warrnambool providing a focus for industry and employment. These are also the main centres from which Ballarat Group Training JPP deliver their services through their offices as well as smaller offices in Ararat, Stawell, Portland, Hamilton and Colac.

One of the sub-contracting agencies, Wimmera Grampians Group Training, is also a Job Network member.

JPP staff say that the region has above average youth unemployment and that many JPP clients present with lower than average literacy and numeracy levels (particularly in the Central Highlands Wimmera Region). Pockets of the region, disadvantaged in terms of accessibility and transport, pose special problems for younger school-leavers without the means of independent travel.

The JPP service was first established in 1997 through a consortium of Ballarat Group Training Company (the lead agent); the University of Ballarat (Ballarat School of Mines) and Wimmera Institute of TAFE (Horsham). The project first operated out of the Ballarat School of Mines.

In 1998 Ballarat GTC established the programme on its own, although Wimmera GTC was brought in to support delivery in the Wimmera area. JPP currently operates as a programme of Ballarat Group Training, but it is located separately from the other parts of the organisation and maintains a distance from the other services and administration of the Company.

Presently Ballarat Group Training hold two JPP contracts and employ twenty staff in the two regions working across 61 secondary schools, which take in 78 campuses. Additional staff are also employed to facilitate workshop delivery as required. Staff members work on a case-load of between 200 and 300 clients, and two focus on "high risk" students (working with parents, teachers and other facilitators).

There are three site co-ordinators appointed to lead teams in Ballarat, Warrnambool and Horsham, and work in schools. One staff member is dedicated to reporting data and information management. The offices are well equipped and some students use e-mail as one way of keeping in touch with staff. JPP has used staff from schools to help select JPP workers and feel that such collaborative strategies assist in schools developing 'ownership' of the programme.

Contact with most students is dependent on the relationship that JPP establishes with each school.

There are four ways in which students become involved in JPP.

For Year 12 students (and other year levels as requested), JPP staff visit each of the schools in August and provide information and registration forms to key school staff. They speak to as many forums as possible including small group sessions, individual classes and assemblies.

A growing number of referrals are also originating from staff (careers, teaching, welfare and principals) within schools who identify students they consider need the assistance of JPP. Ballarat Group Training JPP also receive referrals from outside the school system through other agencies.

Finally, students themselves are becoming a source of referral for other students. According to Lindy, "*peer marketing becomes an important source of clients as word of mouth gets around*". JPP also actively promote their services. Brochures and posters are located at the local youth venues such as cinemas, youth centres, doctor's surgeries and youth expos. Other marketing includes information evenings, industry breakfasts, attending service group meetings and general press releases usually promoting success stories.

Whichever way they are referred, every student is given an interview and an action plan is developed on an individual basis.

Within their individual plans, students may be referred to a wide variety of programmes using the community network. This JPP project uses a lot of subcontractors and other services that are available locally. For example, the Karate School housed in the same building as JPP in Ballarat provides anger management, self-reflection and self-awareness classes for some JPP clients. Workshop facilitation is delivered by staff who are chosen for their abilities to connect with young people.

The JPP programme actively researches emerging methodologies and incorporates elements that they consider promising. In particular, the JPP team has recruited specialists Tony and David Davidson (of The School of the Road) who are experienced in dealing with disengaged students at risk of leaving school early. Tony and David conduct a variety of workshops showing students how to learn successfully, increase self-esteem, overcome numeracy and literacy deficiencies, and set personal and achievable goals. Tony and David's workshops use Myer Briggs; memory exercises; NLP, kinesiology and other techniques.

JPP also organise regular sessions aimed at parents which are held at their offices. Tony and David Davidson use material based on the Myer Briggs Type Indicator to explain and analyse students' learning programmes. The intention is to assist parents understand why

some students are disengaging in the classroom and why they are sometimes in conflict with parents. To develop a deeper appreciation of their relationship with their students, careers teachers are also attending these sessions. Positive responses to sessions have prompted JPP to conduct a regular programme on the last Wednesday in every month throughout this year. Other sessions include separate workshops on self-esteem and confidence building for males and females, goal setting and motivation workshops, and literacy/numeracy courses. All the workshops are free to the students. In some instances video-conferencing has been used to link presenters to the youth and parent audience.

This approach is built on Tony and David Davidson's individual skills that effectively operate as a specialist consultancy service within the broader JPP framework.

The way JPP services are developed and used is highly dependent on each school.

Mt. Clear Secondary School has been working with JPP since the first programme. Involvement was initially focused on achieving employment outcomes for year 12 students. After the end of October, when the year 12 students had left, they were followed-up in the months before Christmas. The next year, the involvement with JPP was broadened.

JPP staff helped deliver classroom lessons such as English for a group of technically oriented year 12 boys. This included organising relevant excursions and taking particular classes.

Now Mt Clear Secondary School is increasingly using JPP to work with 'more difficult' kids. *"What JPP was doing was giving us confidence that these kids could achieve successful outcomes"* according to the VCE Coordinator. A JPP officer is now located in the school every Thursday, based in the careers room alongside the careers coordinator. He notes that the student network had already started to operate. *"We would suggest to the kids that they should go down and talk to JPP, and they would say 'We already are! We go down there all the time'"*.

The JPP officer helps the careers teacher with the VET Industry and Enterprise Unit by organising placements around workplace learning. The school is also using JPP to talk to all year 10 students. Year 9 students are being singled out for special attention as needs within the group emerge. The school is also discussing JPP working with groups of parents.

JPP's relationship with the school has strengthened and spread to include contact with several staff from the school. Within the school, JPP staff regularly talk to the principal, curriculum and year level coordinators, and staff involved with teaching year 10, 11 or 12 students.

JPP is beginning to be seen as a "gateway" to other services within the region. It is able to supplement school records and increase the power of their student database, especially with destination data.

JPP tests all their clients for literacy and numeracy levels to determine the need for a suitable course of intervention and improvement. This procedure was introduced after finding that large numbers of students, even at year 12 level, were failing employer aptitude tests and pre-screening tools. 96% of one group tested were unable to calculate percentages. JPP have set up a 'maths drop in centre' that is delivered in a 'non-threatening' environment using their own staff, which is working extremely well.

The lack of reading and spelling skills is probably the most serious skill deficiency identified with the students. To overcome literacy problems, JPP is trying to encourage schools to use "Soundways". Costing \$3400 to purchase, this is a phonetically based programme developed in Australia that uses eighteen videos as a teaching resource. A number of local schools and one Registered Training Organisation are already using it; and Lindy Hamill, the manager of JPP, suggests that it is producing very good results. At the time of this report, 'Soundways' had just been acquired by JPP and delivery is about to commence.

In Warrnambool where rural isolation is an issue for youth, Stephen Hoy says, "*Young people rely heavily on the collaboration between agencies but still find service provision patchy*". In areas like Terang and Mortlake there are few employment options and students probably need to relocate. Stephen suggests that individuals seeking vocational education or employment options need to be treated uniquely. For example, a student wanting to train in hospitality is now enrolled through the William Angliss College on-line stream and attends four blocks of training of two weeks each in Melbourne. JPP are assisting with the student's accommodation costs.

Some rurally isolated students have difficulty in accessing even basic services. A student who resides on a farm and wants to be a deck hand is unable to get to the classes. He is "biding his time" until he reaches 17 years of age when he can obtain his motorbike licence. For clients who are not on a transport route, services offered at the job seeker centres (e.g. fax, phone, printing, photocopying, scanning and email) are not accessible. JPP plays a pivotal role in providing links between the services and the young people, and the JPP service uses e-mail and telephone contact extensively in an attempt to stay in touch. Some use is also made of videoconferencing.

With 61 schools being assisted across a wide area, staff are extended to the limit and the young people assisted are said to be over the required numbers in both regions. Lindy Hamill acknowledges the crucial need to obtain and retain skilled and committed staff. Five professional development days for JPP staff have been planned for and budgeted in the current programme.

CADET (Community Agency for Development, Employment and Training)

- **Queensland**
- **24 schools**

CADET provides JPP services for the Sunshine Coast in southern Queensland, with the main offices based in Caloundra, 100 km north of Brisbane. This is a region experiencing strong population growth, and new schools are continuing to open in the area. Twenty-four schools in two school districts (Mooloolaba and Nambour) are covered through this broker. Eight of the twenty-four schools are from the independent or Catholic sectors.

The Community Agency for Development, Employment and Training (CADET) is a not-for-profit community-based agency that was formerly a Skillshare organisation. It has 6 Divisions. As well as delivery of JPP, CADET is also:

- a Job Network service provider
- a Group Training Company
- a provider of labour hire services
- a Registered Training Organisation
- a Community Work agency, coordinating Work for the Dole projects

The JPP service in CADET operates from within the large Caloundra CADET complex that includes an administration area, training facilities, nursery and landscaping, and group training operations. JPP has stand-alone accommodation housed in two modern huts with access to other meeting rooms and training facilities.

There are opportunities for JPP clients to benefit from other CADET services such as CADET JPP fully funded accredited training programs, if it is in the interest of the young person. CADET became a JPP broker for the first time under version 3 of the program, receiving notification late in 1998.

The five staff members employed to assist the school leavers from the 23 schools comprise of four staff, who provide the service, and one administration person managing data and related matters. The field staff, David, Mark, Kerryl, and Debbie, have employment backgrounds in training and employment services, with particular experience in designing and delivering training programs.

The agency seeks to recruit staff with training and employment services backgrounds, as well as those who have some local knowledge.

Each of the 23 schools is allocated to a particular consultant to work with. A file is established and maintained on each school (as well as on each client) so that continuity can be maintained in staff absences or turnover. The CADET JPP consultants have access to an office or a desk in the schools. With an average of six schools to each consultant, services can be provided for between one and two days each fortnight.

An estimated 5-10% of the clients are assisted at the CADET premises, especially over the holiday periods. However, the other 90% are assisted at school or in various community locations in the region. This flexibility in where services can be provided includes JPP having negotiated access to the use of offices at six Job Network offices up and down the coast where meetings with JPP clients can be arranged.

Students who leave school in years 9, 10 and 11 are the biggest percentage of their target group. *"The key areas we work on are self-esteem and motivation. That is the foundation for assistance."*

After several years of involvement in JPP, schools are starting to provide CADET with access to help identify students needing assistance. Using the school careers and guidance officers as the primary contacts, the JPP 'consultants' work with school staff to identify those students that are 'non-tertiary bound'.

Most JPP client registrations result either from JPP staff making presentations directly to students in the school; or school staff selecting and referring particular students to JPP. The balance depends on the school and the way in which it decides to use the range of JPP services.

As a generalisation, a majority of year 9, 10 and 11 clients are identified by teachers, while year 12s are more often identified by direct contact with classes and screening processes. CADET have adopted a number of screening processes to try to make sure that the clients who need the assistance get it.

The remainder of the registrations, about 5%, result from referrals by Centrelink (which remain very few), other parts of CADET, and by word of mouth through peers or parents. This is the group that are either assisted at the CADET offices in Caloundra, or at various locations in the community up and down the coast.

CADET uses a general 'aptitude' and skills identification process when young people are registered. When an interested person supplies their details to this JPP program, the one page form includes a section in which the students can indicate areas for which they would like further information provided.

The JPP 'consultants' can use any resource from a suite of products available in the CADET offices, as there are a variety of assessment tools available for career development. In part, the consultants try where possible to link in to each school's approach, but each 'consultant' has considerable flexibility in how they conduct the assessment process and the use of resources. No formal vocational assessment tool is used initially when young people are signed up.

A variety of services are available, some of which are provided directly by CADET, and some of which are delivered through referrals to other agencies. In summary, these services are:

Career Counselling	in house & referral to other agencies
Jobsearch Training	in house training
Numeracy/Literacy	referral to other agencies
Further Education & Training	through a variety of RTO's
School Industry Program	through school contact
Employment	support agencies
School Based New Apprenticeships	via the School's preferred Group Training Organisation

JPP consultants provide career counselling, because they have the track record and experience in the employment services industry to do so. Job Search training is mainly conducted by workshop, and also acts as a recruitment device. In 1999, three and a half-hour Job Search workshops were conducted in most of the schools by the JPP staff.

CADET negotiates access to recruit and deliver training in the most appropriate school terms so that it won't have a negative impact on the school curriculum. Some schools have built JPP into their school curriculum to increase the opportunity for students to access JPP services. For year 10 students, the 'consultants' conduct work preparation courses for the entire cohort at the invitation of teachers. Participating students all receive a job search kit from JPP in the workshops.

"Presentations have been made to all schools delivering sessions on skills auditing to their students." The JPP consultants sometimes meet with the English teacher, offering the option of JPP staff coming in to help the students develop resources, or assist the teachers through providing them with additional teaching resources.

To assist registered young people who have already left school, CADET JPP purchases training services from the CADET RTO Division. This training includes the hospitality and retail sectors at Certificate II level (the same outcome as provided by the VET in Schools program), each course consists of full-time training for about 15 students of either 8 or 11 weeks for Hospitality and Retail respectively. Young people who have already left school that would benefit from training are identified by the JPP 'consultant' through the assessment process. Participants may have completed different levels of schooling. These courses are delivered at convenient sites (for example, at the local yacht club, close to where the young people are concentrated). *"We are getting good results, with high rates of completion, and participants are getting job offers as a result."*

The JPP 'consultants' also seek out courses for clients that are available at either low cost or preferably at no cost to the client. For young people who have left school, use is made of fully funded New Apprenticeship Access Program (NAAP) courses, and those that attract concessional rates. JPP clients are referred to such courses in preference to CADET training if the latter require fees to be paid.

CADET RTO Division is also running courses for schools on a fee for service basis as a result of invitations issued by particular schools.

Traineeships and apprenticeships are arranged through, SCRGAL (South Coast Regional Group Training), the other Group training Company situated on the Sunshine Coast apart from CADET. They attend SCRGAL Information Days and have placed over 50 apprentices/trainees with them.

There appear to be no problems for the JPP 'consultants' to identify vacancies for the young people registered with them. As has already been noted, CADET's JPP program recruits 'consultants' who have contacts with local industry as a result of their previous work in the employment services and training sectors. *"We are continually 'marketing' the local community, and CADET has 170 active vacancies on the books at the present time. We know from the local labour market that employers are screaming for employable junior staff."*

In order to track employment trends, the broader CADET organisation arranges surveys of the local labour market by monitoring advertisements in the local paper. This task is carried out by an internal consultant of CADET who synthesises the material into a document that is available on the Sunshine Coast for the various divisions of CADET.

The JPP division also maintains close contact with the Job Network agencies that are the gateway to jobs in the region

Once the young person has been assisted into employment, or undertaken training or further education, there is regular follow-up provided. Due to large numbers most clients are contacted by a phone call, others face to face and those that can't be contacted by phone are sent a letter.

"We have to be realistic about the level of contact. If the person has been placed in a job, we make contact to ensure they are going alright and invite them to keep in contact, but we concentrate on the more needy people as a priority." The intensive work is focused on those who need more support to achieve employment or a training place.

A feature of the operation of JPP in general is that the service is available to young people over the school holiday period (a critical period for job seeking) when most education and training institutions are closed. CADET staff suggest that the job search assistance and follow up available over this period is an important aspect of a successful transition service.

CADET provides detailed information on outcomes achieved for students and former students to the schools. This helps the schools with the requirement that they produce regular destination reports on student outcomes to the Queensland government and advises the school of the effectiveness of the JPP project.

DAKABIN STATE HIGH SCHOOL

- **Queensland**
- **5 schools**

Dakabin State High School is located in the Murrumba Downs Education District close to the northern outskirts of Brisbane. The Dakabin Jobs Pathways Programme operates out of Dakabin High School and covers four other schools in the region; Albany Creek, Pine Rivers and Bray Park State High Schools, and the Pine Rivers Special School.

Rapid suburban development is occurring in the area, and overall enrollments are increasing, with additional state schools soon to open in the area. School retention rates in the area are consistent with the Queensland state average. The youth unemployment rate for the region is 27%.

The five schools provided with JPP services through Dakabin State High School all have sizeable enrollments of between 1000 and 1500, with the exception of the Pine Rivers Special School.

There are three 'employment officers' employed by the Dakabin Jobs Pathways Programme. They each work a 35-hour week, and are supported by a part-time administration officer. The three officers, Mark, Kay, and Terri previously worked in the public and private employment services industry, as well as other private sector backgrounds. They have combined experience in the CES, DEETYA, the Job Network, Job Clubs and public sector training and Human Resource positions.

Mark, one of the programme managers, notes that... *"people with employment expertise are new to the school. They have recruited staff looking for expertise in employment."*

The Dakabin JPP service operates out of a number of offices and rooms attached to the administrative section of Dakabin High School.

Dakabin State High School's involvement in the JPP programme grew out of their work placement cluster arrangements. Dakabin was achieving about 400 placements a year, with similar numbers being achieved at Pine Rivers. The cluster successfully tendered for JPP (version three) in 1998 to complement and support the work placement and employment programme that was already operating.

Over 40% of registered JPP participants are still enrolled at school. Each of the other four schools has provided facilities for the Dakabin JPP officers to work out of during term time for the period of the contract. Their ratio is approximately one staff member per school. At Pine Rivers State High school, the JPP staff are in the school at least two days per week, located next to the guidance officer.

Student involvement with JPP begins in year 10 with 'work experience' coordinated by JPP, placing 30 students a semester. Students feel comfortable with the service, meeting the employment officers through work education.

The Jobs Pathways Programme staff continues to provide a work placement service that organises up to 500 structured placements each year for two of the five schools, Dakabin and Albany Creek High Schools. Providing the work placement service includes classroom based activities, individual assessment of students, contact with employers, and matching of students to vacancies. (ASTF funding provides for one workplace coordinator for the other three schools involved in the cluster.)

The JPP staff also coordinate school-based apprenticeships and traineeships at the two schools, though to date these remain small in number.

As a result of these combined activities, the JPP employment officers work with many of the students for over two years and have conducted various assessments of them by the time they complete school. *"I would be seeing some students in year 10 to organise work experience, then dealing with them again for work placement in years 11 and 12, and then assisting them to find jobs through JPP"* says Mark.

All school leavers are registered as potential JPP clients. Programme staff at Dakabin emphasise the placement of young people into employment as the main focus of JPP. Their approach is influenced by their view that there are experts within the school who can provide the other services needed by young people.

Each school has a full-time Guidance Officer. Their expertise is focused on those intending to go to university and TAFE, while JPP staff's expertise is for those going onto employment.

The "at risk" young people tend to be dealt with by the Full Service School staff (which operates at Dakabin State High School, and also at two of the other schools in this cluster). Potential early school leavers are provided with case management under the Full Service School programme, and only referred to JPP for employment matters. Most of the 50 current Full Service School clients would be referred to JPP as well.

All year 12 students are registered in terms 3 and 4. This allows JPP to track every student (even if they go to university). These are not counted for the purpose of the JPP contract, but allows the service to put a safety net in place for every student. If students fail to gain a place, or drop out early in the piece, they are actively supported.

On two days each month for 10 or 12 weeks, a compulsory workshop is held for the year 12 students who will not be progressing to university (called the "non QCS" students). Roughly two thirds of the year 12 students attend this compulsory "Pathways Day" run by JPP staff. These workshops have been held for several years.

Early school leavers are referred to JPP through the Guidance Officer and Full Service Schools Officer in each of the schools. Typically, these students have no work experience or much knowledge of the job market. Once registered, they are placed in work experience for up to two weeks to give them insight into a particular industry and to

begin to come to terms with workplace requirements. This process often results in the student returning to school, but in a few cases the young person has gained and maintained employment.

As part of the registration process, JPP staff can use some standard 'employment maths', comprehension and temperament tests that take between 5 and 15 minutes to complete. If school leavers are having difficulty in identifying a career path, a work environment preference analysis is conducted to assist in identifying the types of work that would suit the young person.

Because the JPP staff are so accessible to Dakabin High State School (as the service is located there) this particular school also uses JPP employment officers to help deliver classes in English and Communication Skills, and in Maths. The other schools in the cluster are now also beginning to seek these services. One senior school coordinator commented that ...*"the greatest advantage of the present model of JPP is that it is so much part of the school programme"*.

Following the "Pathways" programme run for year 12 students while they are still at school, Dakabin JPP organises Job Search Workshops in the December/January period for school leavers conducted in the resource centre of Dakabin High School. These three-day workshops catered for approximately 60 school leavers in the 1999-2000 holiday period. The workshops also involved a large practical component, in which prospective employers were contacted. Some participants gained employment even before they completed the workshop.

If school leavers need additional training before they can compete for employment, Dakabin JPP have been able to place students in Access courses through Lorraine Martin College and First Impressions for training in office and retail.

JPP staff assess the literacy and numeracy skills of the non university-bound students using short structured tests, based on those employers use to recruit. The shortfalls in literacy and numeracy required for quality employment placements are large, with schools estimating up to 35% of students are in this group. However, the programme does not purchase or provide specialist literacy and numeracy assistance. Mark Clarke, one of the co-ordinators, says that *"JPP is a 'small money' programme that can't adequately provide for literacy and numeracy training that is required."*

The JPP programme has become involved in assisting teachers with the delivery of English and communication skills as their main contribution to assisting in this area.

The Dakabin JPP has strong links with local employers and an extensive database developed through the work placement programme and their responsibilities for school-based apprenticeships. The programme's managers estimate that *"ninety percent of our placements were taken through our strong direct connections with local employers."*

The JPP staff have now begun to act as a gateway for employers in the region, because they can coordinate and provide placement, work experience and employment services. The programme staff obtain feedback on employer requirements through from the Pine Shire Industry Schools Links Scheme (PSISLS). Those school-leavers who are harder to place in a job are eventually referred to Job Network agencies in the area.

All young people who have left school and are registered as JPP clients are followed up by programme staff. All staff stay behind after work one Monday night per month and call clients by phone. Each employment officer contacts one hundred clients on the night.

Queensland schools are required to provide a destination report to the Education Department around March, and each student is reported upon. For these schools, this requires follow up of about 800 young people each year. JPP performs this role for the schools in the cluster. *"We follow up every body from the previous year until at least March as a "safety net", even those who are going to university."* As a result, schools have a detailed picture of the short-term outcomes for their former students.

JPP is marketed as a comprehensive service for the school, covering:

- work education
- school based New Apprenticeships
- classroom talks on vocational education and careers
- finding employment

Any part-time and casual jobs that are available are placed into the school newsletter daily notices as part of the process of employment preparation of students.

The Head of Department of Senior School at Dakabin High notes that students from the schools in this cluster have a 2% unemployment rate (compared with a 27% unemployment rate for the region). This is confirmed by the Deputy Principal and Head of Dept. Senior Schooling at Albany Creek State High School.

They report that *"about 6 of the 160 students from last year's year 12 are not 'doing something'."* Their data from students who left one of the schools at the end of 1999 is as follows: Of 27 students leaving at the end of Year 10, one is still seeking work, out of 31 students Year 11 students leaving, one is still seeking work, and of 160 students leaving in Year 12, six are still seeking work.

This data goes into the school's report. The school will track the students over a number of years to determine what the patterns are, and use the information to analyse and improve the position. The information is also having short-term impacts. According to the Head of the Senior School at Dakabin High School ,Leanne Krosch,... *"teachers in the school who take vocational education are being influenced by the information that JPP collects and provides"*.

EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

- **South Australia**
- **15 schools**

Employment Options Inc. is a South Australian community organisation with a Board of Management consisting of volunteers from across the region.

The project covers a large region and includes the coastal centres of Kangaroo Island, Goolwa and Victor Harbor in the south and the Adelaide Hills townships of Hahndorf, Mt Barker and Oakbank to the north. The region is classified as rural and is changing in nature as traditional industries such as beef and sheep farming are being replaced by grapes, tourism and food processing. Much of the "new" work is seasonal. Students on work placement and employees have to be prepared to travel and cope with a public transport system that is described as 'inadequate'.

Employment Options Inc. was previously a Skillshare provider, and now offers employment services, NEIS and the JPP project among other services. Employment Options is situated in an industrial area of Mt. Barker. The JPP project shares the main facilities with the NEIS and employment programmes delivered by Employment Options.

Employment Options Inc. have been providing JPP for three years. Four staff work in Employment Options JPP as training and placement officers. Not all are full-time and they work across other programmes in the organisation. The four staff are based at the Mt. Barker office and regularly travel to the other JPP offices located across the region, including Kangaroo Island. Steve Reddy, Hilary Healy and the other JPP staff have diverse backgrounds in Human Resources, welfare, youth and recruitment gained within the manufacturing, retail and hospitality sectors.

Fifteen schools are assisted by this JPP project.

Employment Options Inc. has negotiated service arrangements on a school by school basis, but usually commence contact with a written approach to the principal.

Steve Reddy at JPP notes that school-based careers counselling other than JPP is limited in the region. While information on professional careers and further education options are available, school-based "work education" units are optional and inclusion of students in programmes is left to the discretion of teachers.

JPP staff maintain a schedule of regular meetings or structured phone contact with schools. Communication protocols are firmly established with each school.

Work within a school usually commences with an information session held at a school assembly for teachers and students outlining the JPP service. Flyers are provided to the school to insert into school newsletters. The flyers nominate school contacts who are

familiar to parents and students and who can provide further information and clarification.

The great majority of registrations are made in the schools at the end of the year. However, staff advise all students that JPP is available to them at any time and after they leave school, should they require it. Steve Reddy explains that then... *"it is up to them to pursue it... The staff adhere to an adult learning approach"*. Quite a few year 12 registrations also occur through peer referral.

All enquiries are directed to the Employment Options offices in Mt. Barker, Victor Harbor and Kingscote, where appointments for interviews are made. To actually provide assistance, JPP staff travel to the other locations of Goowla, Victor Harbor and Kangaroo Island. The interviews are sometimes hosted in the local schools.

Once a school leaver registers with JPP, a bright yellow envelope with the JPP logo is sent to the young person's home address. The envelope contains a package of information, tip sheets, career information and details of sessions to be held at the Employment Options Centre. *"The envelope is designed to be noticed and commented on by parents. Hopefully, even if it is tossed in the corner of their bedroom, a parent will ask about what was in the big yellow envelope!"*

The young person can enroll by phone in the activities detailed in the information pack or they can drop in to one of the offices. The initial interview is used to gauge their eligibility, needs and expectations. Registration is then offered to eligible clients.

Clients can be assisted by any of the four JPP staff. Schools and clients are dealt with as a team rather than on a caseload basis, and any staff member may deal with a particular young person. Clients are not allocated a particular staff member, and the young person is assisted by any member of the team who has the specific skills required.

Although the majority of students find out about the programme through attending school assemblies, much of the subsequent contact is provided at a JPP centre. The training, research and job seeking activities are conducted at the Employment Options facilities.

At the interview, the young person's knowledge of the labour market, preparedness for work, literacy/numeracy and career expectations are assessed.

In school the preferred JPP structure for registration and assessment is to organise a one-day group session, during which a mix of assessment and programme activities are combined. This can be held either at an Employment Options Centre or in one of the participating schools if there are sufficient numbers. The content of the session varies according to the amount of time that schools are willing to release their students. Where possible, career assessment is administered using Holland's Self-Directed Search (SDS) as a tool. A minimum of two hours is needed for the administration of the SDS. Follow-up with the student is organised as quickly as possible.

With limited careers guidance available in the schools, JPP staff are also arranging training for some interested schools staff in the use of the SDS. The potential of this tool has been noted by some schools, and a process of accreditation is being canvassed.

Group follow-up sessions are arranged which registered individuals are able to attend. These cover:

- local labour market scene and issues
- improving interview skills
- information on educational opportunities and pathways
- understanding employer expectations
- testing for apprenticeships accepted by Group Training Companies (such as ACER tests for literacy, numeracy, problem solving, clerical, matrices, mechanical reasoning)

These sessions are advertised directly to registered school leavers and co-ordinated via a school contact person for those at school, who have been assessed as benefiting from the information.

Although Employment Options Inc. uses these scheduled group activities, the basic approach is based on the individual's action plans. Research and follow-up tasks are provided that are designed to clarify and enhance a client's choice. It is the individual's responsibility to follow up on each of these tasks.

Employment Options Inc. is also a Job Network provider that complements the JPP service. Recruitment staff from the Job Network have remarked to JPP staff that "*job-ready students are easier to place and happier about the placement because they know its what they are looking for*". Registered school leavers are referred to all local and suitable Adelaide based Job Network companies.

Young people are also directed to various other organisations. Employment Options JPP access state funded Youth Assistance Grants for financial assistance for JPP clients such as transport costs due to 'isolation'.

Cornerstone College is an independent, non-denominational college. The school is located within walking distance of the JPP office. Cornerstone College employs a state funded 'Pathways Officer' (not to be confused with JPP) at the school.

They primarily use JPP for the "at risk" students who are most evident in year 11 and, to lesser extent, year 10. JPP staff contacted the students through the school regularly through the year. Any students thinking of leaving school during year 10 or 11 are encouraged to make an appointment with the Employment Options JPP staff. The JPP staff are considered to be "outsiders" who can tell the "real story". The student's involvement with JPP quite often prompts a return to school and a change in attitude.

According to the school, if a student makes it to year 12 they are usually assured of a successful completion. But College staff recognise that up to 20% of the students who reach university drop out in the first year. While still in year 12, students are now informed of JPP and told that the service can be used throughout their transition to university or in the event of a deferral.

JPP tracks and supports students and job seekers through a combination of telephone calls, personal contact and mail. While students are on work experience or placement, JPP staff visit them to discuss progress towards meeting personal goals. Between placements, students and those no longer at school are contacted *"just to say hi and let them know that we're still around"*. The experience of one former client of Employment Options JPP was that they *"...kept in phone contact about ten times over the next year and also called in to work about five times, 'just for a chat'."*

Two schools in the region noted that they were working with JPP to explore ways to use the data that is being generated about young people to better manage student transitions. Although discussions are at a preliminary stage there is general agreement that there could be improved student exit and tracking information in the region.

ASTF school clusters actively seek regional information from JPP on labour market trends. Each school organises its own work placement and again, JPP has been a valuable source of industry contacts.

MIDLAND

- **Western Australia**
- **26 schools**

Midland Job Link is a community-based incorporated association in Western Australia that runs a suite of initiatives in addition to JPP, including TAFE graduate placement, a Mature Employment Programme, 'Return 2 Work', and State Department of Training and Employment initiatives. Their main funding is obtained through the Department of Training and Employment as part of the State Employment Assistance Strategy (SEAS).

Midland JPP services 26 schools and has two full-time staff in service delivery and one administrative officer. The programme is located in a complex that previously housed the local TAFE Institute. The complex is adjacent to a railway station and bus terminus and this has attracted a wide diversity of employment, welfare and community groups that share the building as occupants. A major regional shopping centre is also within fifty metres.

Youth statistics in the area indicate that the availability of work and school completion rates offer some challenges for the local community. Youth unemployment is approximately 20% and school completion for the region last year was at 67.2%.

The Midland JPP programme was first funded in 1998 and unfortunately coincided with both a Job Network advertising push and the State government's School Leaver Programme. As a result, the newly appointed JPP staff faced a formidable marketing challenge.

They began by personally contacting all school principals, explaining how JPP fitted into the existing and new arrangements. However, many of the schools did not see a need for the programme. Four schools initially accepted the offer of JPP services, and this had risen to six schools by the end of the first programme.

The JPP staff realised that they would need to establish a marketing campaign in the wider community to ensure that students knew of the services available even if their schools were not participating. The campaign took the form of local news releases (including the very popular "jobseeker of the week" special feature in one regional paper), expo attendances and shopping centre stalls. Word of mouth led to students coming to the JPP office and eventually to schools arranging for some students to be transported into the office.

The relationship and trust of schools has now developed as a result of the time-consuming introductions and explanations that were originally carried out. JPP staff now "adequately" service twelve schools and this will rise to about twenty by the end of 2000.

It is probable that about five or six schools will never formalise a relationship nor ask to access the services directly. However there are now students from all schools in the

region on the programme. Some are referred by teachers, some by parents after seeing news items and some by friends who have had previous contact with JPP.

All of the marketing materials are self-produced and consist of laminated posters, brochures that can be produced and printed in-house, newspaper copy and flyers advertising coming events. Midland JPP staff note that they do not have the resources to produce the "glossies" that some of the Job Network members use and there are currently no State or Commonwealth Government campaigns to raise general awareness of JPP.

"Providing information to the parents" has been identified as a key to achieving successful outcomes for students. To achieve this, newsletters are distributed through the schools. Information evenings are also offered and advertised in the local papers. At these sessions parents have an opportunity to unravel "the maze of educational options". In particular, information about apprenticeships, In Step and structured workplace learning is presented by JPP staff.

Where schools identify a group of their students requiring particular assistance JPP staff will work with the students and staff to define and implement the courses. For example, forty students interested in school based traineeships are being assisted by Midland JPP. It is important for JPP to be seen to be supporting students in continuing, school-based activity. Later, students will often approach JPP seeking further information about labour market and transition to work issues.

Where schools are not participating in the programme, JPP staff will still report back to the school on the numbers of students who self refer.

The primary source of student contacts is through direct teacher referral.

The year 12 students have special needs because they have often completed secondary school without any work placement and therefore have a low work skill base and inadequate knowledge of employer expectations. In addition, they cost the employer more than younger students and they can be hard to place.

JPP assists the year 12 students leaving school with help to gain part time work; advice on Tertiary Entrance Exam choices using TAFE or part time options; motivational assistance; and participation in work-readiness programmes including work experience.

For those young people who just turn up at JPP, usually after they have heard a good report from a friend or a concerned teacher, an interview is arranged for them. Staff make every effort to ensure that this is organised immediately where possible. Once their eligibility is established, the young person is registered in JPP and directed into assessment.

Self referrals are mainly year 10 and year 11 students who are looking to leave school and seek employment. *"Year 10 exits are quite easy to place but suffer from unrealistic expectations especially where pay is concerned!"* says Denise, the JPP manager. The

students leaving in year 11 tend to require action plans with a variety of strategies including TAFE options, industry research, "reality testing" and self assessment.

Sometimes the schools identify the needs of groups of students and devise an in-house solution, but still call on JPP staff to assist with parts of the programme. JPP staff regularly deliver talks in schools on "the world of work", employer expectations and the local labour market.

If required workshops can be run on resume writing and interview skills.

Establishing a regular time in the school for one day a month has become the goal for JPP to achieve with all their schools. This has taken time, but once the first school established the model successfully, other schools began considering this as an option. Registration in the school provides a much more streamlined access for students and allows school staff and JPP staff to mingle and discuss issues and possible strategies. This can lead to JPP participating in some school programmes being organised. For example, JPP staff assist in Work Studies classes in year 10 in one school.

Involvement with the first school to use JPP in the school one day a month developed from an invitation to establish a programme for students identified by teachers as needing special attention. Fifteen students in years 10 and 11 who seemed to be lacking self worth and direction were referred to JPP.

A four-day programme was developed with combining elements of personal development, self-management and work preparation. Highly positive outcomes were achieved, with two students gaining apprenticeships, two enrolling in TAFE and some taking on part time work while continuing at school. Teachers remarked on the vast improvement in attitude of all those who did continue at school.

This school also had a high rate of expulsions, and was seeking some alternative strategy. A JPP staff member elected to work in with a school based team to see if any alternative could be found. As a service based outside the school, JPP assisted the parents, students and staff to consider alternative points of view and plan a transitional outcome for the students. Based on the first successful outcome for a student who was to be expelled, the school invited Midland JPP to set up a regular time at the school each month.

For all registrations received, an appointment with the young person is made where a full assessment is conducted. The assessment is based on an interview where a variety of techniques are used to help provide an understanding of the student's goals and potential. Some of the techniques include "mind mapping", goal setting, barrier breaking, strategy plans and action statements.

This information is structured into an action plan for each student. Where a student is advised to consult with another service, JPP provide a contact person for local agencies.

Monitoring occurs on a regular basis, with key elements of the follow up recorded in case notes. Most contact is by telephone although a proportion of clients do drop in to the centre to keep in touch. Follow up typically occurs between every 2 to 4 weeks, but it can be every other day.

Employers in the region regard JPP as a supplier of labour. Employers contact them to obtain recruits. School staff see JPP as an external agency that provides a bridge to employers and other agencies outside of their system. And students see them as an independent resource that's viewed as "cool".

Midland Job Link JPP, after experiencing a slow start with schools taking up the service, is making inroads into schools in their region. Their approach is to provide a variety of options, strategies and support to their clients, emphasising 'flexibility' to suit the needs of the schools and young people. Specialist workshops are conducted for students in year 10 and year 11 who experiencing difficulty coping at school. Employment vacancies for clients are achieved by calling our own employers, referrals, and also using the 'Jobseeker of the Week' in the local paper.

JPP in the NORTH - based at NORTHERN MELBOURNE INSTITUTE OF TAFE

- **Victoria**
- **45 schools**

JPP in the North is a consortium of three agencies: the Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT), the Northern Interactive Education Coordinated Area Programme (NIECAP-an industry education partnership body based at RMIT), and Work Placement Inc., an employment and youth services agency.

The region covered by JPP in the North extends from sparsely populated rural areas in the north to industrial and commercial centres close to the heart of Melbourne. Key issues for young people across the region include lack of mobility (with one study showing that they are the least mobile group in Melbourne), low levels of literacy and numeracy skills, and high levels of casual employment positions among young people which often leads to extended periods of underemployment.

JPP in the North operates from the TAFE Institute's Epping Campus and occupies a prominent position near the main reception office on campus. There are two full-time JPP employment officers and an administrative officer who work from the TAFE site which has an administration area, access to a boardroom-style conference area and interview rooms.

In addition to the two full-time employment and school liaison staff, the programme also has access to the services of two TAFE Institute staff on a part-time basis who provide specialist literacy/numeracy and vocational counselling expertise. As a group, the staff have a background in access programmes, vocational counselling, group training and employment programmes.

There are 45 schools covered by JPP in the Northern Region. JPP in the North is also a key programme partner of the Whittlesea Youth Commitment that covers 8 of the 45 schools in the region. The Whittlesea Youth Commitment is a broad partnership of community, education and industry organisations that have agreed to ensure that young people leaving school in Whittlesea are provided with a range of services so that they can achieve an appropriate employment, education or training outcome after they leave school.

JPP in the North makes strong use of the TAFE infrastructure and training facilities. Integration into the faculty structure makes it possible for JPP to use the facilities of the Institute and purchase training services at relatively low cost. The JPP staff consider that the integration within TAFE adds to the credibility of the programme, especially in the eyes of the parents of students.

One of the distinctive features of the JPP in the North approach is that almost half of the young people are assisted outside of the school environment. Many have already left school when the programme staff begin to work with them, and they are interviewed and assessed at the TAFE Institute. The coordinator of JPP in the North says "*we see 80-85%*

of our clients here at NMIT. Those we see at school are because the kids are located a long way away. It's a geographical issue."

However, strong links with schools are still necessary to ensure that eligible young people are referred to JPP services. The staff also make sure that bridges are built with Centrelink, welfare agencies, employment and youth services. JPP in the North has strong links to a network of agencies in the northern region, maintained by staff involvement with local government youth services meetings.

Referrals result from JPP presentations made to year level assemblies. Students who choose to follow up are asked to contact the JPP office to make an appointment. Many referrals to the programme also come through the Careers Teachers and the Student Welfare Co-ordinators. For the eight schools involved in the Whittlesea Youth Commitment, a transition officer funded by the State Department of Education to work across these schools identifies the students 'at risk' of leaving, and refers them to the JPP service. A Principal involved with the Whittlesea Youth Commitment explains that...*"Schools can identify those young people who are in need of the service. There is often a lot of work needed before they are ready to approach JPP. The transition officer working across the eight schools in the region may undertake some of that work or refer out to other youth services."*

At the interview with the young person, which is often organised at the school, an initial assessment is carried out and the student fills in a self-assessment form. Interviews are conducted by trained staff with specialist expertise in literacy and numeracy assessment, vocational counselling and dealing with NESB students. The registration form is filled in with a JPP officer and is used as a discussion starter about their school background, and other relevant experiences.

For those young people being assisted to remain at school, JPP in the North offers in-house vocational counselling and literacy and numeracy assessment. There are also some customised vocational programmes that can be offered as a result of the location of the JPP project in a TAFE setting.

The Literacy and Numeracy programmes are regarded as a particularly important aspect of supporting young people. A specialist TAFE literacy and numeracy teacher works part-time with JPP to develop learning strategies effective with the target groups. Young people needing assistance are also referred to an extensive network of literacy providers, such as TAFE Institutes, community agencies, the Adult Multicultural Education Service and private providers.

Vocational counselling is a specialist service also available within JPP in the North. A specialist in this field provides approximately one third of all JPP clients with guidance in the two days a week that she is available to the service. She works both with young people seeking employment and those remaining at school. Apart from individual counselling, she also contributes to developing action plans by advising on access to Internet job search, resume writing, job search information and post placement support.

Most of the JPP clients who are still at school do the "Let's Look at Work" programme which has been specifically developed for students in Year 10 who have become disaffected by school. "Let's Look at Work" are vocational preparation courses of one day a week for nine weeks, designed for year 10 students, and delivered at the various campuses of the Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE. There are ten different industries that students can select from, ranging from joinery, engineering and furniture making through to tourism and hospitality. 180 school students can participate in these vocational preparation programmes. JPP purchase the time of the teaching staff and fund materials costs, but obtain the training facilities at no cost. As well as the opportunity to 'taste' a particular trade, these year 10 students are also given the opportunity to undertake classes in a TAFE environment.

Each nine-week course ends with students having produced a product at the end of the training. Once the students have completed "Let's Look at Work", JPP staff try to subsequently link students to ASTF funded industry placement programmes to reinforce the learning experience.

One day "TAFE Taster" days (run in collaboration with NIECAP) are also available for school students and involve a visit to an industry area within the TAFE Institute. The aim is to help the young person clarify their training options and get to know the training environment.

JPP also offer schools the Vocational Pathways Programme that provides information to students in years 9 to 11 designed to encourage them to stay at school. This information programme is available to classes, small groups or on a one-to-one basis. Topics cover information on the local labour market, New Apprenticeships, employer expectations, vocational pathways, skills identification and self-assessment. The focus is to provide students with a realistic understanding of the requirements of employers and Group Training Companies.

For students in year 12 needing vocational experience and to regain interest in their studies, industry visits are organised to help them establish accurate perceptions of the workforce and potentially gain motivation to complete their studies.

In addition to information on pre-apprenticeships and pre-vocational training, JPP in the North have developed and maintain a strong network with regional welfare and specialist support services and provide advice to schools and individual students about how to get in touch with crisis counselling, housing, and other services. Information about this network is considered to be an important part of the school retention strategy. Students 'at risk' may require more intensive case management that can include referral to other agencies (such as Kildonan Youth and Family Services, Whittlesea Housing, the Justice Department, Youth Services and private organisations). Their main information service relates to the area of pre-apprentice and pre-vocational training.

Jobs for school leavers are found by a combination of direct links with employers, and by referral to local Job Network service providers. Young people are assisted with resume preparation, interview skills, job search workshops and vocational counselling.

Out of school clients can also participate in Industry Experience Placement and are offered work experience with employers who support JPP in the North.

JPP in the North promotes the service to potential clients and the wider community through regular media releases which often feature success stories, placing recruitment ads in the paper and widely publicising parent information evenings. All young people registered with the programme are sent a newsletter and a breakfast club operates before school/work activity.

Other outcomes attributed to the JPP in the North include the development of a more positive view of the usefulness of TAFE and vocational training for school students by some teachers, parents and students. This is influencing the environment in some schools. The recent introduction of work experience for year 9 students in one school, and wider moves to introduce alternative learning environments for students in years 9 and 10 was at least partially attributed to the influence of JPP locally.

The availability of JPP as a central information source on youth issues is also proving useful to some schools. JPP in the North is used as a "gateway" to a range of other youth support services relevant for particular students in those schools.

SCISCO (South Coast Industry Schools Coordinating Organisation)

- **Queensland**
- **23 schools**

SCISCO is a non-profit incorporated organisation formed by a cluster of schools and governed by a Management Committee of Industry and School representatives. It has been operating on the Gold Coast since 1996. SCISCO is based in a large shopping centre (the Oasis Centre) in the middle of Broadbeach, easily accessible by public transport. The project operates from one reasonably large partitioned office within the shopping complex.

The Gold Coast is the sixth largest city in Australia, and has an economy highly dependent on tourism. As a result, job opportunities for young people in the hospitality, retail and tourism industries are often seasonal in nature. One of the challenges for employment services in the Gold Coast is the lack of large manufacturing and infrastructure in the region.

Most schools in the region offer a range of VET subjects. Typically, over half the students in years 11 and 12 would undertake one or more VET courses. A high percentage (about 45%) of the students registered by JPP are enrolled in non-government schools. This is said to be one of the fastest growing regions for independent schools coverage in Australia. Catholic schools, in particular, are strong users of the JPP service.

SCISCO operates as a cluster covering 21 government and non-government schools in the region. SCISCO provides its member schools with three key services. These are:

- The Workplace Learning Programme (work placements)
- School-Based New Apprenticeship Programme
- The Jobs Pathways Programme

Links with employers and representative groups are strong. The SCISCO Management Committee has representatives from the local Chamber of Commerce, the City Council, a number of Industry Training Councils and Industry Training Boards, the Queensland Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and eight individual company representatives.

The staff employed by SCISCO work across all three of these programme areas in the schools within the cluster.

Schools in the cluster pay an annual membership fee of \$1000 per year to participate. However, the Jobs Pathways Programme service is also available to schools that do not subscribe to the ASTF cluster. There are currently 23 schools covered by the Jobs Pathways Programme, as opposed to the 21 schools subscribing to the cluster. Schools do not have to be a member of the cluster to access the JPP service.

Seven staff members are employed by SCISCO to deliver the three programmes for their schools. As has already been noted, staff are also involved in arranging work placements

and school based New Apprenticeships for the schools, as well as delivering the Jobs Pathways Programme.

The seven staff consist of a programme manager, three 'training and employment' coordinators, an aboriginal liaison/marketing administrator, an administration assistant, and a recruitment coordinator.

The programme manager, Andrea Meredith, has a background in TAFE training, and the domestic and international hospitality sector. The three training and employment coordinators, David, Maja and Tara have expertise in organising traineeships, literacy and numeracy training, and recruitment processes.

Some of the JPP staff were selected by a panel comprising Andrea and two school principals from the region. Despite the one year nature of the JPP contracts, SCISCO have built professional development of their staff into the budget, believing that the resulting benefits are important, and that it assists in retention of staff.

The three training and employment coordinators each work with approximately eight schools, and have a maximum number of clients that they 'case-manage'. They are all based in the SCISCO office at the Oasis Shopping Centre, but go in to the schools to provide services at the school's request.

SCISCO's interest in JPP grew naturally out of the existing involvement in school VET programmes and their organising of work placements for member schools. They first became a JPP broker in 1997, and their experience in the subsequent period is that the earlier that students have access to transition services, the more likely it is that the transition will be successful for them. As the JPP staff are also providing work placement services for the schools, they can potentially be working with the students over a number of years.

Although SCISCO is an organisation formed by a cluster of schools, the JPP service is not based in the schools. Although presentations and seminars are held in a variety of schools, the students 'seem happy' to mainly access the services of staff at the SCISCO offices. However, SCISCO does have access to training rooms and facilities at some schools and training organisations.

The approach adopted at SCISCO is to work with the schools and the students in fairly defined cycles. The training and employment coordinators go out to their schools around September or October, and interview any student planning to leave at the end of the year. Year 12 students are treated as a priority group, and JPP enroll those who are not proposing to go to university. Each student is interviewed and assessed.

Then, in January the following year, JPP staff go back to their schools, and ask the relevant staff to identify the students who are "at risk of leaving before July".

Most of the eligible participants, apart from those leaving at the end of year 12, are identified through consultation with VET Coordinators and Careers Counsellors. This is particularly the case for students who are at risk of leaving school early.

In many cases the JPP staff have had prior contact with young people through coordination of their work placements if they have previously undertaken VET programmes. According to Andrea Meredith... *"students who have done VET courses are proving to be much more employable. If they have participated in workplace learning,, they are much better prepared than those who have done a general education."*

For students who are leaving school at the end of the year (mostly year 12 students), SCISCO offers employment focused seminars in the school for groups of approximately twenty students. There are typically two sessions held, each two hours long, which cover the key topics of resumes, interview and telephone techniques, general job search, and information on the labour market.

Young people leaving school at the end of the year and making the transition to employment comprise approximately 70% of the SCISCO clients. These students can also access careers counselling from the JPP training and employment coordinators if they are not eligible for the Commonwealth-funded Careers Counselling Programme.

The other 30% of their client group are young people "at risk of leaving school early" and are the main focus of the programme from the start of the new school year. These young people, once identified by the schools, are assisted in the following ways.

- the "Partnership Programme" conducted one day a month for 50 participants
- literacy and numeracy training, delivered in schools by JPP staff, for approximately 150 students currently
- students seeking to leave are referred from schools while still enrolled and are registered as job seekers and assisted. Approximately 50 of the students in this category currently access services at the SCISCO office, while remaining enrolled until a suitable option is found.

The pilot *"Partnership Programme"*, being run for the first time in the current year, is a six month programme conducted one day a month. SCISCO targeted fifty year 10 boys who the schools identified as "at risk of leaving school early" and likely to benefit from a programme addressing self-esteem and motivational issues.

SCISCO put the programme out to tender, and purchased services from three other organisations to assist these year 10 students with a programme one-day every month. Three organisations; Higher Ground, Peer Power, and Global Sports Ministry came together to offer a combination of a climbing programme; sports development; and activities to support personal and emotional development. A JPP staff member also attends the programme each month.

SCISCO JPP provides literacy and numeracy training through a programme called "Winners at Work", which focuses on workplace literacy issues. The programme is

coordinated by Maja, a specialist training and employment staff member. The programme takes 9 hours over 3 days and is delivered in the school. Maja says that surveys of students show a really good response to the programme. *"They like it because they can see the relevance of it."*

According to Andrea Meredith, the JPP project has no problem finding jobs. They are known to employers and advertise their JPP employment services through the work placement programme. Jobs are readily available in the hospitality and tourism sectors. SCISCO acts as a central point of contact for employers in their relations with schools, coordinating work placements, employment and apprenticeships. *"There are so many vacancies available also because of our local links, and the fact we have now been running the programmes for over three years."*

An approach that they have developed directly links interested and eligible school leavers with potential employers on an industry sector basis. SCISCO hold information breakfasts for employers in a particular sector, and also invite potential recruits to the events, providing employers with the recent school leavers' resumes. For example, a group of students were taken to a monthly building industry dinner to give them a sense of the industry and explore potential employment opportunities. Some of these linking activities are offered as combined JPP and Workplace Learning activities by SCISCO.

All eligible young people are also referred to register with Job Network providers.

As a result of the client follow up combined with their other activities in the cluster of schools, they are able to provide a labour market report to all schools every 12 months.

A destination survey is also provided to each school detailing their students who are enrolled as clients, and the outcomes achieved for present and former students. This was originally provided once a year, but is now available to schools every three months. This assists the schools with the reporting they are required to perform back to the State Government on student transition outcomes.

A typical quarterly report to one of the schools indicates that of 45 young people from years 10, 11 and 12 currently registered as JPP clients on 1 March 2000, 35 had achieved one of the above outcomes, while the remaining young people continued to be actively supported.

In reflecting on the development of JPP over the past three years, SCISCO's JPP staff suggest that on the Gold Coast, the significant aspects appeared to be the increase in options developed to assist young people; the increasing interest and involvement of schools, younger students becoming a larger percentage of the client group, and the growing importance of peer referral as a way of accessing JPP.

WESTGATE COMMUNITY INITIATIVES GROUP (WCIG)

Victoria

70 schools

Westgate Community Initiatives Group (WCIG) is a community-based organisation located in Melbourne's west. The region serviced by JPP includes major industrial zones, warehouse/distribution centres (water, air and land) and rural areas with water management, orchard and market gardening.

The programme was initially tendered for under a consortium arrangement between Melbourne City Mission; Victoria University; Westcap (an industry-education partnership), Djerriwarrh Employment & Education Services and WCIG to provide a transition service in the western region of Melbourne. Djerriwarrh and Melbourne City Mission, part of the original consortium, now form the Board of the JPP brokerage. WCIG is the lead agent and main host site for the delivery of the service, with outreach at Djerriwarrh and Melbourne City Mission.

The first WCIG JPP programme commenced in 1997 with two staff. In this year JPP was provided 'outside the school'. In the second year of the programme the operation moved 'inside the school'. Under the present contract WCIG services 70 schools with nine staff.

Explaining WCIG's approach to providing JPP, Sue Draper says, "*we need to provide a supportive and friendly environment, advising and encouraging young people through the often confusing and intimidating transition beyond school*".

According to Sue, recruiting professionally educated people, appropriately trained, but with a sympathetic background for working in this region are required. Selection of the right staff is critical. As a result, school clusters are being involved in the selection of new JPP staff members. They participate on the selection panel. At present, the majority of the nine JPP staff have formal qualifications related to the field.

With sixty schools across a region, staff feel that to be successful the programme must maintain a flexible approach to the needs of the schools and individual students. Therefore, WCIG has strategically placed the services within the schools. Officers spend at least one half day a week in each of their designated area schools.

With strong linkages to the schools, approximately 95% of clients are referred through them. The referral process includes providing JPP with an information form containing details of the individual student.

JPP is beginning to provide the schools with "a lot of information about what is happening to their students". In parts of their region, JPP has moved from solely providing a transition service to beginning to act as a "gateway" for information/analysis of local services, labour market information and employment assistance for the schools. Officers are attending school cluster meetings and offering to provide teachers and school

representatives with information tailored to suit their needs. At the moment JPP are providing information that includes regional profile updates, new employment opportunities, information on 'other agencies and the Job Network' and entry and exit information on a school by school basis.

Recruitment is primarily through school referral. The JPP officer requests background information about the young person from the Careers Teacher (or other source in the school). The officer makes a time for a follow-up meeting at the school or the office.

The JPP officers have been trained to carry out assessment using AIM-S. This tool allows a starting point for career/vocational choice. Some clients are referred to other agencies if it fits their action plan. In these cases, staff attempt to offer two or more choices and always check out the places of referral. The time by which it is planned to achieve an outcome is usually about six weeks.

After six weeks, the JPP officer begins a monitoring and mentoring phase that may last for six months. The monitoring is usually carried out either by having a meeting or making telephone contact. Contact occurs about every six weeks at a minimum. The follow up phase can continue informally for up to two years and detailed case notes are considered essential.

Within the schools JPP involvement may include

- Addressing all year 10, 11 and/or 12 students to inform them of the service, and the world outside of school
- Identifying year 10/11 students who are at risk of leaving. These students are followed up through small group work and/or individual casework.
- Year 9 students undertaking the school's Work Education Unit (or similar) may be referred for career counselling.

To obtain job vacancies, one WCIG staff-member fills a marketing position dedicated to finding potential jobs, and then marketing students to businesses. The marketing person uses local Job Network providers, Internet resources and an employer network developed by JPP. Once placed, the young person is monitored and offered ongoing assistance.

The main focus of the WCIG approach is to "assist the young person to take responsibility and control". Where possible, JPP also work with those who might influence students (i.e. parents, careers teachers, role models), but they primarily concentrate on working directly with young people intending to make the transition from school to work and are at risk of 'falling through the gaps'.

JPP relies on referrals by teachers for their clients. The teachers therefore need to have a clear idea about JPP, its services and staff. The person in the school responsible for the referral varies from school to school. It can be the careers teacher, welfare coordinator, year level coordinator or the principal.

It is up to the schools to nominate students whom they feel require the service. WCIG staff say that it has taken time, but the schools are now beginning to refer 'the right people' to JPP. Previously, the schools were expelling students because there were few other options. Now schools are selecting those students who are truanting, not passing exams, and threatening to leave and suggesting that they visit a JPP officer. The willingness of some schools to rethink the issue of expulsion is viewed by staff as a direct response to the presence and influence of JPP.

School retention was the focus for an initiative designed for students from Williamstown High School. A group was identified who "had significant problems and need to be linked in to the community". JPP organised their enrollment in a local TAFE vocational skills programme. This course operates in tandem with their usual school activities.

At Laverton Secondary College, where the relationship with JPP programme has matured, joint initiatives are undertaken with JPP as a partner. Peter Day, Laverton Secondary College Careers Teacher, cited three such instances.

A tripartite working group between Victoria University, JPP and Laverton Secondary College has identified a group of year 10 students in danger of "dropping out". A programme was developed around a TAFE 'taster' concept and became known as "10 A". The concept has developed into a Certificate 1 course and is offered alongside year 10 for one day per week. JPP staff work in classroom activities and offer careers, interview skills, resume building, introduction to Group Training Company personnel and assessments.

The second example is the development of a more aggressive promotion and pursuit of relevant VET courses to be offered within the school. Starting with year 10 and possibly, in 2001, year 9, information evenings detailing the opportunities and benefits of such course options are led by JPP staff.

Finally, JPP is becoming a key source of information to the school. JPP staff are able to advise on changes to government policy, location of Job Network members, New Apprenticeship Centres and Group Training Companies and are the "first call" for students looking to identify a clear set of choices.

WCIG have learnt that schools want a stable service. It takes a while for schools to work out whether they can trust the service or not. Schools also value a service that understands the external environment and can bring an unbiased realistic view into the school. Establishing trust is based on programme continuity as well as performance. Sue considers trust "*...is what will make JPP successful or unsuccessful in the long term*".

Peter Day agrees and notes that the relationship between the school and JPP has developed with each subsequent year of operation. In 1997 there was an enthusiastic but limited service. 1998 saw the start of an in school programme with the JPP staff on site each week. The service proved successful for students and referrals became more frequent. At the same time they began to discuss the possible directions that the school-

JPP relationship could take. The services expanded and Peter is able to report that for the exiting year 12 students from 1999 *"every kid in year 12, 1999 got a placement, job or course entry"*. In 2000, all students in years 10 11 and 12 are registered with JPP.

JPP maintain a close working relationship between their youth officers and the LGA youth committees. The local government councils are the critical youth services linkage in the region and the LGA is the source of most primary data. Each JPP officer participates in the respective local government youth network meetings. These forums are used to provide links to other youth services - *"all the other youth services would be aware of JPP"*, and in return staff gain valuable locality information which is shared through their weekly meeting.

In an attempt to capture information, the programme has introduced client surveys. Approximately 1000 students from 1999 have been sent surveys. About 10% of young people responded. The survey was included with a parcel of information and a congratulatory letter about their personal outcomes being met. The responses have been analysed and have provided information by gender, age level and VCE outcomes. Emerging trends identified have been valuable to JPP planning. Issues particular to males, completion rates of students returning to school, youth perceptions of control and family support have influenced the JPP programme and its procedures and strategies.