



JESUIT SOCIAL SERVICES RESPONSE:
Victorian Government's Employment Programs
Review: *Background Paper*

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For further information contact:

Sally Parnell, A/CEO, Jesuit Social Services

Tel: 9421-7600

Jesuit Social Services

Jesuit Social Services welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Victorian Government's Employment Programs Review *Background Paper*. We commend the government's focus on the employment needs of vulnerable and disadvantage Victorians. Jesuit Social Services has been a longstanding advocate for people with complex needs who are highly vulnerable in society. For over 37 years, we have accompanied people who are disengaged from education, training and work. By working in solidarity with people who are in need, Jesuit Social Services strives to build a just society where the dignity of all people is respected and the common good is pursued.

In particular, our Jesuit Community College, our Ignite Social Enterprise, our African Australian Inclusion Program in partnership with National Australia Bank (NAB) and our Workplace Inclusion Program all work directly with people disengaged from education and employment. These programs are highly successful at re-engaging vulnerable groups, supporting them through alternative pathways into education. These practical programs provide support for people to learn, train and take up employment opportunities. Our work is grounded in years of experience working with people involved in the justice system, culturally and linguistic diverse communities, refugees and asylum seekers, young people with mental health issues and indigenous communities.

Our service delivery and advocacy focuses on the following key areas:

- **Justice and crime prevention** - for people involved with the criminal justice system
- **Education, training and employment** - for people with barriers to sustainable employment
- **Mental health and wellbeing** - for people with multiple and complex needs and those affected by trauma, suicide, and complex bereavement
- **Settlement and community building** - for recently arrived immigrants, refugees, displaced people and disadvantaged communities.

Our employment initiatives are described below. A full description of our programs is provided at Appendix 1.

- **Jesuit Community College:** The College is a Registered Training Organisation and Learn Local organisation. We assist people facing significant barriers to learning, providing real skills for life, learning and work.
- **Artful Dodgers Studios:** Part of Jesuit Community College providing pathways to education, training and employment for young people with multiple and complex needs associated with mental health, substance abuse and homelessness;
- **African Australian Inclusion Program:** A partnership between Jesuit Social Services and the National Australia Bank that provides paid work experience placements for people from African communities.
- **Social enterprise Ignite Cafés:** Our Ignite Cafes (located in Hawthorn and Camberwell) are 'living classrooms' where people gain on-the-job, real work experiences and certified training. Through our cafes participants can gain experience in both back-of-house and front-of-house hospitality services while completing accredited courses through Jesuit Community College.
- **Workplace Inclusion program:** A program of Jesuit Community College that partners directly with employers to provide tailored pre-placement training and entry level employment opportunities for people experiencing significant barriers to social and economic inclusion. Since its inception in 2013, the Workplace Inclusion Program has worked with over 30 employers and placed 43 participants in employment opportunities.
- **Industry Employment Initiative:** The Industry Employment Initiative (IEI) is developing and prototyping a demand-led employment model that can meet the entry-level recruitment

needs of national employers around the country while improving employment outcomes for long-term unemployed jobseekers who want to work. Through the IEI, Jesuit Community College is currently working with Coles Supermarkets to support 30 highly disadvantaged young people into entry level employment.

Overview of our submission

The Australian job market has become more competitive over the past few decades as the number of traditional entry-level jobs has shrunk and the demand for qualified, skilled and experienced workers has grown. Victoria's unemployment rate is 6.2 per cent. Currently there are six unemployed people for every job vacancy. There is also a significant mismatch in many sectors between the needs of employers, and the skills and capacities of the people who are looking for work. In addition people are remaining unemployed for longer, with the number of long-term Newstart recipients in Australia increasing by 50% in the last three years.¹

Table 1: Victorian employment trends²

Victoria	May 2013	May 2014	May 2015
Unemployment rate	5.8%	6.5%	6.2%
Underemployment rate	8.1%	8.3%	8.8%
Youth unemployment rate	10.4%	13.9%	14.2%
Workforce participation rate	64.9%	64.3%	64.8%

Victorians who are already facing disadvantage, – such as Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, people in the justice system, vulnerable young people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people from rural, regional, or socioeconomically disadvantaged communities – already have higher rates of unemployment, underemployment, or long-term unemployment, compared to other Victorians. As the job market gets tougher these people are the ones most likely to lose their jobs, and to have difficulty finding and sustaining work.

The high volume, low margin nature of Commonwealth employment services such as jobactive means that many disadvantaged people are not provided with the intensive, ongoing and meaningful support they need. The cost for people left out of the workforce can be immense. The longer a person is unemployed, the harder it is for them to move into work. Some will face extended reliance on income-support payments and other social services, suffer from poorer health, or become marginalised from their communities.

The current high levels of youth unemployment are of particular concern. A growing number of the next generation of young people faces being locked out of employment. This will have potentially disastrous consequences for these young people, the broader community and the economy.

¹ Department of Social Services, *Labour Market and Related Payments: a monthly profile*, July 2014, and Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Statistical Paper No. 10 *Income support customers: a statistical overview*, 2011.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, 6202.0 - Labour Force, Australia, Sep 2015, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6202.0>

Highly disadvantaged jobseekers, face considerable and multiple barriers that prevent them from entering the formal labour market. However employment initiatives are often funded on the basis of single outcomes. We believe that programs should be funded on a milestones based system. This approach would help to ensure that programs address the transitions and needs of disadvantaged groups at different stages along the pathway to reengagement in education and employment.

An effective approach to disadvantaged groups requires providing ongoing, intensive support to build people's capabilities; pathways to meaningful participation – such as training, skills development, work experience and opportunities for participation in the community.

Jesuit Social Services calls for a coordinated strategy to address the employment-related needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Such a strategy will provide pathways to employment, improve their health and wellbeing and reduce reliance on other services. To do this we recommend a strategy based on **six key planks**:

1. Intervene early, and intensively, to prevent long-term unemployment and disadvantage
2. Building the skills and capabilities of vulnerable people (including job-readiness training, for jobseekers with limited previous work experience, such as young people, long-term unemployed, people in the justice system, refugees and migrants).
3. Linking education and training to demand, including a focus on positions that offer the real prospect of ongoing employment.
4. Fostering business and community partnerships, and support existing partnerships to deliver pathways to employment, including ongoing post-placement support
5. Trial a whole-of-community approach to harness community-wide efforts to address unemployment in areas of socioeconomic disadvantage.
6. Evaluate and measure the long-term outcomes of employment-related programs to better understand the most effective models for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

This submission specifically addresses the Employment Programs Review questions 1-11 & 16-17.

Commonwealth government employment services

- 1) What types of clients groups and what sort of barriers to employment do Commonwealth government services cater well for?
- 2) What are the types of clients that need different or more targeted support? What is the nature of this support?

Commonwealth services work well for the mainstream majority

Commonwealth services cater well for a large proportion of the population who have a clearly defined set of skills and a clear sector they can target. However commonwealth services are high volume, compliance driven and provide short, sharp interventions that are not oriented to the type of intensive, holistic support that disadvantaged groups need to find and maintain employment. The narrow focus on employment outcomes fails to address the need for progress through participation for disadvantaged groups.

Where jobactive services are capable of placing a person in employment, often the employment position itself is problematic, often because the person is not well matched to the position, and therefore the job becomes unsustainable. In addition, too often the

training, and Work for the Dole activities take place without a clear pathway of how participants will move into work. There is also a lack of employer engagement in developing pathways into work.

Through our research and advocacy, Jesuit Social Services has consistently identified recurring systemic barriers to inclusion for the most disadvantaged learners and jobseekers in our community - these include:

- the churn of people through a range of ineffective programs or short term support
- limitations in the range of support offered to people who are clients of jobactive or mainstream training institutions
- insufficient recognition of the significant time and effort it takes to engage with and build trusting relationships with disadvantaged groups
- the lack of explicit pathways from training and learning programs into employment and participation
- the focus on compliance and meeting prescribed outcomes, which fails to address the needs of disadvantaged job seekers.

Barriers to employment and job readiness

Each group can face unique barriers to employment based on their circumstances, however there are also be number of shared and overlapping factors across vulnerable groups that can pose a barrier to a person being 'job ready', these include:

- Individual factors - such as self-esteem and confidence issues, limited self-efficacy in relation to a particular occupation, limited English language ability, poor literacy and numeracy, low occupational skill levels or personal difficulties such as poor mental health or physical health or substance abuse issues.
- Life circumstances - such as homelessness, family violence, restrictions related to justice orders, lack of access to transport, complex financial situations, excessive debt and poverty, uncertain visa status or limited understanding of the job market and the Australian workplace culture.

Participants that need specialised support

We work with people involved in the criminal justice and child protection systems and are aware of the specific challenges faced by these people. This includes those people involved in or exiting the justice system and young people leaving protective care. Young people in our Youth Justice Community Support Service (YJCSS) are often disengaged from education at an early age, have lower-level cognitive functioning, have lived a transient lifestyle and are often institutionalised. Often these young people have had traumatic backgrounds and have not yet transitioned to a point where they have sufficient confidence and capacity to step into a workplace. This is further compounded by homelessness or living in home environments where there is ongoing family violence or a history of inter-generational unemployment.

This group of young people have in their formative years often experienced dysfunction, criminogenic behaviours and abuse, trauma and neglect. Supporting YJCSS participants into the work-force requires an approach appropriate to their life stage and individual experiences with the recognition that there will be set-backs. In addition employers need to have an understanding of how they can support the young person to manage and retain work.

Attention should be paid to the specific issues for people from culturally and linguistically diverse groups, including recently arrived migrants and asylum seekers, for whom language and isolation presents a barrier to employment. Often people in these groups may not be

eligible for Centrelink benefits or the assistance of jobactive because of their visa status. They may have work rights but not necessarily access to Centrelink and jobactive. They are also not eligible for training. Other groups that require targeted approaches include Aboriginal Australians, single parents, women experiencing domestic violence, early school leavers; and long-term unemployed.

Finally we are aware that there are a significant number of people who do not fall easily into the above categories. Often they are hard to reach and hard to engage. Their personal circumstances may be particularly complex, or they may be reluctant to engage with services. These factors can prevent them from either applying for or being eligible for Centrelink payments. This can also include people with disabilities that fall below the official eligibility level of disability required for disability support, or who have disabilities that they may not want to disclose. Often there may be untreated anxiety and depression issues and considerable backgrounds of trauma.

Recommended actions:

- *Services to help disadvantaged groups into employment need to be able to support their broader needs and the non-vocational barriers to social and economic inclusion. This should involve a tailored, flexible approach that addresses the needs of each individual and encourages pursuing education and eventual employment.*
- *Promoting participation for the most disadvantaged requires holistic and ongoing support that is relationship-based, directed towards building capabilities over time, and provides clear pathways into learning and work.*
- *Engagement activities in local areas needs to be funded for hard-to-reach groups, including for those that do not fit neatly into a category of disadvantage.*

Victorian Government employment programs

- 3) What support services are required to assist disadvantaged Victorians find and sustain employment?
- 4) What gaps exist for unemployed Victorians in the range of existing Commonwealth and Victorian Government support measures? What groups of job seekers are not getting the support they need to move into and remain in sustainable employment?
- 5) What employment assistance is or isn't working and why? Is there enough flexibility for programs to take account of local circumstances?
- 6) Are there any examples where support is being duplicated, with multiple initiatives servicing the same client groups?

The following describes some of types of services we believe are required so that disadvantaged groups can build their capacity and be effectively supported into sustainable employment.

Services designed around milestones rather than single outcomes

Employment initiatives are often funded on the basis of single outcomes. However for some highly disadvantaged jobseekers, the barriers they face mean that they are some distance from entering the formal labour market. Programs that support people to transition on to further opportunities are more likely to see long-term reengagement in the education system or positive employment outcomes.

We believe that programs should be funded on a milestones based system. Funding providers based on milestones would potentially provide an impetus to deliver this type of support. Under such a milestone based system, outcomes would be remodelled to reward engagement and participation in activities recognised as essential to prevocational pathways, commencement and completion of training, participation in work tasters or work experience, through to employment outcomes.

Recommended actions:

- *Employment-related initiatives for disadvantaged groups should to be funded on a milestone model rather than a single outcome model. This would recognise the stages that are required to support vulnerable and disadvantaged groups into employment, and ensure that providers use a stepped approach to support.*

A focus on education and training

Education plays a critical role in addressing many of the overlapping issues encountered by vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Unfortunately, in Australia, the most vulnerable people are still systemically excluded from the education system, with socioeconomic status continuing to have a major influence on the educational attainment levels of Australians.³

There is an increasing emphasis on qualifications as a prerequisite for work, and a growing demand for higher skills. Vocational Education and Training (VET) provides an important pathway for people from disadvantaged backgrounds to gain qualifications and find meaningful work. Since 2008, the VET system has undergone significant reform, resulting in unfavourable changes for disadvantaged groups. Previous reforms saw a rise in poor quality provision and a reduction in funding for equity programs. Consequently, there have been fewer enrolments from people across a range of vulnerable groups, and of the students who do enrol, many find the transition to further study and/or employment challenging.

Our Jesuit Community College educational approach differs from mainstream education environments, in that our class numbers are low in order that we can provide participants with individual support, allowing us to clearly identify the needs of each learner, but also so that we can build rapport and trust of participants. This is important in being able to fully understand the barriers that the participants face in accessing further education and employment post the period of the community work.

The Victorian Government is currently conducting a much needed funding review of the VET system. VET plays a critical role in providing pathways to employment for disadvantaged groups. It is critical that the value of local, smaller initiatives, that are integrated into communities are recognised and supported.

Recommended actions:

- *Programs should be tailored to student needs, be accessible and affordable and invest in the engagement and retention of disadvantaged groups.*
- *Jesuit Social Services supports immediate reform to the VET system to ensure disadvantaged groups are reengaged in education and are given opportunities to reach their full potential.*

³ Productivity Commission, 2013, Report on Government Services, http://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/121784/government-services-2013-volume1.pdf

- *Education and training programs should be fully linked with employment pathways programs.*
- *Education and the employment needs be supported by flexible funding packages so that high quality education and training programs can work holistically with disadvantaged groups.*

Location matters: giving priority to the most disadvantaged communities

Certain locations and communities are linked to lower levels of labour force participation, lower skill levels, lower levels of educational attainment and higher unemployment rates. Unemployment is significant and notably worse in regional and remote communities and in the urban growth corridors.

The *Dropping Off the Edge* (DOTE) report by Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia (2015) found that the most vulnerable four per cent of localities in Victoria showed high rates of unemployment, criminal convictions, disability, child maltreatment, family violence and psychiatric admissions alongside low levels of education.⁴ People in the lowest socio-economic areas are approximately 20 per cent less likely to attain Year 12 or equivalent.⁵ (Australian Social Inclusion Board 2012).

DOTE research shows that a significant number of postcodes have persistent, entrenched disadvantage. For example those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes in the state are:

- 3.6 times as likely to have spent time in prison;
- 3.3 times as likely to be experiencing long term unemployment;
- Nearly 3 times more likely to have a low level of education

The interconnection between educational disadvantage and unemployment and broader forms of disadvantage is further highlighted when we consider outcomes in other areas:

- Involvement in the justice system: 56% of young people in custody in Victoria have been suspended or expelled from school (Youth Parole Board 2014), and only 17 per cent of the national adult prison population had completed Year 12 (AIHW 2012)
- Involvement with child protection: less than half of children in residential care in Victoria attend school on a regular basis (Victorian Auditor-General 2014)
- Increased risk of poor health: In 2009, only 50% of 20-24 year olds reporting fair or poor health had attained Year 12, compared to 79% for those reporting good or excellent health (ABS 4102.0)
- Increased risk of unemployment: approximately 50% of working-aged people, whose highest education level was Year 11 or below, are not in the labour force (ABS 6227.0)
- Increased risk of homelessness: 26% of 15 – 24 year olds accessing specialist homelessness services are not in some form of education and training (AIHW 2014a)

⁴ Vinson T & Rawsthorne M, 2015, *Dropping Off the Edge*, Persistent Communal Disadvantage in Australia, Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia, http://www.dote.org.au/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/0001_dote_2015.pdf

⁵ Australian Social Inclusion Board, 2012 *Social Inclusion in Australia*. How Australia is faring 2nd Edition, http://ppcg.org.au/dev/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/HAIF_report_final.pdf

- Increased risk of mental health issues: 1 in 4 young people were experiencing a common mental health disorder in 2007. Young people with a mental health disorder are more likely to have lower educational attainment, experience joblessness and have poor physical health (AIHW 2014b)

Locating places of learning and employment pathways within vulnerable communities helps to alleviate some structural and accessibility barriers to education and employment. Research suggests that this strategy is one of the best ways of increasing participation by vulnerable groups in the VET sector.⁶

Strong partnerships with local businesses, training and education organisations and community organisations help to support the transition to employment as well as share resources and expertise between organisations. Strong links between different education and employment services means that individuals are easily able to both access opportunities to transition as well as be supported in their transitions.

Partnerships with the community can create opportunities to engage the person's support networks, such as family, neighbours and friends. Parents and families have a strong ability to influence a person's decisions and attitudes towards education and training, and therefore, it becomes very important to engage the family and other support networks when reengaging people in education and training.⁷

Recommended actions:

- *The government should trial whole-of-community approaches in the most highly disadvantaged communities. This approach needs to work in partnership with the community in order to lift participation across the key areas, improve community well-being and community safety.*
- *Employment programs should be required, wherever possible to form partnerships with local employers, other training and education and community organisations. In addition employment programs need to consider the connections and networks of their participants and work to enhance those existing networks and supports. Employment programs should be resources to be able to work with the individual and their family to address family related issues (eg caring responsibilities) which may present barriers to employment.*

⁶ Davies, Lamb & Doecke 2011, Strategic Review of Effective Re-Engagement Models for Disengaged Learners, Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/research/revreengage.pdf>

⁷ Nelson, J and O'Donnell, L. 2012 Approaches to Supporting Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training: a Review (NFER Research Programme: From Education to Employment). Slough: NFER, <https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/RSRN01/RSRN01.pdf>

Place-based approaches

Many of Jesuit Social Services programs provide outreach and deliver programs and support where people live. For example our community work programs including: *Dandenong Drug Court*, *The Rosebud Garden* and *Helgas Program for Kids* are delivered on or near the Drug Court or Community Correctional Services offices. These programs work with men and women with special needs who are involved in the justice system through focussed community work programs. Locating the programs near or in the justice spaces that they are already using, not only improves accessibility but also means participants are working in safe, familiar and non-judgemental environments.

Demand side approaches: Engaging with employers

One of the key gaps in the current response is the underdevelopment of demand-led approaches to employment programs. Over many years, Jesuit Social Services has developed an understanding of what it takes to engage with employers to create work opportunities for highly disadvantaged people. This includes linking jobs to training through Jesuit Community College, and to work experience placements through our Workforce Inclusion Program. All these initiatives require investment of resources and goodwill in supporting jobseekers, building their skills, and also in developing the capabilities of employers to support them to succeed.

Demand-led approaches can address demand-side barriers – in that employers get to know disadvantaged candidates and this can work to negate any negative perceptions about certain groups (such as refugees, older workers, long-term unemployed). It also allows employers to mitigate what they might perceive as risk in recruiting certain groups. In this model once the positions have been identified, the community partner works to identify and meet training needs in matched employment candidates; and ensures adequate support to transition such people to sustained employment.

We believe that in order to realise this approach for the most disadvantaged jobseekers further investment is needed. There are challenges for community agencies in delivering these demand-led partnership models. Currently they are not well supported, they require intensive time and focus to both support the candidates and the employer throughout the process. In our experience, partnerships with employers to identify real recruitment opportunities within their organisations need to be more fully supported.

Recommended actions:

- *Further investment and focus is required to develop and support demand-led models, fostering business and community partnerships in order to better provide for sustainable employment outcomes.*
- *Our AAIP model has had significant employment success for a marginalised group. This partnership model should be supported and could be replicated in other areas.*

The African Australian Inclusion Program (AAIP)

African Australian Inclusion Program (AAIP) is a demand-led partnership model in which Jesuit Social Services and the National Australia Bank (NAB) work together to support candidates and provide them with six months paid job placement. The need for the program was identified by the African-Australian community who noted that lack of local experience in the Australian business sector was a significant barrier to employment for qualified African-Australians.

The program provides participants with:

- Relevant work experience in their chosen field
- An entry level salary
- A range of skills, training and professional development workshops and opportunities
- A supportive workplace environment to ensure successful completion of their placement
- A workplace mentor to support workplace performance
- A career coach to assist with broader career development

The AAIP was established in 2009 and provides a strong example of social and business sector collaboration for stronger collective impact. The program delivers genuine shared value benefitting NAB, the participants and the broader community. The program has provided roles in areas including Finance, Business Administration, Business Analysis, Corporate Responsibility, Project Management, Marketing, IT, Customer Contact Centre. To date 183 participants have successfully completed their placement. The program has achieved an 86 per cent success rate post the placement period with candidates either finding employment at the NAB or other companies. The AAIP has been recognised with a number of awards.

On-the-job support

In most instances there is no post-placement support provided by Commonwealth programs. In addition in some instances young people are referred into employment placements with employers who take advantage of them (for example requiring them to do long hours, with minimal breaks between shifts). There is generally no follow up from the job agency regarding the rights and responsibilities of employers.

We know that for disadvantaged groups, job placement support is critical to sustainable employment outcomes. This step is missing in many of the current programs. On the job support also needs to involve support the employer. This might mean liaising with the employer to help them understand the needs of the employee, how they can best support them, and assisting the employer with any problems that might arise. All these activities can help to ensure the person is successful in the position and is achieves job retention.

Recommended actions:

- *Fund post job placement support as a core component of all employment programs for disadvantaged groups.*

Supported work experience (work placements, volunteering and training on the job)

In workplace surveys, work experience is consistently ranked by employers as one of the most important attributes when recruiting staff.⁸ They are reluctant to interview people without relevant experience, and yet there are few available opportunities for disadvantaged groups to acquire that experience. While there are some promising work experience programs for school students, opportunities for those who have left school are very limited.

The requirement for work experience can affect people who have long gaps in their employment history and this places them at a disadvantage in the labour market. The skills and the experience required by employers (such as communication skills, ability to take instruction, initiative) can be developed through training if it is combined with 'real' work experience. Work experience can also provide an avenue for training on-the-job. This can provide people with experience and connections to the workplace so that they can build their confidence and develop skills for the workplace. The Workplace Inclusion Program at Jesuit Community College is one such example of on-the-job training, seeing 13 high needs learners placed with employers in 2013-2014. Through initiatives such as our Workplace Inclusion program, our social enterprises, and the Jesuit Community College we seek to embed work experience and participation opportunities in all our work. This provides equal focus on pathways to and sustaining people in employment.

Recommended actions:

- *Embed work experience as a pathway to employment as a key feature of all training and employment programs.*
- *To be effective work experience must be integrated into broader employment pathways support and be able to provide appropriate levels of support to participants.*

Fix the Cycle program at Jesuit Community College

Fix the Cycle is a bicycle repair program designed for young males on community correction orders. The program provides training, case management, and non-vocational supports and aims to increase the confidence of participants in their ability to learn and achieve. Rhys was a recent graduate of the program. Rhys found that the program not only taught him about fixing bicycles, but taught him discipline and kept him "on the straight and narrow". After completing the program, Rhys has successfully transitioned to an apprenticeship and is now attending TAFE.

Volunteering

In our experience volunteering can have positive impacts for disadvantaged groups including opening up potential pathways into employment. It can also represent a soft entry point to employment, allowing a person to gain familiarity and confidence in a workplace environment.

However there are challenges to ensuring that disadvantaged groups gain valuable experience and skills that can provide a pathway to employment. To be effective as a

⁸ Department of Employment 2013, *Regional reports of employers' recruitment experiences* <<https://employment.gov.au/regionalreport>>.

pathway to future employment, volunteering for disadvantaged groups needs to be embedded within a broader training and employment pathways program, rather than simply as an add-on. There needs to be a considered assessment of the person's needs and strengths. The volunteering experience also needs to include appropriate support to the person, pre, post and during the volunteering period.

Recommended actions:

- *Education, training and employment programs should promote and support participation in high quality, well supported volunteering roles for highly disadvantaged groups.*
- *Volunteering should be supported as one option to increase the employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups. However volunteering must be embedded as within a broader training and employment pathways approach, be tailored the individual, based on a considered assessment and be well supported.*

Work for the Dole programs

Work for the Dole programs have been expanded under new Commonwealth arrangements. Eligible job seekers registered with a jobactive provider now need to participate in Work for the Dole or another approved activity for six months each year to keep receiving their income support if they have mutual obligation requirements.

Our organisation has previously expressed concerns about the effectiveness of earlier iterations of Work for the Dole. Research has demonstrated that at times it has fallen short of successfully developing employability skills or helping participants gain experience or training that is transferable to future employment. In addition Department of Employment data shows that for job seekers in 2013 - only 19.8 per cent of participants in Work for the Dole programs found a full or part-time job within three months. This compares with 40.3 per cent of people who did unpaid work experience, 28.4 per cent of those who completed some form of work training, 25.7 per cent who were trained in job search techniques, and 21 per cent of those who did voluntary work.⁹

In our experience Work for the Dole can be particularly problematic for disadvantaged groups if they are not provided with wrap-around supports. This means intensive case management, on-the-job support, pathways planning, and linking to education and employment opportunities post the Work for the Dole period.

⁹ Gareth Hutchens (1 August 2014). 'No modelling to prove Abbott's dole plan works' Brisbane Times (Fairfax Media).

Recommended actions:

- *Work for the Dole programs must provide meaningful work experience opportunities in the community for all unemployed people, and opportunities for participants to improve both their 'soft' employment skills as well as their functional vocational skill levels otherwise there is a real risk of delaying other work opportunities and thereby reducing employment outcomes.*
- *To be effective and worthwhile for disadvantaged participants Work for the Dole programs must provide participants with intensive case management, wrap-around supports, education and training opportunities, employment pathways planning, ongoing support post the employment period.*

Better employment-related support for young people in the justice system

Jesuit Social Services, through our Brosnan services delivers a range of programs to young people who intersect with the criminal justice system including the Youth Justice Community Support Service (YJCSS). This program provides an integrated approach to the provision of intensive support and services to young people in the justice system to complement the statutory case management undertaken by Youth Justice Units. The service has been developed recognising that young people in the justice system present with a range of complex and varied needs that require an individualised service response.

Our YJCSS staff are aware of the specific difficulties for young people in the justice system to access employment opportunities. In our experience mainstream employment programs are generally not able to respond to the complex needs of this cohort. Reengaging these young people in education and employment is critical to their future outcomes.

Research consistently shows that the majority of people involved in the justice system have low education levels and often come from backgrounds of entrenched disadvantage.¹⁰ In addition most are not in education or employment. They may also be struggling with a range of other difficulties including mental health problems, substance abuse, and lack confidence in many areas of their lives. More often they have a background of early disengagement from schooling, and have had many negative education experiences.

Further, statistics shows that:

- In Victoria less than 7% of adult male prisoner population have a secondary, trade or tertiary education
- Around 90% of male prisoners and 80% of female prisoners have not completed secondary schooling
- 60% of male prisoners and 76% of female prisoners were unemployed when they entered custody.

Jesuit Social Services through Jesuit Community College delivers a number of vocational pathway programs for people on CCOs, as well as people exiting detention from the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) and the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre (JLTC). Our program staff see firsthand the transformative value of community work programs that are built around education and learning models.

In the delivery of our programs (in partnership with Corrections Victoria), we seek to ensure that not only do participants fulfil their obligations to 'repay the community', but that they

¹⁰ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, The Health of Australia's prisoners, 2012, <http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129543945>

also gain increased skills, both vocational as well as personal and social skills, together with a better understanding and ability to continue to pursue positive life and employment choices. A number of our programs over the past three and a half years have been recognised as exemplary projects through the Department's Community Work Awards (see Appendix 1 for a description of two of these programs).

1. Assessment to ensure the training program is at an appropriate level for each participant
2. Training is tailored in accord with the skills and work experience of participants and the opportunities available in the particular community work project
3. Outcomes sought for each participant include both their training and work experience, the opportunity to progress to further accredited or non-accredited training and employment
4. Provision of a Vocational Pathways Plan and support for participants to assist their further education, training and employment, following the completion of their community work hours.

Recommended actions:

In order to enhance the response to this cohort and provide stronger pathways to employment we recommend:

- *Enhancing work training support from custody to the community, including better use of targeted training opportunities in custody.*
- *Building stronger relationships between education and employment providers in custodial settings to prepare young people for training and or employment on their release.*
- *Providing flexible employment opportunities for participants to 'transition' into work –the Sentenced to a Job for adult offenders in the northern Territory is one such model.*
- *Developing partnerships with sympathetic employers who have capacity to support a planned transition to a working environment. This should be characterised by a flexible approach, with access to after-hours and weekend support and with a degree of flexibility and understanding in relation to regular attendance.*
- *Funding to enable young people to have additional support through initial employment stage including after-hours support.*
- *Providing flexible funding for YJCSS to assist young people to prepare and be more work ready (i.e. work clothes and OHS training red cards, myki)*
- *Providing targeted opportunities for this cohort to access apprenticeships.*
- *Increasing the access to L2P, a driving program for young people to gain their license and the freedom to travel to different work locations, in the north and west regions.*

What types of support can make a difference?

7. What are the types or characteristics of support that work well for unemployed clients, particularly disadvantaged clients?
8. What kind of support services would make a significant difference to unemployed Victorians, particularly disadvantaged clients?

Soft entry, intensive, relationship-based approaches work well for disadvantaged unemployed clients

Soft entry approaches and flexible learning environments

For vulnerable and disadvantaged groups soft entry points to education, training and eventual employment are critical to facilitating their participation. Many disadvantaged groups do not have the confidence or knowledge to access large educational or training institutions, and do not feel prepared to access mainstream employment programs. Soft entry points are local, welcoming, non-threatening environments that engage people in a range of educationally-related activities. By working with people in the context of art and music for example, creates opportunities for building relationships and trust. The use of taster courses as part of initial engagement strategies, enable students to try out an education and training option with little commitment, boosting learner confidence and self-esteem.¹¹ Jesuit Community College makes use of the taster course strategy through programs such as our Ready, Set programs such as *Ready Set, Work – Computers, Ready, Set, Barista* or *Ready, Set Work Aged Care*.

Soft entry points also generally provide flexible learning environments in order to retain the engagement of participants. This means that teaching methods can include teaching experimentally through sport or drama. In addition such approaches create opportunities to celebrate students' achievements and this works to build student confidence and self-esteem in educational environments. A positive and welcoming classroom which makes the learner feel comfortable can also make students feel respected and counter their negative attitudes to education.

Recommended actions:

- *Education, training and employment programs for disadvantaged groups needs to provide soft entry points that combine flexible educational delivery to build the confidence of disadvantaged groups and provide a pathway to further education, training and employment.*

Intensive and Sustained Engagement

Short-term approaches to employment assistance are ineffective with vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Under current arrangements many programs are funded as short-term models, with limited additional support.

A relationship needs to be built with the person particularly in the initial stages, in order to fully identify the person's barriers to employment. Building positive relationships plays a crucial role when engaging disadvantaged groups. By engaging and supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, through a relationship built over time, this can help to restore their confidence and trust in education and employment environments.

¹¹ Nechvoglod & Beddie 2010, *Hard to reach learners: What works in reaching and keeping them?*
Published by: Adult, Community and Further Education Board Level 10, Melbourne

Outreach workers are also important in being able to connect with hard-to-reach groups, helping them to navigate education and training systems, suggesting soft entry points and guiding them through systems and supports.

Recommended actions:

- *Provide funding so that staff can provide supportive relationships and intensive support over a longer period, in order to address the barriers to learning and employment, whilst guiding the individual to recognise their strengths and assist with their employment pathway planning.*

Embedding literacy and numeracy

Australian Bureau of Statistics survey shows that 46 per cent of the Victorian working population do not have the necessary literacy skills to engage competently in work and 54 per cent do not have the necessary numeracy skills either.¹² Experiencing literacy and numeracy challenges is also common amongst those accessing Learn Local organisations, impacting 65 per cent of the learner body.¹³ Lacking the necessary foundational skills for the workplace not only hinders employment prospects but also restricts educational options for hard to reach learners.

Embedding literacy and numeracy into education and employment related programs is an important element that needs to be built into employment-related programs. For example, the Jesuit Community College project, in our community work program, *Bully Zero*, literacy and numeracy were embedded into the program. The activities of the program involve practising literacy and numeracy skills, and participants completed units of the General Certificate of Education for Adults. Enhancing their literacy and numeracy of participants requires skilled assessment of literacy and numeracy issues, sensitive best practice teaching approaches using evidence-based methods.

Recommended actions:

- *Literacy and numeracy should be integrated into education and employment related programs for disadvantaged groups.*
- *Literacy and numeracy must involve expert and sensitive assessment, be culturally inclusive and based on best practice principles.*

Mentoring and volunteer support

A number of our programs use mentoring support in recognition of the value for program participants receiving that one-on-one support. Mentoring represents a cost-effective model as it supports experienced and skilled people as volunteers who have a commitment to the participants.

¹² Australian Bureau of Statistics 2009, Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALLS)

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/1136.0Main+Features1022009>

¹³ Ellum L & Longmuir F, 2013, A Different Journey, Youth in Learn Locals Research Report (a study of the southern region of metropolitan Melbourne) Southern Metropolitan Regional Council of Adult Community and Further Education.

Mentors can be an important component at all stages of an education and employment pathways program. In our experience mentoring can have a significant impact on how well a person transitions to further training or employment, improving their confidence in pursuing further opportunities. Career mentoring can assist students in developing their ideas and career planning whilst improving awareness around education and employment opportunities. Mentoring can also be important in the learning and training environment, where a mentor can encourage a student's learning by tutoring them on a subject for which they need additional support. Mentoring can also be an important element in the transition to employment, providing informal support as a person navigates their way through the first few months of a new position or work experience.

While mentoring can add to the capacity of employment-related programs to support disadvantaged participants they must be of high quality in order to provide effective and valuable support. This requires adequate coordination resources and support for the mentors. There also needs to be skilled assessment and matching of mentor to participant.

Recommended actions:

- *Employment related programs should include mentoring support to assist disadvantaged groups into employment.*
- *To be effective mentoring components of employment programs must be funded for coordination and support to mentors.*

Mentoring programs at Jesuit Social Services

A number of our programs enlist mentors to support our participants including:

- **Jesuit Community College** in its programs for highly disadvantaged learners Jesuit Community College provides individual participants with access to a mentor and coach to support their learning through the use of a large network of highly skilled volunteers.
- The **L2P program** managed by Brosnan Youth Services. For young people in Youth Justice and Child Protection programs, to support them to assist them to complete the required 120 hours of driving practice prior to taking their Probationary License test. Volunteers undertake training designed by VicRoads and training by Brosnan Youth Services on how to work with high risk young people.
- The **African Visitation and Mentoring Program (AVAMP)** run from the Brosnan Centre in Brunswick. It is an initiative delivered by the Jesuit Social Services in partnership with Corrections Victoria, providing mentoring support to people from an African background who have been imprisoned in the Melbourne region.
- The **Leaving Care Mentoring program** is aimed at providing extended community support to young people involved in the Child Protection system, who reside in residential or home based care and are soon to be transitioning into independent living.

Early intervention to prevent and reduce long-term unemployment

In Victoria, more than 36,000 young people aged 15-19 (about 10 per cent) are not in education, training or employment. In addition around one in five young people leave school before completing Year 12.¹⁴ Almost half of these young people end up marginalised

¹⁴ Victorian Auditor General Report 2012, Student Completion Rates, <http://www.audit.vic.gov.au/publications/2012-13/20121128-Students/20121128-Students.pdf>

in the labour force, either in part-time employment or out of work. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are over-represented among early school leavers, with a lower rate of year 12 completion. Research shows that early school leavers are two and a half times more likely to experience deep social exclusion than those who complete Year 12.¹⁵

Jesuit Social Services supports an early intervention approach to early school leaving. Funding needs to be provided for outreach workers to reengage students in education and training, and respond to the cause of their disengagement promptly, to minimise the exacerbation of barriers to learning. In addition students at risk of disengaging need to be identified and there needs to be a more diverse range of schooling models so that we can retain vulnerable students in the schooling system. There are clear economic benefits to investing in programs that promote school retention. An analysis of one program that supports year 12 completion, Hands on Learning, revealed a \$12 return for every \$1 of investment.¹⁶

Recommended actions:

Keep vulnerable children and young people engaged in learning by funding area-based workers to follow up with those who disengage and match them to learning opportunities.

¹⁵ Brotherhood of St Laurence & the Melbourne Institute, the Social Exclusion Monitor, <http://www.bsl.org.au/knowledge/social-exclusion-monitor/>

¹⁶ Deloitte Access Economics, *The Socio-economic benefits of investing in the prevention of early school leaving*, prepared for Hands on Learning Australia, 2012.

Table 2: Summary of the elements required to support disadvantaged groups into employment

Soft-entry approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local, welcoming environments that provide course tasters and engagement and encouragement in learning and provide pathways to employment.
Place-based services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing programs in areas of disadvantage, that can provide a collective impact on the range of factors that lead to unemployment. Strong connections with local employers about their labour requirements Gaining local business and labour market knowledge
Intensive and sustained support with wrap around services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building a trusting relationship with participants to re-engage them in learning as part of a pathway to employment Programs that can link to a range of supports and take an individualised approach.
Job readiness training and assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training programs to develop job readiness and the skills needed to identify, secure and retain a job Foundation skills including literacy, numeracy and IT skills (where needed) Reinforcing personal skills such as team work, communication, customer and business awareness
Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match people with volunteer mentors to support and develop a employability Access to networks and employment opportunities Mentoring in employment, providing support for the individual to retain employment.
Supported work experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedding work experience in training and employment programs Providing a range of work experience opportunities, work tasters, volunteer work. Structured work experience (tied to accredited training) connected to career goals Building an understanding of workplace expectations and culture
Demand side- engaging with employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships between community organisations and business to support disadvantaged groups into employment Learning about what employers want from their workers Based on identified vacancies, providing job readiness assistance and on-the-job support
Education and training as pathways to employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance to find full-time and part-time jobs Field support and mentoring to help young people retain their job Entry into further labour market programs if work skills still need to be developed Use of wage subsidies where appropriate

Integration between Commonwealth and Victorian Government support

- 9) How can local employment programs be better integrated between the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments, and between Victorian departments, to benefit job seekers?
- 10) Are there examples of good collaboration between programs?
- 11) How might transition between programs be managed?

Integration, collaboration and transition

Relationships between our programs and commonwealth employer providers

A number of our program staff liaise with jobactive providers with regards to our participants. This can be in relation to assessing a participant for working in our social enterprise cafes, or it may involve advocating or negotiating with jobactive or Centrelink staff on behalf of our participants. In our experience there can often be an inconsistent response from jobactive staff and where we do have good collaborative relationships this is often dependent on the individual jobactive staff and their commitment to our shared client/participant.

To ensure integration, collaboration and transition there needs to be memorandums of agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments, and between individual jobactive agencies and State funded programs as to their respective roles and the relevant application of resources. In the situation where the jobactive agency and the State program have a shared participant, Commonwealth and State funded programs should be complementary in the support they provide, for example a state program would only support the individual in needs areas not able to be supported through the Commonwealth programs.

Recommended actions:

- *The State and Commonwealth Governments develop Memorandums of Understanding between the Governments and between jobactive providers and State employment programs to ensure the complementary use of resources in the event of joint support of a Victorian program participant.*

Social Enterprises

- 16) What particular challenges do social enterprises face in contributing to sustainable employment outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged people?
- 17) What additional services should be provided through a social enterprise to support a person into sustainable employment?

Support for social enterprises

The open labour market can often exclude people with limited experience or those not considered 'job-ready'. Social enterprises provide hands-on work experience in a real life

working environment to assist disadvantaged jobseekers with entering into the workforce.

Our social enterprise cafes (Ignite cafes in Hawthorn and Camberwell) provide practical programs supporting people who are long-term unemployed to learn, train and take-up employment opportunities so they may realise their potential and be active, contributing and valued members of the community. Participants gain experience in both back-of-house and front-of-house hospitality services, and some will complete accredited courses through Jesuit Community College. Our café kitchen garden project combines the growing of organic produce with this hands on experience of working in a café and kitchen. This process embraces ecologically sustainable and responsible practices and provides participants with a holistic approach to the food industry.

The experience of working within the social enterprise cafés not only provides participants with experience and training in the hospitality and customer service but also helps to develop soft skills such as team work, communication, language and interpersonal skills. These programs are often a stepping stone to the open market employment.

Participants are referred to our program through a variety of channels, including jobactive providers. Some of our participants are volunteers and others come to the program as part of Work for the Dole requirements. Our participant coordinator provides case management support to participants, and has built strong relationships with the jobactive Work for the Dole coordinator, our education and training programs, other community supports, local council and local employers.

In our experience for a social enterprise to be an effective model leading to sustainable longer-term employment outcomes, participants need:

- Initial assessment of suitability
- Intensive case management support throughout their work experience
- Access to training and other supports
- Coaching and intensive support on-the-job
- Post placement support and follow up

Well run social enterprises can provide valuable work experience to disadvantaged groups, increasing confidence and skills that can help to break the cycle of unemployment. However social enterprises can face many challenges and operate in a competitive business environment. Most social enterprises are not provided with any baseline funding and often start up through the generous donations and efforts of local communities, local councils, not-for-profit organisations, and businesses (who may donate time, premises, equipment). In our experience social enterprises can take upwards of two years to become financially self-sufficient. To be financially viable social enterprises need investment during the establishment period and requires intensive case management support for participants.

Recommended actions:

- ***Government, business and the community sector should invest in the development of social enterprises through funding emerging organisations and using their purchasing power through social procurement policies.***
- ***Social enterprises that take on highly disadvantaged groups should be provided with case management funding.***

- *Government should invest in the establishment phase of sound and well-run social enterprises that understand both the needs of disadvantaged participants and the realities of the competitive business environment.*

Appendix 1: Jesuit Social Services programs

Justice and crime prevention programs

African Visitation and Mentoring Program (AVAMP)

The African Visitation and Mentoring Program (AVAMP) is run from the Brosnan Centre in Brunswick. It is an initiative delivered by the Jesuit Social Services in partnership with Corrections Victoria, providing mentoring support to people from an African background who have been imprisoned in the Melbourne region.

Brosnan Services

Brosnan Services is a holistic support service for young people exiting adult prisons and/or Youth Justice centres, who are assessed as high risk/need, with limited social and family networks, limited accommodation and post release support options and experiencing multiple and complex health problems.

Brosnan staff deliver quality programs in a manner that reflects the social justice principles of participation, equity, access and respect. Services include: intensive outreach support, case management, supported accommodation, drug and alcohol counselling, recreation programs, employment/training programs, 24/7 after hours emergency assistance and duty work and referral service.

Corrections Victoria Reintegration Program

Jesuit Social Services delivers post-release support to people exiting prison in the north and west of Melbourne as part of the Corrections Victoria Reintegration Program (CVRP).

The CVRP program provides voluntary, targeted post-release support for up to 12 months to high risk/complex needs and high profile offending men and women. Support provided uses an individually tailored, case management approach that addresses key domains including: housing and material supports, assistance with family reunification, day-of-release support, referral to specialist services (such as drug and alcohol counselling employment/training programs, supported accommodation) and 24/7 after hours emergency assistance and referral service.

Next steps

Next Steps is a Homelessness Innovation Action Project that aims to prevent homelessness for highly vulnerable young people 16-24 who intersect with the youth justice or adult justice systems. Next Steps delivers intensive, multi component case management support that addresses the issues of homelessness and offending, incorporating therapeutic elements and links to training, vocational and employment services.

Based in Carlton, Dillon House, is the supported accommodation component of Next Steps, and provides temporary, short- term or transitional 24 hour supported accommodation for young people involved in corrections or the youth justice system.

Youth Justice Community Support Services

The Youth Justice Community Support Program provides intensive case management for young people aged 10-21 engaged with the justice system. Our approach brings together agencies currently supporting Youth Justice clients to work alongside statutory Youth Justice Case Managers to:

- achieve a reduction in the rate, severity and frequency of re-offending
- enable young people to make an effective transition to adulthood, and

- develop young people's capacity for economic, social and cultural participation

Youth Justice Group Conferencing

Youth Justice Group Conferencing is a sentencing option based on restorative justice principles that aims to balance the needs of young people, victims and the community by encouraging dialogue in a controlled and structured way between individuals who have offended, their victims and the wider community. Young people who can be referred to Youth Justice Group Conferencing include young people aged 10 to 17 (at the time of offending) who have:

- pleaded guilty or have been found guilty of offence(s) that do not include homicide, manslaughter, sex offences; and
- appeared in court on a previous occasion and have committed offence(s) serious enough to warrant a supervisory order (primarily a probation order) to be considered by the court; or
- have committed offence(s) serious enough to warrant a supervisory order on their first appearance; and
- consented to participate; and
- been assessed as suitable by a DHHS Youth Justice Officer.

Education, training and employment

The Artful Dodgers Studios

The Artful Dodgers Studios provide innovative and creative spaces for young people to work in fully equipped art and music studios with experienced artists and musicians. Exploring and developing their creative skills and getting involved in projects, exhibitions and public outcome events.

Based in Collingwood the program offers a flexible and welcoming space for young people to work in order to increase social connectedness, self-esteem, foundation and employability skills and re-engage positively in the learning process. Young people can choose whether to engage in a short course, one on one mentoring, drop in to the open access studios to work on individual or collaborative projects or a combination of these based on readiness.

African Australian Inclusion Program

The African Australian Inclusion Program (AAIP) is a partnership between Jesuit Social Services and the National Australia Bank that provides paid work experience placements for people from African communities. The AAIP is a dynamic and highly professional program for qualified African-Australians providing 6 months paid working experience at National Australia Bank (NAB).

The need for the program was identified by the African-Australian community who noted that lack of local experience in the Australian business sector was a significant barrier to employment for qualified African-Australians. The AAIP has been recognised with a number of awards.

Community Futures program

Community Futures program at Jesuit Community College provides opportunities for recent arrivals to engage with their local community as volunteers and develop skills that can lead to further study or employment in the community sector. Delivering Certificate I in Active Volunteering with an ESL focus, Jesuit Community College focuses on improving learners' language, literacy and communication skills through volunteering, to promote inclusion, build their personal confidence, highlight the value they can add to their community and enhance their capacity to interact and engage with a broad range of people in the community. Emphasis is placed on providing innovative, flexible and supported training to meet individual learner needs and preparing learners for more fulfilling involvement in their community and/or further study

Community Work Programs

Jesuit Social Services through Jesuit Community College has developed and is delivering an increasing number of vocational pathway programs for people on Community Service Orders, as well as people exiting detention from the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) and the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre (JLTC).

These initiatives have been recognised as delivering significant benefits both to the Department of Justice and Regulation and the individual participants. A number of the programs which have been developed for people on Community Service Orders over the past three and a half years have also been recognised as exemplary projects through the Department's Community Work Awards.

Jesuit Community College

Jesuit Community College is a Registered Training Organisation and Learn Local organisation. We assist people facing significant barriers to learning, providing real skills for life, learning and work. The College also provides opportunities for personal development, a solid foundation for further education and training and connection to a community of learning. For a broader group of learners, we offer a wider range of accredited and non-accredited vocational education and training and pathways to further study and work. The College also brokers opportunities for learners to access training offered by other training organisations in ways that suit their needs and circumstances

We offer nationally recognised qualifications in general education for adults, short courses in visual arts and pre-vocational programs. Jesuit Community College is funded by the Victorian and Federal Government for eligible student enrolments in pre accredited and accredited training. People with a disability are encouraged to apply under the Victorian Training Guarantee and Learn Local ACFE programs.

Social enterprises - Ignite Cafés

Our Ignite Cafes located in Hawthorn and Camberwell are 'living classrooms' where people gain on-the-job, real work experiences and certified training. Through our cafes participants can gain experience in both back-of-house and front-of-house hospitality services while completing accredited courses through Jesuit Community College.

The Outdoor Experience

Offering an alternative treatment service through a range of outdoor intervention programs for young people aged 15 – 25 years, who have or have had problems with alcohol and/or other drugs. Since 1985, The Outdoor Experience (TOE) has been offering a range of Outdoor Adventure Intervention programs for young people aged 15 - 25 years.

During the program, participants set personal goals for the program; learn teamwork; gain an understanding of many aspects of "safety"; take up the challenges of outdoor adventure; acquire living skills; enjoy a sense of health and wellbeing; and are encouraged to take control and make decisions about the programming. Young people are supported to deal with and reflect upon the difficult life circumstances that may have brought them to TOE. These programs assist young people to recognise their own strengths and to make changes that are valuable in everyday life.

L2P

The L2P program managed by Jesuit Social Services, Brosnan Youth Services was created for young people involved with Southern Melbourne Metropolitan Region Youth Justice and Child Protection programs. Jesuit Social Services, Brosnan Youth Services has funding from VicRoads through Department of Human Services to support 25 young people to access supervised driving practice to assist them to complete the required 120 hours of driving practice prior to taking their Probationary License test. Department of Human Services has funded the purchase of the 5 star ANCAP rated vehicle to be used for this initiative. The vehicle is housed at the City of Greater Dandenong.

The volunteer drivers are covered for liability through Jesuit Social Services by becoming registered volunteers with the organisation. Volunteers are to undergo a selection process including an interview, a Police Check, Working with Children Check, VicRoads Driver History Report and reference checks to assess their suitability to be in a vehicle with young learner drivers. Volunteer drivers are to undertake training designed by VicRoads to assist them with the management of the learner driver and to give them a better understanding of the aims of the program and requirements of a supervising driver on the road. Separate training is run by Jesuit Social Services, Brosnan Youth Services and covers how to work with high risk young people, how to engage them and how to put boundaries in place.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Connexions

Connexions was established in January 1995 as a response to young people experiencing co-existing mental health and drug and alcohol issues. Connexions is a counselling programs for young people with a "dual diagnosis" of mental illness and substance misuse. Diagnosis can be formal or self reported.

Support After Suicide

Formed in July 2004, Support After Suicide is a program developed specifically for people bereaved by suicide. The program provides support to individuals, families and children who are bereaved by suicide and has also developed a range of resources and materials to assist those who are bereaved. The program also provides education and training to health, welfare and education professionals about how to effectively and sensitively support those who are bereaved.

Settlement and community building

Settlement Services

Jesuit Social Services has provided settlement services to asylum seeker communities on the Flemington public housing estate for over ten years and in St Albans since 2010. Services focus on supporting people from migrant backgrounds to integrate into Australian society while keeping in touch with their cultural backgrounds.

The program follows a strengths-based approach, acknowledging and building on participant and community skills and knowledge. The program conducts a number of activities within a community development framework including:

- casework and referrals to help strengthen participant's ability and confidence to access support services and develop independence
- information sessions designed to provide increased knowledge and understanding of issues facing participants
- basic skills training and work experience opportunities to volunteers as part of a volunteers program
- community advocacy to strengthen relationships between police, leaders in the community and community members, and
- Homework Club on the Flemington housing estate for primary and secondary school students.