
FUTURE CONNECT INC.

Office: Taylors Hill Youth & Community Centre, 121 Calder Park Drive Taylors Hill 3037
Mail: PO Box 3015 Caroline Springs 3023
Email: admin@futureconnect.org.au

AN INTRODUCTION

Who are we?

We are a group of individuals who are passionate about improving education and employment outcomes for young people aged 10 to 19 years in the Brimbank and Melton area.

What are our aims?

Future Connect's mission is to broker partnerships, advocate, research and initiate projects that enable all 10 to 19 year olds to actively engage in schooling, training, further education and employment.

We support programs that aim to:

- Increase interest and enthusiasm of those at school
- Encourage young people to stay at school longer – so that successfully completing Year 12 is regarded as the norm
- Ensure there are worthwhile alternatives to an academic year 12
- Better prepare young people for entering employment
- Better link schooling/education, training and employment
- Provide a better skilled workforce linked to the needs of industry and business in our local area
- Provide a networked support structure that encourages those who are disadvantaged or at risk of "dropping out" to become active participants in education, training and employment
- Integrate the community-based services available to support young people so they are accessed in a timely way whether the young person is at school or has left school
- Identify students at risk of leaving school early and coordinate support from within and outside the school to ensure they complete Year 12 or its equivalent

How do we do this?

- Research local needs
- Support and link existing programs and organisations
- Seek new membership which will broaden the support base and bring fresh input
- Plan and support new ideas and programs
- Share and promote the successful approaches with members
- Broker partnerships between key organisations to achieve mutual goals for young people in Brimbank and Melton

We have been set up to make a real difference in the opportunities for young people in our local area.

What and Who is behind this program?

In 2000 the Minister for Post Compulsory Education and Training, The Hon. Lynne Kosky, expressed concern over the number of young people who do not seem to be well served by existing services, as too many seem to have "fallen through the cracks". Too many have not been succeeding at school or dropping out, not continuing with further education and not gaining sufficient skills to meet the needs of employers.

The subsequent Kirby Report heard submissions from all over the state, including representations from Brimbank and Melton. We wanted the Kirby Report to support the ideas of local actions for local needs, linking agencies and cutting bureaucratic red tape to work for our young people. The Report recommended the formation of Local Learning and Employment Networks.

In 2009, the Victorian Government negotiated with the Commonwealth Government to have the LLEN-inspired School Business Community Partnership Brokers National program built into the work of the 31 LLENs in Victoria. This became the Enhanced LLEN Contract for 2010-2013 and broadened the work of the LLEN by:

Making the focus age for the LLEN 10-19 as opposed to 15-19
Emphasising the role of parents and families in any approaches to improving outcomes for disadvantaged young people
Emphasising the role of career advice and development

The Coalition Government elected in 2010 indicated it values the work of LLENs – in fact a number of parliamentarians have sat on their local LLEN Committees over the last 13 years so are well versed in the work of the LLENs.

Will you join us?

What can I get out of being a member?

- An opportunity to be heard at the local level, and at the state level
- An opportunity to make a contribution to improve the situation for young people by working with others
- A higher profile for my organisation and its work
- An opportunity to improve my knowledge of local industry and business, education/training and community service providers, other local support agencies, and forms of government assistance (e.g. to help me employ young people)
- To have the assistance of an organisation which can assist me in research, planning, and acting as a broker with agencies and government

What does membership of Future Connect involve?

(Membership is open to anyone interested in assisting young people in the matters raised.)

- Being registered as a member – it is necessary to complete an application form
- A willingness to talk about issues, to raise concerns
- A willingness to help plan and act
- There is no membership fee – but you may be asked for “in kind” assistance
- You may take part in *any* of the following ways:
 - volunteer your time attending meetings as a Board member
 - take part in working parties
 - open your workplace for training opportunities – for students, employees etc.
 - open your workplace for visits from training organisations/delegations etc.
 - answer an occasional survey/questionnaire – sometimes on a one-to-one basis
 - attend an occasional stakeholder’s forum
 - share programs you have initiated
 - be a contact person for networks to which you belong
 - use your contacts outside work, within the community, to support Future Connect and its programs.

Contacts:

Chair Piper Rodd

Executive Officer Deirdre Hardy

deirdre.hardy@futureconnect.org.au

0400 155 405
