

## **Notes 5th of August 11.30–1 am**

### **Break Out Group: Government - What Needs to Be Done?**

Deb Tsorbaris / VIC DHS

- Early intervention is way to go but how do we do it?
- In VIC:

Homelessness only one factor

Multiple issue

Huge numbers of young people are homeless in VIC, increasingly children and families

- Benefits in early intervention : reduction → if you are homeless for a long time → less likely to change
- Different actions: Action Plan 2004-2006, partnership, homelessness strategies....
- Action Plans in VIC:

Prevention, intervention, tailored support, young people's connections to their families and friends...

- Relationships are important!

How we count them, how do we understand them?

- Lot of money targeted on homelessness
- How we can better understand the homelessness?
- Gov. do not want more programs but new elements

David Marnie / Office of Youth

- White Paper
- Job search effort
- Job expectations

- Income support payment
- How to do it right?
- Health, mental health → engaging health sector is tough
- Different protocols: Where the hell is tap? There is no one tap?
- E.g. ex prisoners needs help for the re-integration
- Early intervention programs

E.g. in UK they did profiling → what kind of young people are in risk? → there are indicators to recognize what kind of families are in risk

- Putting people in different boxes is problematic even though are clear

Peter / Centrelink

- Nature of social contacts
- Centrelink is interesting place to be, variation of folks
- For many young people Centrelink is the only contact
- Big challenges:

Access to service

Whole range of issues

Challenge to see young people holistic

More complex the issue is more difficult it is to make referral

- E.g. young people with multiple problems
- It is important to see industry more as a network than thinking this is not my area. Like in CL some workers might be thinking that why they would have to deal with homelessness?
- New things happening at Centrelink: Homelessness indicators
- Homelessness is a challenge for CL

Service delivery system, lot of work with young people, more contact with other agencies

#### COMMENTS/ QUESTIONS

- Young people do not necessarily know what service means. What is it. They go for their parents to ask for help. Also, where is the police? They are not here even though they are the ones these kids are dealing with first!

- Where is the evidence? What is the best practice?

Quality of relationships, attachment to education and the role models are important for young people

- There is not enough talk about young people and education. People are dropping from the schools, role of education sector. Most of (adult) homeless people have been homeless in their early age

- When kids start having problems: timing of referral, how do we demonstrate it to you (government)?

#### ANSWERS / COMMENTS

- Early intervention program is good

- Policies: so many changes in youth service sector, homelessness sector, taking baby steps in VIC

- It is critical for the government to know the activity – who is doing what? There is no clear idea which is most effective?

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#### QUESTION

- Where's the money/ funding? When youth is going to be priority?

- We do have examples of programs which are working well and are highly regarded

## ANSWER

- Bush fires took a lot of money in VIC
- We (VIC) are against the wall
- Centrelink: Home advice program: Works well, not directly founded, we could do it in 100 other places if that would be a priority (in funding)

## COMMENT

- Australian Government is obsessed about control! Controlling the programs and funding. We are not changing the focus.
- Holistic approach would be more ideal, re-connect has been successful
- What is governments role? Accountability to people who use the services/funding