

Opening Panel – Early Intervention: are we talking the same language?

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How we may do things differently in a cross-sector way.

Seeking to stimulate conversation and discussions across those sectors of 'early intervention'

Early intervention – relative to the onset of a problem.

Response to a problem when it's first evident or when there's clear evidence that something is going to happen.

Clear issue – providing 'early intervention' in time

Waiting lists.

Can we connect things up in a different way?

Can we do anything differently to what we're doing currently?

What is it?

Schools - sights for early intervention.

Even though 'early intervention' commonly known that early intervention is effective, why isn't it put into practice as much as it could be?

Gill Callister – Secretary DHS

The question we need to engage in is "are we talking the same language" when it comes to intervention and approach.

Everyone is here to make a difference - all relate to this on a broad emotionally level however there exist a range of differences in dialect [in talking the same language].

The more everyone talks and builds relationships, better outcomes will eventuate for clients.

Public often engages with stereotypes.

Public exposed to lots of headlines and discussions that are viewed through the lens of labels stigma "teens with knives".

Impact of global financial crisis has had on children:

Youth 15 – 24 unemployment is at its lowest level since the 1970s

From 2008 – 2009 [one year], rate for unemployed teenagers who weren't in full-time education increased from 12.2% to 18.5%.

Increase in youth unemployment [largest in twenty years] + the need to actively **re-engage** young people in the workforce – now one of Australia's biggest challenges.

“Young people continue to miss out on jobs”

The challenge is to “support, engage and re-engage” – risking long-term unemployment having missed out on the ‘critical’ transition from education to employment.

Participation in education, skills, employment and community is the key objective of all welfare and health service delivery.

If concerned with building upon peoples lives and reducing their experience of disadvantage

Focus must be placed upon:

increased **social participation**.

Help with employment

Volunteering

Education

Training

Participation in community.

Traditional models of care and protection and support are not sufficient to give people the independence and outcomes they need to move forward.

Important not to divide people into problem streams [housing, child protection and family problems] but instead help them take up ‘life-opportunities’ at a very critical time in their lives.

Opportunities and Capabilities allow for people to contribute to society.

Good life comes about through relationships, participation, self-worth and aspirations

Amagi-sen:

Moral: Individuals

Global: Education, training and employment – proven link to wider participation to society and good life

To provide care and protection for young people.

Build relationships – **engage** with them

Provide pathways for **participation** – do this with them [not to them]

“Working together is rocket-science.... it makes a difference”

David Murray – CEO YSAS

Programs increasingly becoming categorical – focusing on specific domains.

Loosing sight of the young person as a result.

Commonly see evidence of family breakdowns, violence, abuse and neglect – generally linked to poverty which can be linked to locations.

Alcohol and drug related problems with families – generational difficulties

School exclusion and low education

Isolation leads to disconnection in community.

Fragmented, uncoordinated and rarely resourced

What is intervention?

1. early in life – produces good outcomes
2. early in problem or episode – youth services
3. early transition – [primary, secondary school, family to non family environment, school to no school, unemployment to employment, transition into custody, link between people are at high risk treatment to residential community.

Focus on **transition, engagement, participation**

[rather than categorical diagnosis]

Moving from Rhetoric to Reality – Break out groups

Education – Engaging, connecting, succeeding

John Staley – ‘Youthworx Productions’

Manager and executive producer of youthworx production

background: education, theatre and film and has a passion and commitment for working with ‘at risk’ and marginalized students on creative arts projects.

Also currently undertaking a reflective practice based Phd at Swinburne

University Institute of social research entitled ‘creative media engagement for at risk young people’.

“that lonely cry in all of us, not to be nothing, to make our mark upon the world, to matter” - advice from an old mistress to a young wife

This quote applies to all of us. A lonely cry manifests itself on graffiti walls, urban streetscape and in the sorts of outbreaks of violence you see - Often its about a lonely cry.

How do we engage with this as educators? social welfare workers?

The program John works for ‘youthworx’ - an education space.

A program that has been established in the last couple of years that is ultimately

based upon the idea that creativity is just as important to a person as is food and shelter. You need a roof over your head, however you also need to be productively engaged with the world, your own story, with who you are as a person, relationships that extend beyond the you into the broader world.

The main real challenge is to create a space where we can engage with people in that way.

Receives funding from salvation army and radio station - come together to try and creatively engage with young people.

Uses radio and film as tools of engagement.

Physical studio set-up with recording booth and lab of the best mac computers.

Works with young people who are homeless or people who have illness' with support from above mentioned organizations as well as Swinburne University and NMIT tafe [accredited training].

Key question "How do we engage with people who have been disengaged, who have opted out from the story of education, opted out of taking up mainstream opportunities offered at school. How do we engage them?"

There are some things we can do to create a **fertile space** that does help engage.

It doesn't necessarily work for everyone, however there are certainly things we can do.

Physical spaces we create - studio space instead of the traditional 'classroom' space which is seen to be a difficult space to facilitate creative engagement particularly for young people who have been disengaged and within a dynamic that hasn't really worked for them.

[three tables put together to have 'production style' meetings rather than setting up 'classroom environment']

If we want creative engagement, we need physical spaces that support a realm of creativity.

Need structure, time to mull, think, chew over things –without stress

In need of a space that is flexible and works in this way.

Cultural spaces we create

Staff have industry background [film makers, radio producers] with sensitivity to the people they work with, however very professionally skilled who participate in the cognizant cultural and physical space of the setting.

Try to provide an environment where they are feeding the young people and getting them engaged – also giving time to 'back-off' and let them "play at woo"

Social Enterprise

Workshops:

Examples of work that tell a story - from looking at yourself as the subject matter to something outside yourself that is broader than yourself to a group devised piece or broader piece.

1. 'Digital Story' – initial work from kids who start the program.
A work about themselves [highly engaging to be involved with] you as the subject matter.
2. 'Micro doco' outside yourself - broader project

Acquire high production skills and learning about editing, music, story telling.
Aim to engage with yourself but also in a dialogue with the broader community of people where they are able to develop skills as they go.

The Space / setting

Best possible gear they could get hold of with the funds they had [cameras equipment, computers etc]
statement of intention / aim – as this work is really important and when part of this space, its important to realize that its not just a **welfare space** but it is in fact a **working** space, an **education** space. A space where they want children to engage and be productive [most of the time].

3 x Films presented - created by young people who are employed 3 days a week at Youthworx production.

Youthworx hopes that all young people they're involved with, through the experience gained in production and across the board will become transferable across their lives in other employments and opportunities.

Synopsis

Pointing to the need for alternative, creative spaces in addition to what already exists [education and learning spaces].

Great attention to detail to the design of these spaces.

What the design of the spaces convey to young people about their **possibilities**, **opportunities** about themselves.

Purposeful spaces where people are developing **skills** as well as **connection**.

Brendan Murray – The Pavillion

State school [for disengaged people] provides high quality academic tuition - social psychological, emotional wellbeing support.

125 enrolled students across 2 campuses

32 students enrolled in year 12

No detention, suspension or expulsion policy

Gordon house, South Melbourne – Bar featured within homeless facility informed and inspired Brendan to create the school – the Pavillion.
Engaging and negotiating learning experiences developed from this workplace.

2006 – Brendan and Josey Howey given the opportunity to set-up ‘alternative’ school in West Heidelberg for kids who would find themselves outside educational systems.

Support from Department of Education
A ‘new’ and ‘innovative’ approach

2010 – experienced lots of success on many levels

Flexible learning options

Social work + education program = A centre for education [good things for different people]

“Everyone has the right to education”

“Education should be directed towards the full development of the human personality” — united nations declaration for human rights, article 26

A Holistic approach

Families approach the Pavillion independently.

Kids engage with education and receive supports outside education system

Create attachments with community that are ongoing.

Many of the kids have experienced homelessness – couch surfing

Temporal sleeping places

Needs are met early on.

Challenging attachment – radical approach

Exclusion in schools is real.

How can you create a sense of belonging and connectedness when this occurs?

Supports double if children get in trouble [rather than suspending them]

Kids have proven to re-engage in a stronger way after supports have been doubled.

The Pavilion will assist in transition as long as children are ready to become involved in this process.

An environment that is different to the traditional school setting.

Calm, low stimulus and inviting.

Targets teachers for specific needs – eg. Early childhood development

“Engagement is not a moment.... its an ongoing process that one needs to be mindful of”

The Pavilion pushes “one needs to create a positive relationship” and secure attachments

Social work + counselling take on relationship studies.

Therapeutic relationships that create positive change.

The above creates respectful and calm environment.

1 x teacher + 1 x social worker – class of twelve students

Classes are grouped to suit students

Flexible learning option – staggered complex timetable

Highly structured

Intensive

“Education is empowering and can break a cycle of disadvantage for kids”

Synopsis

“Everyone is entitled, therefore we must provide”

An attention to detail around space

The space conveys relationships – just as important as relationship building.

Connection between educational activity with the relationship building, practical assistance are entwined and without these, education would not go forward.

Flexible approach.

Kris Arcaro – DEECD [connecting social and emotional health and wellbeing]

Transforming Victorian educational system – bring about cultural and structural changes necessary to meet the demands of the changing Australian society.

Flexible learning options –

How can we better cater for the younger people who are more vulnerable or at risk?

Alternative settings in the system.

School systems:

Catholic schools 489

Independent schools 218

Government schools 1650

Focuses on keeping kids engaged and connected to education and involved in program.

Diverse student population:

Low SES families
Aboriginal
Out of home care
Homeless
Witnesses or victims of physical, mental, emotional, sexual abuse
Disabilities
Complex health needs
Family break-ups
Involved in juvenile justice
Parents with low educational attainment

Groups of vulnerable children.
Must do things differently for some children.
Regular way of delivering education does not work in some cases.
Kids who aren't fully engaged in education will have an increase likelihood in experiencing
unemployment, poorer outcomes of health, accommodation, social status, offending behaviour, greater susceptibility to influence of alcohol and drug misuse, homelessness.

Education has a positive impact.
Schools need to be effectively engaging.
Target teaching curriculum.
Ensure as many young people are participating as possible.

Universal platform – universal activities and approaches that targets 80% of their kids
15% require early intervention support
5 % will require individual support and intervention and much more flexible learning approaches.

System interventions:
Mentoring, Literacy, Numeracy, referral programs to external service, internal health services, breakfast clubs, homework clubs – list is endless.

Ultimate goal – children and young people to complete year 12

'ultranet' – online management system for government students [communication tool]
Objective is to connect with communities + globally

Synopsis
Cultural shift occurring with DEECD

DEECD - An attempt to provide an educational response to disengaged,
disadvantaged young people
Changing schools [culturally]
Recognition – workforce building – training