

## **REQUEST FOR QUOTATION**

### **1. Purpose**

To provide information to assist bidders in the preparation and submission of quotations for the evaluation of the School Focused Youth Service program by the Department of Human Services (DHS) in partnership with the Department of Education and Training (DE&T), in order to:

- assess the impact of the SFYS program on schools and young people in the program's target group;
- assess the effectiveness of the SFYS in facilitating and strengthening partnerships between schools and community sector agencies with a view to supporting young people;
- receive advice and recommendations in regard to enhancement of the current service delivery model;
- assess the value-add of the SFYS program to other current DHS and DE&T initiatives.

### **2. Background**

**2.1** The School Focused Youth Service was established in 1998 as an initiative of the Victorian Suicide Prevention Strategy to develop a coordinated service response to young people at risk in the education sector, including Government, Catholic and Independent schools.

Since 1999 SFYS has operated as a jointly funded initiative between DHS and DE&T in the following funding cycles: 1999-2001; 2002; 2003-2005, with the Catholic Education Office and the Association of Independent Schools as key partners in the Program, although not contributing funding. The current funding cycle for the Program is 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2007, with DHS contributing approximately \$5 million and DE&T \$1 million.

#### **Target Population:**

The target group of the School Focused Youth Service is children and young people, aged 10-18 years, with a focus on the 10-14 years age group including those outside the school system, who are at risk of developing behaviours that may make them vulnerable to self harm or who are displaying behaviours which require support and intervention.

The target group of young people has one or more risk factors including:

- Violence
- Offending
- Depressive mood and depressive disorders
- Self harm
- Substance abuse
- Socially and geographically isolated young people from Indigenous and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, young people in rural areas and those experiencing homelessness
- Young people displaying concerns regarding sexuality, early school leaving, and physical or psychological disabilities.

## **Program Objectives:**

The core objectives of the SFYS are to:

- Facilitate and strengthen collaborative structures and mechanisms between schools and the relevant youth and community services which support young people, including welfare, health and mental health agencies.
- Provide linkages for schools and agencies which have a client base of young people and which directly support young people. Improve linkages, cohesiveness and integration of service provision for young people displaying 'at risk' behaviours who require support and intervention.
- Purchase services to meet gaps in the current service system as identified at the local level, with the secondary benefit of creating systemic change and/ or the establishment of collaborative work practices.

## **Desired Outcomes of Program**

The intended outcomes of the School Focused Youth Service are:

- a significant improvement in addressing the needs of "at risk" young people as a result of effective collaborative structures and mechanisms between schools and relevant community agencies
- a significant enhancement of the current service system as a result of the identification of gaps and subsequent service purchase.

## **Program Structure**

Funding is provided to 41 different clusters across Victoria, under the auspices of a variety of service providers such as Local Government Authorities, Community Health Services and Community Service Organisations. In each of the 41 sub-regional areas a Coordinator has been appointed, with brokerage capacity to respond to gaps in service availability, as identified at the local level. The SFYS covers all primary and secondary schools in the state of Victoria and is governed by a set of program guidelines and a structure of local, regional and statewide advisory groups.

Administrative responsibility for the Program is carried by DHS. DHS regional offices manage service agreements, and a central Program and Policy Advisor who is part of the Juvenile Justice and Youth Services branch of the Office For Children provides policy and program advice.

The Student Wellbeing Branch, DE&T has carriage of the Program for the Department of Education and Training. The Branch sits within the Office for School Education (OSE). DHS provides regular information and quarterly reports to DE&T. DE&T is represented at the various levels of operation of the Program, and provides support to the DHS administration team as required.

Statewide, Regional and Local Advisory Groups provide strategic input into the development and delivery of the SFYS program, and, on a local level, to oversee the allocation of brokerage funding.

The Statewide Advisory Group (SAG) meets quarterly and includes representatives from DHS, DE&T, the Catholic Education Office, the Association of Independent Schools, service providers, SFYS coordinators and the Office for Youth, Department of Victorian Communities.

Regional Advisory Groups (RAGs) operate at the level of the nine DHS and DE&T regions. Membership of the RAGs include the DHS regional Program and Service Advisor (PASA) DE&T regional personnel, service providers, coordinators and

representatives from other agencies or programs such as Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) or Regional Youth Affairs Networks. The RAGs have responsibility for developing a regional strategic plan with annual priorities that inform the local planning and brokerage allocation process.

Local Advisory Groups (LAGs) are varied in membership but generally include representation from key local youth agencies, local schools and local government. The LAGs are responsible for developing local action plans that reflect regional priorities while incorporating locally specific needs.

SFYS coordinators are responsible for managing brokerage applications, developing relationships with schools and community agencies, and generally promoting the SFYS Program in their clusters. Coordinators are based within each of the 41 service providers and are supported by agency managers.

More information on the SFYS program can be found at: <http://www.sfys.infochange.net.au/>.

In 2001 an evaluation of the SFYS program was undertaken, which can be accessed at <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/community/evaluation.htm>. The Program faced a period of uncertainty during 2002 which resulted in many of the recommendations of the evaluation report not being followed up. However, there is at present a broad reform agenda in place which seeks to implement a number of changes to the Program. These include the development of a consistent data collection system, which commenced in July 2005; changes to brokerage documentation; the establishment of an Executive Committee; and greater engagement of agency managers. It is intended that this evaluation will be undertaken alongside these program development initiatives.

Since the inception of the SFYS program in 1998, there have been a number of DE&T, DHS and Office For Youth (OFY) initiatives addressing the needs of at risk students in the school system implemented in Victoria. These include programs and policy initiatives such as:

*DE&T initiatives*

- the Primary Welfare Officer Initiative
- the Student Support Services Officers Program
- Student Welfare Coordinators
- *It's Not Ok to Be Away* attendance initiative
- Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs) program
- Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs)
- The School Improvement Agenda - The Blueprint for Government Schools

*DHS initiatives*

- Mental Health Promotion Officers (MHPOs)
- School Nursing program

*OFY initiatives*

- Regional Youth Affairs Networks (RYANs)

*Commonwealth initiatives*

- National Safe Schools Framework
- Mind Matter

## **2.2 Department of Human Services (Corporate Background Information)**

The Department of Human Services is responsible for a wide range of services to diverse client groups across Victoria. The principal function of the Department is to ensure the delivery of a range of health, housing and community services.

The Department's mission statement is :

To enhance and protect the health and well being of all Victorians, emphasising vulnerable groups and those most in need.

The Office for Children was created in April 2005 with an increased focus on youth including the establishment of the Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Branch. The School Focused Youth Service program is managed by the Youth Services unit as one of a suite of youth service programs including

- Secondary School nursing
- Refugee Minor Program
- Finding Solutions.

## **3. Project Scope**

### **3.1 Overview**

The evaluation should assess the Program against its stated objectives and desired outcomes, as listed above.

The focus of the evaluation should be on:

- a) the Program's impact on outcomes for at risk young people in the target group
- b) the Program's ability to facilitate and maintain partnerships between and within the education sector and the community sector
- c) the Program's capacity to add value to existing DHS and DE&T programs.

The evaluation should provide DHS and DE&T with advice on key strengths and areas for improvement in relation to points a), b), and c) above.

### **Evaluation questions**

#### **1. What impact does the SFYS program have on improving outcomes for at risk young people?**

Because of the structure and design of the SFYS program, there is considerable variety in the work that is undertaken by SFYS coordinators and the projects that are funded through brokerage grants. It is recognised that consistent, "one size fits all" outcomes are not realistic nor are necessarily desirable in relation to a program such as this, which operates in varied local contexts.

The evaluation should examine outcomes in the following areas:

- a) safety
- b) health
- c) learning/education
- d) making a positive contribution and
- e) being resourced and connected

Appendix 1 describes these five areas in more detail in the context of DHS and DE&T goals and targets.

## **2. How effective is the SFYS in creating partnerships between and within the education sector and the community sector?**

Local Government Agencies, Community Service Organisations and Community Health Organisations are the three main types of community agencies that work with the SFYS. These are among a range of other relevant youth and community services which support young people.

The education sector includes schools, alternative settings and TAFEs.

The evaluation should examine activity undertaken by SFYS agencies and coordinators in developing relationships with schools and bringing schools and community agencies together on three levels:

- a) What work is being done to create partnerships –  
Information about what activities are carried out by each coordinator in relation to partnership development is currently being gathered through internal data collection systems.

The contractor will be required to analyse and summarise the available data, and to identify relevant trends.

- b) What are schools' and community agencies' perceptions about the partnerships that are created –

The VicHealth Partnership tool can be used in order to measure this.

- c) What are the outcomes of those partnerships over the last three years- i.e. have they changed the way schools/ community agencies operate; are schools more aware of what community services are able to provide support to at risk students/ do schools have a better awareness of referral systems, etc.?

The contractor will be required to develop a tool to measure the extent of change in partnership activity and outcomes in the last 3 years in schools and community agencies.

## **3. How effective is the SFYS in identifying service gaps, developing responses and fostering sustainable change through a) brokerage and b) other work such as community development, networking, and making representation to government / funding agencies.**

## **4. Are the activities and outcomes of the Program consistent with the Program's objectives and its intended targeting?**

Based on the information gathered from the internal data collection and from analysis of questions a), b), and c), above, the evaluation should undertake an analysis of whether the Program, as it is currently being implemented, is consistent with its stated objectives. This will involve looking at the following:

- a) Is the Program facilitating and strengthening collaborative structures and mechanisms between schools and the relevant youth and community services which support young people?
- b) Is the Program providing linkages for schools and agencies which have a client based of young people and which directly support young people?

- c) Is the Program improving linkages, cohesiveness and integration of service provision for young people displaying 'at risk' behaviours who require support and intervention?
- d) Is the Program purchasing services to meet gaps in the current service system as identified at the local level, with the secondary benefit of creating systemic change and/ or the establishment of collaborative work practices?

**5. Do the outcomes achieved by the program align with existing DHS and DE&T policies and priorities at this point in time?**

It is acknowledged that the focus of DHS and DE&T priorities may have changed since the SFYS Program commenced in 1998. This question seeks to understand in a non-critical way how the Program aligns with today's priorities for the two Departments, in order to inform future directions of the Program.

Appendix 2 sets out current DHS Office for Children and DE&T policies and priorities.

DHS has recently published the Protecting Children... The Next Steps White Paper, which outlines the policy directions for the Office for Children. This paper builds on the work of "Joining the Dots" and "Putting Children First" and the broader policy context of "A Fairer Victoria".

DE&T's priorities can be categorised on three levels: 1) the Premier's Goals and Targets for Education, from the Growing Victoria 2 policy document; 2) the DE&T objectives from its Corporate Plan 2003-2006; and 3) the Office of School Education priorities, which inform Student Wellbeing Branch priorities. Relevant extracts are set out in more detail in Appendix 2.

**6. Does the SFYS enhance existing programs, and if so, in what way?**

There are a number of DE&T, DHS, OFY, and Commonwealth initiatives currently in place which seek to address the needs of at risk students – see Appendix 3. DHS and DE&T wish to identify ways in which SFYS enhances and may further enhance these existing programs and initiatives. This should include an examination of:

- a) ways in which SFYS enhances and may further enhance existing programs
- b) whether there is duplication of effort
- c) ways in which SFYS may have provided the impetus for the development of other programs.

**7. In what way is the SFYS program most successful in having an impact on outcomes for at risk young people and outcomes for partnerships?**

- a) What strategies are most effective in achieving outcomes for young people?
- b) What are the characteristics of successful partnerships?
- c) What strategies are most effective in achieving successful partnerships?

**8. What are the key areas for improvement and how can they be applied in relation to:**

- the Program's impact on outcomes for at risk young people in the target group
- the Program's ability to facilitate and maintain partnerships between and within the education sector and the community sector
- the Program's capacity to add value to existing DHS and DE&T programs.

## Methodology

Respondents to this Request for Quote are asked to provide a detailed proposal in respect of the methodology for the evaluation, which should have regard to the following:

The evaluation should provide both qualitative and quantitative information, and should be for a period of no more than 12 months.

The evaluation should be undertaken using a random, representative sample of the 41 agencies and of schools from both regional and metropolitan areas, and from the Catholic Education Office and Association of Independent Schools.

It is suggested that the evaluation track a selected number of brokerage projects and a cohort of students over the year. Alternative methodologies are invited.

The evaluation should include brief case studies where relevant.

The contractor will be required to conduct interviews/ focus groups with a range of stakeholders, including:

- SFYS coordinators
- SFYS agency managers
- DHS central and regional staff
- DE&T central and regional staff
- Community agencies working in partnership with SFYS
- School staff, including Principals or Assistant Principals, Student Support Services Officers and Student Welfare Coordinators.

The contractor will be required to attend SAG meetings once a quarter and LAG and RAG meetings as necessary for the evaluation. The contractor will be required to work together with the Statewide Advisory Group, which will act as Reference Group for the evaluation.

## 3.2 Key Deliverables

Deliverable	Timing
Provide a project plan and evaluation framework on commencement of the contract.	Within two weeks from contract approval.
Provide eight monthly progress reports to DHS and DE&T central staff with information as agreed.	15th of each month April to November
Provide a draft final evaluation report, which addresses all of the evaluation questions listed at 3 under 'Project Scope' and which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An executive summary</li> <li>▪ A summary of recommendations</li> <li>▪ Brief case studies to illustrate outcomes where appropriate</li> </ul>	14 December, 2006
Provide a final evaluation report	31 January, 2007
Attend Statewide Advisory Group meetings	Once a quarter or as required
Attend regular meetings with DHS and DE&T central staff	As agreed.

## 4. Evaluation of Bids

The successful bidder will require a background relevant to the assignment and a demonstrated capacity to successfully undertake the project. All bidders will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria specified below.

### 4.1 Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used for the evaluation of quotations and determination of the successful bidder:

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>
1. The bidder demonstrates an understanding of the context within which the SFYS program operates.
2. The bidder has relevant and adequate experience in undertaking similar projects.
3. The bidder has demonstrated ability to deliver projects within prescribed timeframes and designated budgets.
4. The proposal demonstrates a valid and effective methodology to the delivery of the outcomes and outputs specified.

### 4.2 Evaluation Process

Complying proposals will be assessed on a value-for money basis. The Department may not accept the lowest price quotation and may not accept any quotation.

Verbal explanations or instructions given prior to acceptance of a proposal shall not bind the Department.

Submissions will be evaluated against the criteria listed in 4.1 above, using the following scale :

SCORE	DESCRIPTOR
	<b>Evaluation</b>
	<b>Score</b>
	Exceeds all aspects of the selection/evaluation criterion
	4
	Exceeds some aspects of selection/evaluation criterion (and meets all other aspects of the selection/evaluation criterion)
	3
	Meets the selection criterion
	2
	Fails some aspects of the selection criterion
	1
	Fails all aspects of the selection criterion.
	0

An initial evaluation may be used to shortlist proposals. Following shortlisting, one or more bidders may be interviewed to provide clarification or further information. All bidders will be advised of the final outcome of the selection process.

The successful bidder will be engaged under the DHS short form contract **(Appendix 4 – separate document)**

## 5. Pricing

Quotations inclusive of GST are sought on a fixed price basis (eg. lump sum, hourly rate including expenses, milestone payments).

As part of the quotation a breakdown of the proposed resource allocation should be included indicating what resources are to be provided, time commitment, hourly rate (if applicable) and individual resource cost as well as total project cost.

All prices shall be fixed for at least 90 days from the date of submission of offers.

## 6. Terms and Conditions

The selection process will be managed in accordance with the terms and conditions set out below.

- 6.1 *General.* Bidders should familiarize themselves with this document and ensure that their bids conform with the requirements set out in it. Bidders are deemed to have examined statutory requirements and satisfied themselves that they are not participating in any anti-competitive, collusive, deceptive or misleading practices in structuring and submitting the bid.
- 6.2 *Financial Assessments.* The Department reserves the right to engage a third party to carry out assessments of bidders' financial, technical, planning and other resource capability.
- 6.3 *Legal Entity.* Bidders must provide proof of their legal status. A legal agreement/contract can only be entered into by the Department of Human Services with an organization or individual with legal status established under :
- Associations Incorporation Act
  - Co-operatives Act
  - Corporations Law
  - Health Services Act
  - an individual Act of Parliament
  - Natural Person (person at least 18 years of age, with mental capacity to understand the agreement, not under any order or bankrupt)
  - Trustee Act
- 6.4 *Taxation Requirements.* The Department of Human Services prefers to deal with suppliers who have an Australian Business Number (ABN), unless there is clear evidence that the relevant supply is not assessable for income tax purposes (i.e. hobby or recreational interest).
- 6.5 *Additional Information Required.* If additional information to that contained in this document is required by the Department of Human Services when bids are being considered, written information and/or interviews may be requested to obtain such information at no cost to the Department.

- 6.6 *Withdrawal from Process.* The Department of Human Services reserves the right to withdraw from the request for quote process described in this document for whatever reason, prior to the signing of any agreement/contract with any party for the delivery of goods or services described in this document.
- 6.7 *Negotiation.* The Department of Human Services reserves the right to negotiate with short-listed bidders after the request for quote closing time.
- 6.8 *Part Offers.* The Department of Human Services reserves the right to accept bids in relation to some and not all of the scope of activity described, or appoint one, more than one or no organization on the basis of the bids received.
- 6.9 *Conflicts of Interest.* Bidders must declare to the Department of Human Services any matter or issue which is, may be perceived to be or may lead to a conflict of interest regarding their proposal or participation in the supply of the goods or services described. Bidders must describe a strategy so that any conflict of interest will be avoided.
- 6.10 *Confidentiality.* All bids and any accompanying documents become the property of the Department of Human Services. Ownership of all information, reports or data provided by the Department to bidders resides in the State of Victoria. The bidder shall not, without the written approval of the Secretary to the Department of Human Services, use the information or reports other than in the development of the bid or the delivery of the goods or services. Such information, in whatever form provided by the Department or converted by the bidder, must be destroyed in a secure fashion following advice of the outcome of the request for quote process or at completion of the provision of the goods or services.
- 6.11 *Notification of Probity Breach Required.* Should any bidder consider that the request for quote process has failed to accord it fair right to be considered as a successful bidder or that it has been prejudiced by any breach of these Terms and Conditions or other relevant principle affecting the bids or their evaluation, the bidder must provide immediate notice of the alleged failure or breach to the Contact Person. Notification must set out the issues in dispute, the impact on the bidder's interests, any relevant background information and the outcome desired.
- 6.12 *Disclosure of Bid and Contract Details.* Subject to this clause and the Conditions of Contract, all documents provided by the bidder will be held in confidence so far as the law permits. Notwithstanding any copyright or other intellectual property right that may subsist in the tender documents, the bidder, by submitting the bid, licenses the Department of Human Services to reproduce the whole or any portion of the bid documents for the purposes of bid evaluation. In submitting its bid, the bidder accepts that, in the event that the contract is varied in future to a value exceeding \$100,000, the Department will publish (on the internet or otherwise) the name of the contractor, the value of the contract and the provisions of the contract generally.
- 6.13 *Lobbying.* Any attempt by any bidder to exert influence on the outcome of the assessment process by lobbying, directly or indirectly, Department of Human Services staff or Members of Parliament, will be grounds for disqualification of the tender from further consideration.

- 6.14 *Dumping of Goods.* Bids from suppliers who are offering goods subject to an Australian Customs Dumping Notice will be disqualified from further consideration. The Department of Human Services reserves the right to suspend an agreement where the supplier is providing goods subject to an Australian Customs Dumping Notice.
- 6.15 *Pricing.* All prices quotes must be represented in Australian dollars. Price variations over the period of the contract must be advised. Bidders must state the factor and reasons for any variation.

## **7. Submissions and Queries**

All bids must incorporate the attached response schedules duly completed and endorsed.

Quotations should be submitted as indicated below:

<b>Postal Submissions</b>	<b>Emailed Submissions</b>
<b>David Riley Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Branch Level 19, 555 Collins St Melbourne 3000</b>	<b>david.riley@dhs.vic.gov.au</b>
Submissions must be received at the above address by <b>3<sup>rd</sup> February 2006</b>	Submissions must be received in the above Mailbox by <b>3<sup>rd</sup> February 2006</b>

**Queries can be directed to:**

**Contact:** David Riley

**Email:** david.riley@dhs.vic.gov.au

**Phone No:** 9616 7470

## Response Schedule

### Bidder Details

Full Legal Name											
Trading Name											
Entity Status (eg: Partnership, Company etc)											
Australian Companies Number (ACN)											
Registration for GST	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>										
Australian Business Number (ABN)											
Postal Address											
Street Address											
Contact Person											
Position/Title											
Telephone No						Facsimile No					
E-mail address											
Range of services currently delivered											
Years of operation in this capacity											

### **Qualifications and Experience of Key Project Staff [Delete if not Applicable]**

Name											
Title/Office Held											
Qualifications											
Previous Experience											
Role/functions to be performed											

[Repeat Table as Required]

### **Referees (please provide at least two)**

Company Name											
Postal Address											
Street Address											
Contact Person											
Position/Title											
Telephone No											
Facsimile No											

Email Address	
Nature of work performed by bidder	

[Repeat Table as Required]

## **Proposal**

### **1 Overview**

Describe how you intend to meet the requirements of the project, including details of how the project will be implemented, managed and monitored. The extent to which a practical and workable approach is developed is a key consideration.

Please structure this information against each of the evaluation criteria for this project, as follows :

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>
<b>1.</b> The bidder demonstrates an understanding of the context within which the SFYS program operates.
<b>2.</b> The bidder has relevant and adequate experience in undertaking similar projects.
<b>3.</b> The bidder has demonstrated ability to deliver projects within prescribed timeframes and designated budgets.
<b>4.</b> The proposal demonstrates a valid and effective methodology to the delivery of the outcomes and outputs specified

### **Summary of Costs**

<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>(\$)</b>
Project plan and evaluation framework.	
Eight monthly progress reports to DHS and DE&T central staff with information as agreed.	
Draft final evaluation report, which addresses all of the evaluation questions listed at 3 under 'Project Scope' and which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An executive summary</li> <li>▪ A summary of recommendations</li> <li>▪ Brief case studies to illustrate outcomes where appropriate</li> </ul>	
Final evaluation report which addresses all of the evaluation questions listed at 3 under 'Project Scope' and which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An executive summary</li> <li>▪ A summary of recommendations</li> <li>▪ Brief case studies where appropriate</li> </ul>	
<b>Total Price :</b> <b>(A\$ and GST inclusive)</b>	

### **Acceptance Of Terms & Conditions**

**IMPORTANT:** An authorised officer of the bidding company must signify acceptance of the terms and conditions of this offer.

If the response is submitted by post, the authorised officer's signature as indicated in this part, and submission of a bid in response to the request for quote, signifies acceptance of all terms and conditions.

If the bid is submitted by e-mail, you must type the words "I ACCEPT" in the signature space to signify your acceptance of all terms and conditions.

**Acceptance of Conditions & Endorsement**

Signature of Authorised Officer	(sign here or type your acceptance)
Name of Authorised Officer	
Title/Office Held	
Date	

## **Appendix 1: Outcome definitions**

**Safety:** For young people this means that harm minimisation and a focus on strengthening protective behaviours forms the basis of community actions. Other aspects include: physical safety, emotional and spiritual safety, being well cared for and caring for others, being safe from exploitation and discrimination and feeling safe in all key environments – home, school, public space, transport.

**Health:** For young people this means as much about emotional and mental health as it does physical health. Other aspects include sexual health and having a positive self image and sense of self worth.

**Learning and education:** For young people this means feeling included in community. Other aspects include participating at school, achievement, attendance at school, staying connected to learning and further education, training or employment and making informed life choices.

**Making a positive contribution:** For young people this means getting involved in things that make a difference. Other aspects include developing positive pro-social relationships and celebrating achievements and having fun.

**Resourced and connected:** For young people this means having access to information and services. Other aspects include having adequate income to ensure personal wellbeing, retaining meaningful employment, and being able to get around.

## **Appendix 2: DHS and DE&T Policies and Priorities**

### ***Office for Children priorities (from Protecting Children.... The Next Steps)***

#### **1) Vulnerable children and vulnerable young people protected and nurtured to adulthood**

- Vulnerable children and vulnerable young people are protected and nurtured to adulthood.
- Supporting families and communities to care for vulnerable children and vulnerable young people.
- Establishing an integrated child, youth and family service system.

#### **2) Changes in service delivery: creating opportunity and addressing disadvantage**

- Reducing barriers to opportunity, including through earlier intervention and prevention.
- Providing coordinated services that better meet local needs.
- Targeting assistance to priority populations and the highest areas of risk.

#### **3) Administering the service system to achieve outcomes**

- Building shared objectives in order to place children and young people's best interests at the heart of decision-making and service delivery.
- Promoting learning and innovation.

## **DE&T POLICIES AND PRIORITIES**

### **Premier's goals and targets for education and training**

(from Growing Victoria Together 2):

<http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/CA256D8000265E1A/page/Growing+Victoria+Together!OpenDocument&1=30-Growing+Victoria+Together~&2=~&3=~>

- Improve the standards for literacy and numeracy in primary schooling.
- Increase the percentage of young people successfully completing Year 12 or its equivalent.
- Increase the level of participation and achievement in education and training in rural and regional Victoria and among groups where it is presently low.
- Make near universal participation in post-school education and training the norm in our society.

### **DE&T Objectives**

(from Corporate Plan 2003-2006):

<http://www.det.vic.gov.au/det/about/corpplan/default.htm>

- Increase learner participation, engagement and achievement
- Expand options and pathways in education and training
- Strengthen a culture of working together
- Develop services in response to community and industry priorities

### **Office of School Education Priorities**

- Attendance
- Students with additional learning needs

## **APPENDIX 3: SUMMARY OF INITIATIVES**

### ***DE&T initiatives***

#### **Primary Welfare Officer Initiative**

256 full-time Primary Welfare Officers have been operating in 450 high-needs government primary schools across the State since July 2005. Primary Welfare Officers undertake a range of programs and interventions designed to enhance the capacity of schools to support students who are at risk of disengaging from school and who are not achieving their educational potential.

#### **Student Welfare Coordinators**

Funding is provided to Government secondary schools to employ Student Welfare Coordinators to assist students with issues such as truancy, bullying, drug use and depression. Student Welfare Coordinators work with other welfare professionals and agencies to address student needs.

#### **Student Support Services Officers**

Student Support Services Officers work with schools in providing specialist services to students to enhance the school's capacity to improve student outcomes and provide continuity of care to all students. These services include: guidance officers, psychologists, social workers, speech pathologists, visiting teachers (hearing, visually and physically impaired), and curriculum consultants.

#### **It's Not OK to be Away**

*It's Not OK To Be Away* is an initiative designed to provide schools with information and resources to develop and implement strategies to reduce truancy and absenteeism, in partnership with the wider community. The initiative, currently in its establishment phase, will be supported by a media campaign, website resources and a truancy awareness week to highlight the importance of regular school attendance.

#### **Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs) program**

The focus of MIPs programs is to engage young people through an active program of individual support in educational and vocational programs with the support of a designated adult. The programs assist young people to develop skills to manage their pathways throughout their working lives; develop their knowledge, understanding and experience of opportunities in education, training and employment; and move through the transition phase from compulsory schooling to further education, training and employment (<http://www.det.vic.gov.au/det/postcomp/initiatives/mips.htm>).

#### **Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs)**

Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) bring together education providers, industry, community organisations, individual and government organisations to improve education, training and employment outcomes for young people in communities across Victoria (<http://www.llen.vic.gov.au/lLEN/>).

#### **The School Improvement Agenda - The Blueprint for Government Schools**

Flagship Strategy 6 of the Blueprint for Government Schools, School Improvement, highlights the importance of a strong accountability system dedicated to student improvement. A new School Improvement and Accountability Framework has been developed, under which schools will be required (from 2006) to develop Strategic Plans that define school goals and targets in the areas of student learning, student pathways and transitions, and student engagement and wellbeing.

([http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/standards/pdf/Overview\\_Paper\\_01-03-05.pdf](http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/standards/pdf/Overview_Paper_01-03-05.pdf))

### ***DHS initiatives***

#### **Mental Health Promotion Officers (MHPOs)**

In 1997, the Victorian Government funded the establishment of nine Child and Adolescent Mental Health Promotion Officers (CAMHS MHPO) to correspond with the then nine Victorian Health Regions.

The MHPO positions are designed to create and maintain networks within each region devoted to the promotion of the mental health of children and young people. A component part of this is the promotion of youth suicide prevention strategies.

The MHPOs support and bring together workers in the local communities who work with young people to:

- increase the accessibility and appropriateness of mental health services to those young people whose behaviour or emotional states place them at risk of suicide;
- increase the skills and confidence of those who work with vulnerable young people in the assessment intervention and management of behaviour which places young people at risk of suicide;
- increase the capacity of health, welfare and educational service networks to respond to the needs of the target group in an ongoing way
- establish and maintain local and community-based youth suicide prevention networks
- facilitate the development of a public information program for teachers, primary care workers and families about mental health problems and available treatment services.

The primary role of the MHPO includes:

- establishing and maintaining partnerships between agencies and individuals providing services to young people (Child Protection, DE&T, D&A Services, Youth Accommodation Services) and Mental Health Services.
- providing Mental Health consultation, liaison, education, training and advice to primary service providers and carers on mental health issues in young people
- providing/organising mental health assessments, treatment, consultation and referral to young people who would otherwise not access mental health services and who are considered as being at high risk of suicide and self harm.

Most MHPOs have established links with schools in their region providing teachers with professional development and students with classroom presentations.

#### **School Nursing program particularly the Secondary School Nursing program (SSN)**

The Secondary School Nursing program is a policy initiative of the Victorian Government to reduce risks to young people and promote better health in the community. The policy resulted in the introduction of a program that focuses on primary health care, primary prevention and early intervention in the secondary school system. The program complements the primary School Nursing program which provides vision screening and a targeted hearing tests for primary school children in their first year of school and additional support as required throughout their primary years.

### ***OFY initiatives***

#### **Regional Youth Affairs Networks (RYANs)**

RYANs bring together community representatives, youth service providers and all levels of government with an interest in improving outcomes for young people, with an aim to: be a forum for information sharing on regional issues and youth policy discussions; promote and celebrate good practice of working with young people; celebrate young people's contributions to the community; engage young people through contemporary consultation; and; assist the Government to make informed decisions about policy issues that impact upon young people (<http://www.youth.vic.gov.au/ryan.htm>).

### ***Commonwealth initiatives***

#### **National Safe Schools Framework**

The National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF) is a collaborative effort by the Commonwealth and State and territory government and non-government school authorities and other key stakeholders to assist all school communities in building safe and supportive schools where. The Framework is aimed at minimising bullying, harassment and violence, and increasing support to students on issues related to child abuse and neglect. (<http://www.mceetya.edu.au/pdf/natsafeschools.pdf>).

#### **MindMatters**

MindMatters is a resource and professional development program designed to support Australian secondary schools in promoting and protecting the social and emotional wellbeing of members of school communities. In Victoria, 76% of all secondary school settings has accessed MindMatters resources, which have expanded and developed to address each individual school's specific needs. (<http://cms.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters/vic/vic.htm>).