

Real Life

WORKING BESIDE YOUNG PEOPLE
TO DEVELOP A PATHWAY
OUT OF HOMELESSNESS

Belle Smith
Jasmin Packer



LUTHERAN COMMUNITY CARE

'Sharing the love of Christ - building caring communities'



Mount Barker Case Study

Causes of homelessness for local young people

- **Semi-rural community and culture**
- **Rapid expansion of population**
- **Clash of rural and urban cultures**
- **Limited rural infrastructure unable to cope**
- **Limited youth-specific services**
- **Lack of affordable and accessible transport**
- **Inaccessible public housing**
- **High demand and costs of private rental**



Mount Barker Case Study

Breaking the Cycle of Crisis

- JPET service overloaded
- Barriers to community housing

Action

- Engaged state government and community organisations to increase SAAP services
- Identified private rental as a key leverage point
- Projects based on Youth Partnership and community development for sustainable change





Project Responses

Breaking the Cycle

To decrease levels of homelessness in the Adelaide Hills, by breaking the cycle of crisis for young people who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, due to inadequate housing

Real Life

To increase the ability of young people to access and maintain private rental through independent living skills training



Youth Partnership

“Youth Participation is about the development of partnerships between young people and adults across all areas of life

so that young people may take a valued position and role in our society

and so that the community as a whole (as well as young people) can benefit from their contribution, ideas and energies”

Foundation for Young Australians



Youth Partnership

Spectrum of Youth Participation Strategies

- Ad hoc input
- Structured consultation
- Negotiation
- **Partnership**
- Control

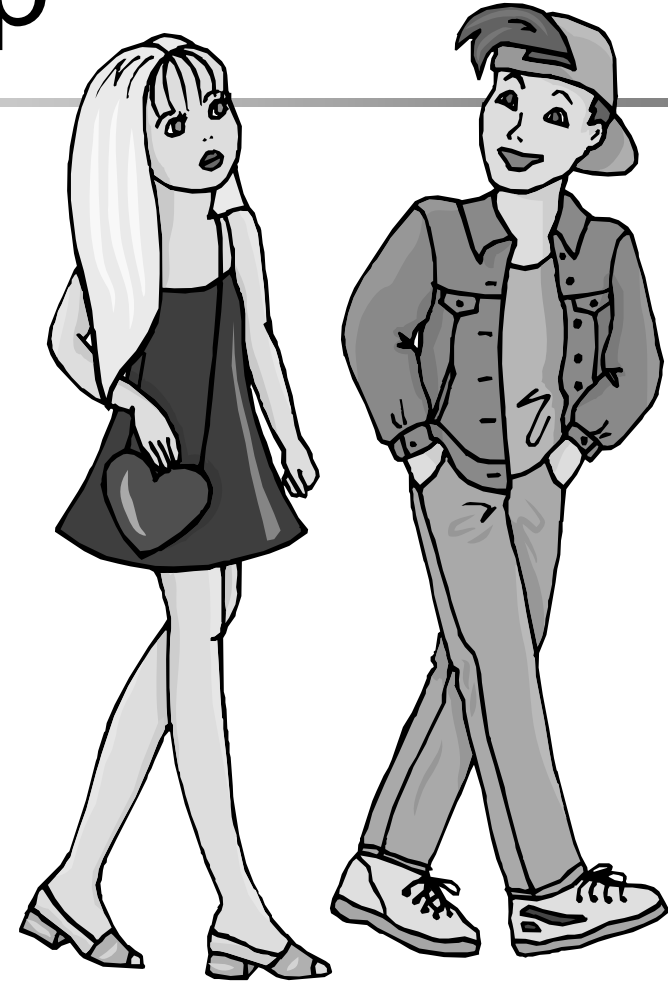




Youth Partnership

Principles

- **Informed choice**
- **Ownership and Relevant**
- **Developmental**
- **Relationship focused**
- **Resources**
- **Diversity**
- **Accountability - Support and supervision**





Youth Partnership

Our Principles - Doing Things Together

- Employ young people for all levels of the process
- Respect their input and time
- Listen to and use their ideas
- Be honest about barriers and issues
- If young people create it they will value it and share it with their peers



Ad hoc Youth Partnership

Ways We Successfully Do This

- Informal consultations with young people showed us the need for a training package like Real Life
- Constant discussions with young people about training package content



Youth Partnership

Ways We Successfully Do This

- Employed two young people to develop and present the Real Life training package
- Employed me to co-ordinate and promote the Real Life training package
- We are encouraged to use our own judgement and make decisions
- Support, guidance and endorsement from Management
- Good communication



Making Real Life A Reality

- We researched independent training packages, finding very little information developed our own
- We consulted young people and local real estate agencies
- We liaised with a qualified teacher about workshop design and content



Making Real Life A Reality

- We booked a location and distributed fliers to JPET clients
- You never give up you try and try again!
- Constant evaluation and revision
- Flexible content
- Now we promote Real Life through brochures, word of mouth and presentations like this one



Real Life - Topics

Topic 1: The Tenancies Act

Topic 2: Looking at a place

Topic 3: The Lease

Topic 4: Successful Sharing

Topic 5: House/Personal Safety





Real Life - Topics

Topic 6: Setting up a House

Topic 7: Budgeting

Topic 8: Cooking Simply

Topic 9: Entertainment

Topic 10: Evaluating Us





Outcomes of Real Life

- Increased knowledge of independent living skills
- Young people choosing to stay at home
- Young people accessing private rental
- Young people successfully maintaining private rental leases





Outcomes of Real Life

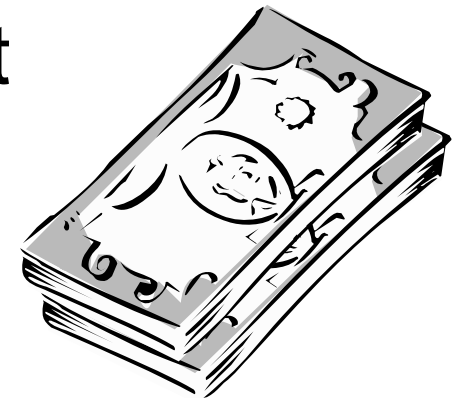
- Empowerment - young people sharing knowledge with other young people
- Young people invited to run a workshop for adults with a disability
- Employment
- Experience in the work environment
- Professional development for young people
- Recognition of the skills of young people





Funding

- Morialta Trust Inc.
- Commonwealth Department for Family and Community Services through Job, Placement Employment and Training (JPET) Program
- South Australian Housing Trust
- Lutheran Community Care

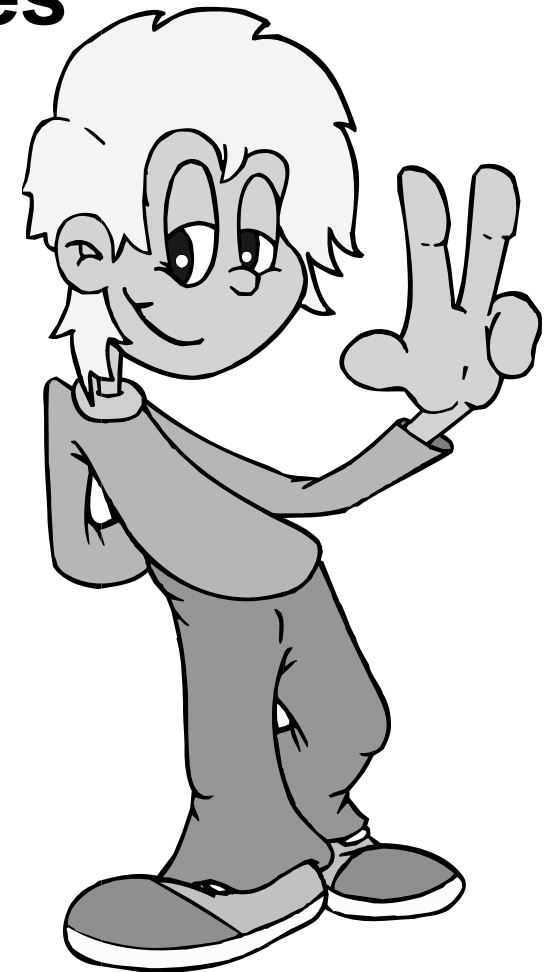




What We Have Learnt

Holistic Approaches

- ↗ Case Management
- ↗ Training
- ↗ Community Participation
- ↗ Policy





What We Have Learnt

- Youth Partnership works best when building on long term relationships
- Young people know what they need so help them to ask for it, create it and express it
- Young people listen and learn from other young people
- Let it be presented by a young person



What We Have Learnt

- Young people are never into structured presentation
- Don't teach it to them - share the knowledge with them
- Go at their flow and they will take it better
- Any topic in the world may come up
- Don't be affronted by what they say



What We Have Learnt

- Take the time to sound out your group
- Be prepared to wander off track and answer questions
- Don't be too serious, be prepared to laugh, joke and be relaxed
- Be honest, be realistic and be aware of the region's needs



Practical Tips

- Payment for Youth Consultants and Youth Facilitators
- Food is always a good thing!
- Create a relaxed and open environment
- Use their words in their context
- Be real, be yourself
- Be honest at all times



Further Information

- www.sa.lcc.lca.org.au
- www.officeforyouth.gov.au
- www.youngaustralians.org.au
- ***Budgeting and Beyond*, Lutheran Community Care**
- ***Independent Living Skills* course, Family and Youth Services, Department of Human Services**
- **Tenancies Branch, Office of Consumer and Business Affairs**
- **The Rental Kit, Service to Youth Council**
- www.syc.net.au



Further Information

Belle Smith
Youth Development Officer
Lutheran Community Care
Ph. 8391 6575
bsmith@sa.lcc.lca.org.au

Jasmin Packer
Senior Policy Officer
Office for Youth
Ph. 8207 0613
jasmin.packer@dhs.sa.gov.au
(Formerly Manager, Lutheran Community Care)



LUTHERAN COMMUNITY CARE

'Sharing the love of Christ - building caring communities'



Real Life

Thank You!

