

STRONG FAMILIES STRONG CHILDREN

JUNE 2017

STRONG FAMILIES STRONG CHILDREN FORUM - NOVEMBER 2016

Who was there

- Participants were from:
- Loddon Shire Council
 - Department Education and Training
 - Department Health and Human Service
 - North Central LLEN
 - East Loddon P-12 College
 - Bendigo Health
 - Bendigo Community Health Service
 - Northern District Community Health Service
 - Catholic Care
 - Anglicare Victoria
 - Goldfield Library
 - Dingee Bush Nursing Centre
 - Pyramid Hill P-10 College
 - Bridgewater Primary School
 - Boort District P-12 College
 - Wedderburn P-12 College
 - Inglewood Primary School
 - Noah's Ark – C4C
 - Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership



THE FORUM

On November 30th last year 33 people from 19 organisations came together to talk about what we could do together to better support the most vulnerable children and families living in the Loddon Shire. We would like to thank everyone who participated and for your energy and input on the day. It is clear that we have an enthusiastic early year's sector, committed to achieving the very best outcome for all children and families in Loddon.



THE NEXT STEPS

Our intention to reconvene the service provider agencies in the first quarter of 2017 was unfortunately delayed for a number of unavoidable reasons. One of those was some changes to the key personnel on our steering group – we farewelled Margaret Anne Wright (Wedderburn Principal) and Bryn Davies (CYAP Principal Advisor). Margaret Anne and Bryn were two pivotal members in establishing Strong Families, Strong Children and we wish them all the best for their future endeavours.

The Steering group recently welcomed new CYAP Principal Advisor, Louise Payne and we are now in a position to continue to progress Strong Families, Strong Children. Some very 'intentional' work has been undertaken by the steering group and this will be detailed throughout this newsletter.

what have we been doing....

LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

Council is currently preparing its Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Each of these plans, while not necessarily focused on specific early years outcomes, provide the supporting structure for many of the social determinants of health that contribute to childhood vulnerability.

Supporting these documents, with a specific focus on early years outcomes, will be the preparation of the Municipal Early Years Plan (MEYP) in the second half of 2017. In planning for the development of the new MEYP, in the light of the work already being conducted through the Children Youth Area Partnership and Loddon Strong Families Strong Children, and to avoid duplication, we will refocus the plan so that it can

be used as the guiding document to progress the activities that were identified at the November forum.

The MEYP will be used to identify the priority focus areas for Strong Families Strong Children. These focus areas will be determined by using available data to identify the key areas of concern and the opportunity to influence change. From this we will identify the outcomes that we want to achieve and the measurement tools we will use to monitor the impact we have made.

Our next step will be the reconvening of early year's agencies to continue the work initiated at the November forum.

STRONG FAMILIES STRONG CHILDREN NEXT STEPS

SAVE THE DATE

Thursday 20 July

10.00am – 2.00pm

At Serpentine - Venue to be confirmed

On this day we will:

- learn about the Continuum of Need pilot in Loddon
- review the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) results from the 2016 data collection
- be guided through the things that can be done in the early years to influence the MDI results
- receive an update on the Children Youth Area Partnership and hear how agencies are committing to the development of 'Core Competencies'.
- determine the priority focus areas to enable the commencement of the MEYP development.

LODDON CHILDREN AND YOUTH AREA PARTNERSHIP

I started as the Principal Advisor with the Area Partnership in early February 2017. Some of you may have worked with my predecessor Bryn Davies who continues to work in the early years space working on policy in Melbourne.

I feel very privileged to join the passionate team that has been working hard in the Loddon Shire to ensure we are using the data and other evidence to guide our collective effort. There is a clear commitment to working better together to support children and families who might be doing it tough which in turn benefits the whole community.

Key activities underway in the Loddon Children and Youth Area Partnership

New Children and Youth Area Partnership Website launched

The Vulnerable Children's Reform Unit within Department of Health & Human Services recently launched the new website for the eight Children and Youth Area Partnerships. This will feature both local and other stories about the work occurring to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. It also includes articles and links to information about collective impact and will be good source of inspiration as well as being a forum for us to show-case our achievements.

Check it out at www.areapartnerships.vic.gov.au and look out for the option to subscribe to the state-wide newsletter.

For further information

If you would like more detail about the Loddon Children and Youth Area Partnership or to see how you can get involved please contact Louise on payne.louise.l@edumail.vic.gov.au or call on (03) 5440 3144 or 0429 443 644.

Headline indicators to guide our strategic learning

The partnership has agreed on seven headline indicators to track the long-term wellbeing of children 0-8 years. These have been embedded into an interactive data dashboard.

It provides the capacity for people to click on this to see data specific to Loddon Shire and compare it with the Loddon Campaspe region and Victoria. The dashboard is being finalised and will soon be placed on the Area Partnership website. If you would like a sneak preview please email and I will forward you the link.

Exploration workshops

These headline indicators informed us we are 'trending in the wrong direction' in regards to the emotional and social wellbeing of young children. Before jumping to solutions, it is important for us to develop a clear understanding of the issue. A workshop was held on 10 May in Bendigo and a follow up workshop is scheduled for early June please contact me if you would like to be notified of the dates.

Shared core competencies: strengthening our shared practice

Last year the Area Partnership agreed to four pillars of core competencies to promote a more consistent approach to good practice: understanding the impact of trauma on brain development; understanding the impact of poverty; being culturally competent and; service integration and information sharing. The partnership has engaged The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare to develop a self-assessment tool for organisations to measure themselves against these competencies; a competency package and; a method to measure the impact of this approach as a strategy. This will be in place by July 2017.

DEPARTMENT EDUCATION & TRAINING

NORTH CENTRAL LLEN

DET School Education Improvement Leader (SEIL) for Loddon Schools - Paul Hon

Loddon Schools MDI

The Stronger Families Strong Children team are well aware that it has been quite some time since the stakeholders' engagement at Serpentine took place; however as part of our partnership commitment with Loddon Shire, the LCYAP and the NCLLEN we have progressed what is a unique opportunity with (6/7) schools in the LGA engaged in the data collection that has provided rich data for schools as well as data for the Loddon LGA and the NCLLEN.

In the last few weeks the Loddon Shire has conducted two consultations in the development of its Municipal Health and Wellbeing plan. Louise Payne and I have been able to use the Loddon Shire MDI data to highlight the positives/ assets and deficits in the lives of our young people and to suggest the use of the data to set targets in their final plan.

Wouldn't it be nice to see strategic planning at a school and local government level working alongside one another striving for the same improved outcomes- it is most certainly possible !

We hope that you will join us in exploring the data more fully on July 20th.

Since November the NCLLEN has continued to support the Strong Families Strong Children Loddon working group in a number of ways including partnering with Paul Hon and LCYAP in promoting and supporting schools to participate in the MDI survey. We were fortunate to be part of both local and state-wide briefing sessions encouraging us to explore some evidence based and action based responses to the data that has now been collected and we look forward to working with you all to discuss this data and ideas for progressing local responses on July 20th.

Working with the School Focused Youth Services initiative we have been fortunate to be working directly with Pyramid Hill College as they pilot a new identification tool 'the Continuum of Need' in Loddon.

This tool should enable schools to enhance and improve early identification practices targeted around more vulnerable cohorts, but also provides the platform for developing a common language and shared approaches with local service providers to ensure the needs of young people and their families can be met as well as providing targeted professional development to build capacity within schools : more information about this pilot and how it links to other initiatives and possibly your service or organisation will be discussed on July 20th.



MDI Snapshot

THE WELL-BEING INDEX

The Well-Being Index combines MDI measures relating to children's physical health and social and emotional development that are of critical importance during the middle years. These are:

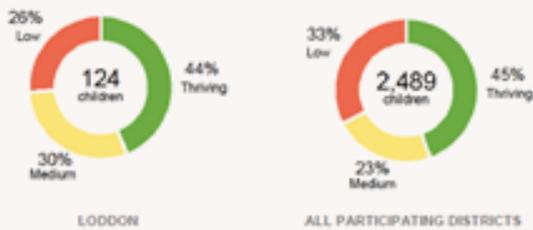


Scores from these five measures are combined and reported by three categories of well-being, providing a holistic summary of children's mental and physical health.

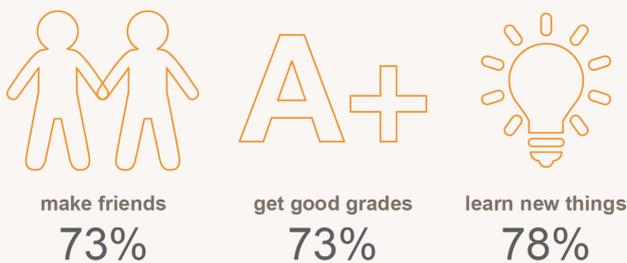
Years 4-6



RESULTS FOR LODDON



Percentage of children who feel it is very important to:



Years 7-9



RESULTS FOR LODDON



Percentage of children who feel it is very important to:

