



**North Central** LLEN

# MEDIA RELEASE

29 May 2023

## **Flood recovery the focus of visit by Youth Affairs Council Victoria CEO**

The North Central LLEN in partnership with Northern District Community Health recently hosted a visit by Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic) CEO Katherine Ellis and her team to meet with young people impacted by floods across Buloke, Loddon and Gannawarra Shires last year as part of their submission to the Victorian Government Inquiry into the Victorian Floods.

The visit included stops at Gannawarra, Boort and Charlton to meet with local youth and representatives from North Central LLEN and Northern District Community Health to talk about their experiences and also find out about some of the initiatives that have been undertaken as part of an Umbrella Grant to support young people as they recover from floods.

In Kerang, Northern District Community Health Staff and members of the Summerwave Organising Committee met with Ms Ellis and other members of the YacVIC team, explaining that the impact was immediately felt through the postponement of the original Summerwave event in earlier November due to the floods, and how an event such as this is can play such an important part in community connectivity.

Over lunch in Boort, a group of students from Boort District School, and Summerwave performer Elias Lanyon met with the YacVIC team for an engaging conversation about the impact of the floods on the Boort community, particularly young people at a critical time on the school calendar – the lead up to VCE exams.

In Charlton, Year 10 students from Charlton College with their teacher Meaghan King joined Northern Central LLEN staff and the YacVIC team to talk about their Geography project documenting the outcomes of the 2022 floods and 2011 flood comparisons/learnings on the local business community from an economic, social and community perspective.

North Central LLEN CEO Jane Hosking said it was great to hear about this timely project, and also the way in which young people were actively engaged during the floods helping with sandbagging for their neighbours and creating levies to protect the community.

“Catherine also asked them about their recollections of the 2011 floods impacts. Whilst the boys were very young at the time they had vivid memories including one boy re-calling being carried out of his home on a neighbours’ shoulders to be rescued by the CFA and another speaking of his family’s experience during the six months it took for their house to be repaired,” she said.

The BLG Umbrella project provided support for young people across the Buloke, Loddon and Gannawarra Shires through the engagement of a project team to coordinate a range of activities between December 2022 and April 2023.

This included the YouThrive Victoria Dreamseeds program in schools in late 2022 to facilitate their workshop on resilience, aspiration and connection; financial support for the re-scheduled Summerwave Music Festival held in Kerang in February through the provision of free bus transport for young people living in Buloke and Loddon Shires to attend, and an activities area with staff from Headspace, YouThrive and Youth Take Over(YTO) available to connect with young people; and for “Summerwave on Tour” in May 2022.

The remainder of the funding throughout 2023 will introduce Phase One of the Live4Life program to our region empowering our rural communities to improve youth mental health and reduce youth suicide.

For more information about the BLG Umbrella Project visit [www.ncllen.org.au/umbrella](http://www.ncllen.org.au/umbrella).

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