



Live4Life Initiative
Evaluation Report
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Compiled by Dr Krystal Bowers
Clinical Psychologist MAPS

Bachelor of Psychology

Bachelor of Arts (Psychology)(Honours)

Thesis title: "Prevalence of depression, anxiety, stress and disordered eating among rural adolescents."

Doctorate of Psychology

Thesis title: "Development and evaluation of a pilot program to reduce stigma of mental illness among rural adolescents."

Researcher and co-author of a range of publications pertaining to the mental health of rural Victorian youth

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Introduction

The following report reviews and analyses a range of evaluative data pertaining to various aspects of the Live4Life initiative during 2014. Evaluation methodology includes both quantitative and qualitative feedback, and is based on materials including surveys and focus groups with students. Ethics approval has been gained from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Copies of this are available on request. The report covers both the successful aspects of the Live4Life initiative, and outlines recommendations for improvements and alterations to the initiative for 2015.

Live4Life Initiative Overview

Live4Life is a Youth Mental Health Promotion Initiative working across a whole rural Victorian Municipality, targeting young people in the Macedon Ranges, Victoria, Australia.

The adolescent population in the Macedon Ranges (9.1%) is greater as a percentage than adolescents in Victoria (8.4%).¹ The region is unique in rural Victoria as there are not one but five larger townships across the area, divided by a mountain range. This poses challenges for not only location of services, but access to appropriate services for young people. These townships are not serviced or connected by an efficient transport network. As a rural community the issues of stigma and confidentiality related to mental illness further compound these challenges.

The Live4Life Initiative is a community-wide response from 2008, to a verbally reported increase from schools, police, community health and medical services of depression, anxiety, cyber bullying, and self-harm, particularly at Year 8 level (13-14 years). Further to this, between the years of 2004 and 2009, the rates of hospitalisation due to intentional self-harm for adolescents in the Loddon Mallee area were approximately 50% higher than those for Victoria for three of those five years.^{2 3} This led to the need for a coordinated, collaborative response, led by the Youth Development Unit, of the Macedon Ranges Council, to seek solutions *prior to* the need for crisis intervention.

¹ ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2006 and 2011

² Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) analysis of the Victorian Admitted Episodes Dataset (VAED), Victorian Injury Surveillance Unit (VISU), unpublished.

³ ABS Population by age and sex, Australian States and Territories, June 2010 (Cat no. 3201.0)

Prior to the commencement of Live4Life, the five local secondary schools or community organisations involved had not collaborated to address young people's mental health and wellbeing.

The five secondary schools and community partners unanimously agreed to support the Macedon Ranges Council, as the Lead Agent, to instigate an approach to mental health and wellbeing focusing on Mental Health Education and Promotion that targets young people, their families, schools and community not just those young people with identifiable problems or a diagnosed mental illness.

A Needs Analysis conducted in late 2009 with over 50 local and state-wide stakeholders, primarily school staff and support services (community mental health and crisis services), confirmed an increase in mental health problems, plus there were consistent requests for support and education to focus on developing:

- Resilience;
- Self-worth;
- Coping strategies for everyday life;
- Forming positive friendships and social inclusion and;
- Community connection and participation.

There was also an acknowledgement that credible state and national mental health resources were available and accessible but all schools expressed concerns that:

- Adaptation was needed to reflect local needs and capacities including recognition of the limited services/support available in rural communities;
- Time was needed to 'sift and sort' the myriad of educational materials sent to schools which was often very time consuming and not well understood;
- There was a lack of professional skill/knowledge to interpret research, determine the quality and appropriateness of some materials and how to deliver mental health education in schools;

- A general 'nervousness' in schools and community organisations to deliver information on mental illness, mental health, address stigma and understand its origins.

Live4Life directly responds to local need, builds local school and community capacity, increases community understanding of appropriate responses to youth mental health, all underpinned by national and international research and health promotion frameworks relevant to Australian secondary schools and community organisations.

Given the geography of the Macedon Ranges, Live4Life places high priority on ensuring key mental health messages, education and approaches to mental health and mental illness, are the same across all schools providing consistency of message across the broader community.

In 2013 a sixth school joined the Live4Life partnership, and requests from other councils for assistance to set up their own initiatives also started to increase.

Now in 2014 with a large strategic school-community partnership between six local schools and several community organisations in place, the initiative aims to address youth mental illness and suicide prevention by:

- **Increasing mental health literacy;**
- **Decreasing stigma of mental health issues in rural communities;**
- **Enhancing access to and delivery of appropriate services for youth in the Macedon Ranges and surrounds.**

Live4Life Future Directions

Existing resources significantly limit the potential for expansion at either the local level or beyond the Shire boundaries. In 2012 Council commissioned a *Live4Life Future Directions Report* to identify a structural model for Live4Life that is sustainable and would allow further evolution and growth. A preferred model was identified by the Partnership group and endorsed by the Macedon Ranges Council in August 2013. As a result **YouthLive4Life Incorporated** has now been created.

Therefore there are now two entities:

- Youth Live4Life Incorporated
- Macedon Ranges Live4Life Partnership Group

YouthLive4Life Incorporated will initially remain in Victoria. The initial intent is to raise funds to support and expand the current Live4Life work in the Macedon Ranges. It is envisaged that fundraising activities will first target the local community to seek financial support for **Youth Live4Life**, and subsequently establish the community's financial ability and interest in supporting this new entity. This is consistent with the gradual, phased approach which was suggested in the *Future Directions: A Preferred Model* paper.

Funding

Core operations for Live4Life are funded on an ongoing basis by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council demonstrating a meaningful commitment to its local young people.

Additional notable funds (financial and non-financial) have also been acquired to support the work and growth of Live4Life in 2014.

For 2014 we gratefully acknowledge the support of:

- \$5000 donation from Kyneton Rotary Club
- \$2008.50 from Terry Moore who fundraised this at his Open Gardens event/s in September 2014
- Private donations \$1400
- Cobaw Community Health Co-facilitator Mez
- WayOut

Other local sponsorship (for Launch and Celebration events) was received from:

- Baker's Delight – Kyneton
- Coles – Gisborne
- Coles – Woodend
- Country Cobb Bakery – Kyneton
- Pizza & Wine Club – Kyneton
- Romsey Fresh Wholesale – Romsey
- Ryan's Super IGA – Kyneton
- Watts Fresh – Kyneton
- Woolworths – Kyneton

Live4Life Launch

The Live4Life Launch took place in March 2014 at Sacred Heart College. Approximately 560 Year 8 students from partner schools attended. Additionally, 39 members of the “Crew” took part, these comprised Year 9 and 10 students. A number of staff members from Live4Life partner schools and the Macedon Ranges Shire were also present and took part in the day. This was the third consecutive year that the Launch was run by students, with this year’s “Crew” taking charge of the event.

In response to feedback gathered from students in 2013, this year there were a greater number of guest speakers organised. This year’s Launch guest speakers included:

Crew members are a core group of 39 Year 9 and 10 students who completed Live4Life in 2012 and 2013. The Crew volunteer to help direct the aims and events of Live4Life activities during 2014 for the new group of Year 8’s. They are an essential part of keeping Live4Life activities and messages relevant and accessible to each group of Year 8’s who come through the six schools that take part. Each year a new core of crew members join, and the older crew members retire. This enables the ‘voice’ of the crew to remain relevant and age appropriate.

- Samantha Johnson – Mental Health Nurse at headspace Bendigo
- Megan Anderson – headspace Ambassador at headspace Bendigo
- Merv Neal – CEO LaughterYoga Australia and NZ who delivered a Laughter Yoga session

Local services set up stalls and provided information for students on what they can provide. Students took part in myth buster activities and an interactive activity called “Health Passport” where students were provided with a health passport and were then asked to move around to different stall holders to find out mental health information and answer questions in order to win donated prizes from the Kyneton Pizza Club. Additionally, students enjoyed a range of entertainment provided by Flaxxon, Jimmy, and Mumbl. Students were provided with morning tea.

Focus group questions can be found in Appendix A. The focus groups ranged in size from 7 to 9 participants with 40 focus group participants in total, including both males and females. One focus group took place at every Live4Life school except Sunbury. A breakdown of focus group attendees can be found in the following table.

	Number of students	Number of males	Number of females
Braemar College	9	4	5
Macedon Grammar School	7	5	2
Sacred Heart College	7	4	3
Gisborne Secondary School	9	4	5
Kyneton Secondary School	8	2	6
Total	40	19 (47.5%)	21 (52.5%)

Questions asked during focus groups related to many different aspects of the Live4Life activities over 2014. Three questions from the focus groups pertained to the Launch.

What things did you enjoy about the Live4Life Launch?

In response to this question, two main themes were raised. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided below.

Enjoyable aspects of the Launch:

- ◆ **Combining with other schools**
- ◆ **Interactive and entertaining delivery**

Combining with other schools

Consistently across groups, participants mentioned their delight in seeing old friends and meeting others from alternate schools.

“I like that it invited like everyone from all our old friends to one place so that we can catch up again because like some friends we don’t have contact with.”

(Participant no. 1, male, Kyneton Secondary College)

“Basically how you got to interact and it was educational but really fun and how we got to meet people from other schools.”

(Participant no.8, female, Macedon Grammar)

Interactive and entertaining delivery

Participants expressed enjoyment of the range of different performances, and reported believing that the interactive and age appropriate nature of the delivery got the messages across well.

“I like how we interacted with it – like not just sitting down listening to people talk”

(Participant no. 6, female, Macedon Grammar)

“I liked how there were different people that spoke. What was that guy called – The Slam or something? (Lauren – the poetry slam? Mumblr?). Yeah him – I thought he got the message across, which was good.”

(Participant no.2, male, Sacred Heart College)

“I liked the representatives [The Crew], ummm if you know what I mean, ‘cause they were like from our school and around so you could kind of relate to them if you know what I mean.”

(Participant no.3, male, Sacred Heart College)

“Hearing inspiring stories about some people who went through rough times”

(Participant no. 3, female, Braemar College)

How do you think the Live4Life Launch could have been improved?

In response to this question, two main themes were raised. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided below.

Recommended Improvements to Launch:

- ◆ **Changing seating arrangements**
- ◆ **Different or more food**

Changing seating arrangements

Three out of the five focus groups discussed in depth the issue of interaction between schools and possible variations to the seating arrangements. Whilst two focus groups felt more interaction was desirable, participants from Sacred Heart College indicated that they felt a bit overwhelmed even with the existing level of interaction. Additionally, it was suggested that students not be asked to sit on the floor.

“Maybe they could set up instead of having each school you could give every person a number and they had to go to that...like you just split them up so it would not just be Macedon grammar in one area. ”

(Participant no. unknown, Macedon Grammar)

“...at the launches and stuff maybe interact with other schools more – so you could like meet even more people... Kind of like just mix us up to do like random activities”

(Participant no. 8, male, Macedon Grammar)

“I thought it was a bit like, all over the place and I didn’t really even listen to what they were saying cause there was...you brang all the schools together so everyone that knew each other were talking and you kind of expected quiet which wasn’t going to happen since you caught up with your friends who you hadn’t seen for 2 years. So like everyone was trying to get their point across and you guys were trying to talk what was happening while we’re just having fun and eating and maybe if you sat us down first and split us into groups, talk to us and then us interact instead of letting us interact and then talking to us.”

(Participant no. 3, male, Sacred Heart College)

Different or more food

Participants in two focus groups raised concerns about the food, with one group suggesting more was needed, and another discontented with the choice or lack thereof of food. It is worth noting from previous evaluations it doesn’t seem to matter how much food is provided at events, the request for more food is made every year.

“They could have had more food”

(Multiple participants, Kyneton Secondary School)

“...more choice of food”

(Participant no. 5, female, Gisborne Secondary College)

What was the key message for you from the Launch?

In response to this question, three main themes were raised. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided. Please note that although themes to this question have been identified, there were a wide range of responses, most of which did

Key messages taken away from the Launch:

- ◆ **Think positively and be yourself**
- ◆ **Seeking help for mental health issues is worthwhile**
- ◆ **How to help friends with mental health issues**

have some relevance to the actual messages from the launch.

Think positively and be yourself

Participants expressed that they had learnt that essential to their mental health was to think positively, and also to just be themselves.

“It was much easier to just be happy, like in any situation, it’s a lot easier to look at the bright side of things instead of always being down and angered up about stuff.”

(Participant no. 4, male, Macedon Grammar)

“Don’t let little things get to you? Like you’re stronger than that?”

(Participant no. 1, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“...be who you are and not someone you’re making up and you could...yeah just be yourself”

(Participant no. 7, female, Sacred Heart College)

Seeking help for mental health issues is worthwhile

It was evident from participant comments that they had learnt not only that mental health problems can be treated but that it’s in their best interests to seek help for them.

“I learnt that you shouldn’t be embarrassed or ashamed if something’s like wrong with you mentally because there’s like sooo many other people in the world just like you in that aspect so you shouldn’t be embarrassed or ashamed and Live4Life taught me that. You can always get help with it, they won’t judge you. That’s really cool.”

(Participant no. 8, male, Macedon Grammar)

“I learnt that it wasn’t as hard as you thought to get help. It is much easier – like you don’t really understand how easy it is until you actually try it out for yourself.”

(Participant no. 7, female, Macedon Grammar)

How to help friends with mental health issues

Focus group participants indicated that they had learned that mental health issues are more prevalent than they had realized. They also indicated that they felt more empathy for those with mental health issues now, and that they had more of an idea how to help a friend with a mental health issue.

“I really like the whole thing that if you notice one of your friends is down or behaving differently to be there to just at least ask them if they’re alright and if they say that they’re alright which we’ve learnt is the most common response which normally isn’t true to at least try a few times just to see if there actually is anything wrong.”

(Participant no. 1, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“...instead of just worrying about yourself and mental issues you kind of learn, you learn because you want to learn how to help other people not just yourself so during the rest of your life you can still say somehow I still know this I know how to help you I know where you can go you’re not just able to help yourself you’re able to help others.”

(Participant no. 2, male, Macedon Grammar)

The Crew

Crew members are a core group of 39 Year 9 and 10 students who completed Live4Life in 2012 and 2013. The Crew volunteer to help direct the aims and events of Live4Life activities during 2014 for the new group of Year 8's. They are an essential part of keeping Live4Life activities and messages relevant and accessible to each group of Year 8's who come through the six schools that take part.

The Crew met on a monthly basis and were supported by the Live4Life Coordinator and the Cobaw Youth team throughout the year. In response to previous feedback from Crew members, they are offered additional training opportunities each year. To help support them through the pressures of their highly responsible role, this year the Crew were offered even more opportunities than last year, these included:

- A 3-Day **MRSC Youth Development Unit Leadership** Training Experience in February
- **WayOut** Diversity Training in July
- Red Cross **Save-a-Mate** Training in December

This year the Crew participated in the Launch, the introductory and four set education sessions, they were involved in the judging of the Live4Life Competition entries, and the Celebration event.

Survey data was gathered from the Crew at the end of 2014 to determine what they enjoyed about the experience, where it could be improved, and their attitudes towards those with mental illness (See Appendix B). Of the 39 Crew members in 2014, 19 agreed to complete the questionnaire, providing a response rate of 49%.

What things did you enjoy about the Live4Life leadership camp at the start of the year?

Participants made reference to the opportunities to get to know others, build relationships, and go outside of their comfort zone.

Meeting other young people

Many participants noted the importance of opportunities provided to meet other like-minded young people, this theme came up in response to other questions on the survey as well.

“I really enjoyed being with the other groups of young people that work in the Macedon Ranges”.

Being challenged

Participants noted that the leadership camp provided the opportunity to move outside their comfort zone, and that this was assisted by the close bonds formed with other group members.

“I also loved that a lot of the activities put me outside of my comfort zone as it helped me to form friendships with others who supported me”

How do you think the Leadership camp could be improved?

Two participants out of 19 indicated that they would have liked the camp to have gone for longer. No other responses were given. It can be assumed, therefore, that the students, were, for the most part, happy with the current structure of the leadership camp.

What else could we do at Live4Life to prepare you for your role as Crew member?

Participants raised the issues of practice opportunities, a buddy system, and increased opportunities to bond with fellow participants in order to feel more supported.

Education session delivery practice

Several students indicated that they would appreciate more practice opportunities prior to education session delivery.

“Maybe we could have one or two younger people – around the age of a year 8 student – to give us an opinion of each session when we practice it at the meetings.”

“We could practice our knowledge of mental health in the crew instead of just having to speak about it at the sessions.”

Buddy system

Further to a desire to have more practice opportunities, participants suggested that they might feel better supported if there was a more gradual take over from last year’s crew to the current crew to build participant confidence.

“If the crew members on their first year had smaller roles (especially at the start of the year) they could slowly get used to what happens at the sessions rather than being thrown in at the deep end.”

“I think it would be beneficial for new crew members to attend the first session and just watch the year 10’s run it so that they get a feel for what goes on and then slowly over the year help more and more.”

More bonding opportunities

Additionally participants indicated that they would feel better supported if they had the opportunity to get to know their current group of crew members better as well.

“More bonding opportunities with the crew before we start the education sessions.”

“More camps [and] leadership activities”

Do you think your leadership skills have improved as a result of being involved in the Live4Life program?

Participants indicated that they felt that they had gained some benefit to their leadership skills from the leadership day with all participants indicating their degree of benefit somewhere between a 5 and 10 on the response scale, and 68% of participants responding between 8 and 10.



Do you think student’s attitudes towards those with mental health problems have changed over the year? Why? Why not?

Most participants suggested that an increase in awareness was responsible for changes in attitude. However, a smaller percentage of students indicated that attitude change was only evident in those students who made an effort to pay attention.

“...their ability to comfortably discuss mental health problems has increased...”

Yes, due to increased awareness

The majority of participants who chose to

comment in response to this question indicated that they thought attitudes had changed due to an increase in awareness of mental health issues, and an increase in empathy towards those with mental health issues.

“I think that their attitudes have changed, because now they know more about the issue and how to handle it, and they may also have a better understanding of what people with mental health problems go through. “

“...they have become more aware of mental health issues, how to handle them maturely.”

“Yes, having awareness of the possibilities reduces the chance of bullying.”

“...their ability to comfortably discuss mental health problems has increased very much.”

Yes, but only those students who paid attention

In an astute observation, a minority of students (3 out of 19) identified that only those students who made the effort to engage in activities changed their attitudes as a result of the education sessions.

“I think the students that wanted to learn have because they put effort and thought in but some of them just made fun of the program and refused to participate properly.”

“Yes I do, the people who were paying attention in the sessions... really valued the information we gave them and will carry it on for later life. “

What did you like about being involved in the education sessions?

Enjoyment of the public speaking role, opportunities to influence younger students, and to make a difference that they could see were all mentioned by participants as highlights of being involved in the education sessions.

Public speaking opportunities

Some participants suggested that the opportunity to speak in public was important to them.

“I also liked speaking in front of the students as I enjoy public speaking.”

Opportunities to influence and share knowledge

A large proportion of students indicated that they felt proud to both learn more about mental health issues, and then to share that with others.

“I really enjoyed being able to learn more about mental health myself and share this knowledge with others.”

“I liked going over each session, because it was good practice and better prepared me for the proper presentation of it.”

Making a tangible difference

Similarly students mentioned the advantage of not only influencing students, but seeing changes in person as a result of the education session intervention, and being involved in a hands on way.

“Doing my part in raising awareness and seeing it right in front of me.”

“The opportunities to speak and educate the year 8’s, and seeing the year 8’s engaged.”

“Actually doing something that makes a difference.”

What didn’t you like or what do you think could have been done better in the education sessions?

Attempt to engage the unenthusiastic students

There was only one theme in response to this question, and it related back to responses made to the question regarding student attitude change as a result of

the program. Participants indicated that trying to work with those students with less interest in the topic was frustrating, and they made a few suggestions to help to engage students more effectively.

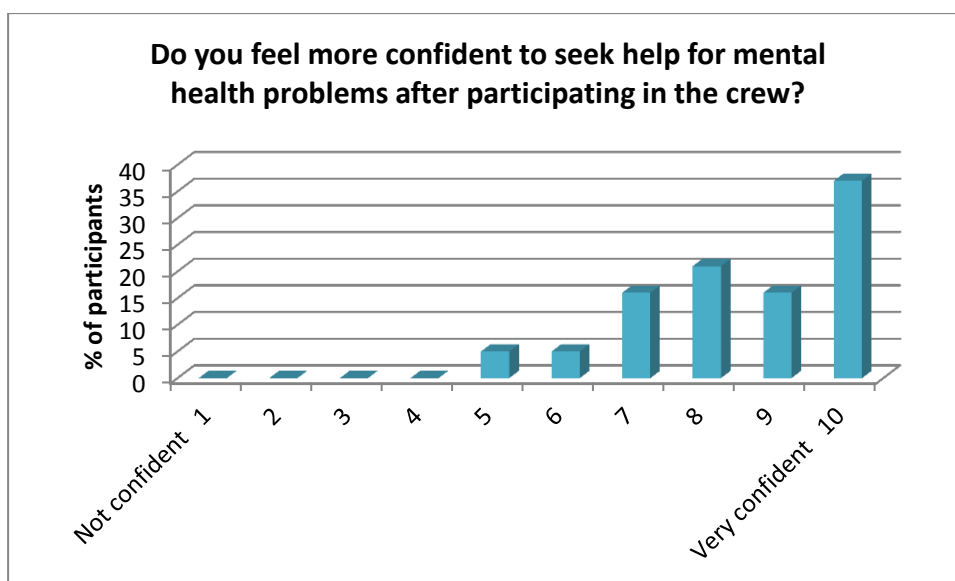
“I didn’t like that a lot of students were unenthusiastic, even when receiving prizes. It was sad to see that they could not make the most of this program.”

“I think that the competition could have been woven into the education sessions from the start and students could have discussed how each sessions topic could have been involved in their project. I think this would have encouraged more students to get involved and also have a better understanding about what their entry is about.”

“Make presentations less like lectures, and more engaging/fun.”

Do you feel more confident to seek help for mental health problems after participating in the Crew?

As seen in the graph below, participants indicated that yes their confidence in seeking help for a mental health problem themselves in the future had increased as a result of being involved in the Crew. A total of 90% of participants indicated a score of between 7 and 10 for confidence post Crew participation.



How can we improve the Crew for next year?

Participants suggested a need for dedicated crew members and a smaller group, a more gradual transition from the previous to the current group members and a more positive atmosphere.

Dedicated crew members only

Three participants identified the need for crew members to be dedicated to their role and motivated to contribute.

*“I think that we should put a certain process in place so that we know that each crew member is **dedicated** and will put their hardest work and effort into everything. There were several members who didn’t show up to many meetings, so I think that we need to make it clear from the beginning what is required to be a good crew member...”*

Smaller crew size

Three participants suggested less crew members might be a good idea as they felt this would allow for more responsibility for each member, however, the themes relating to dedicated members and a gradual transition process, indicates that others may have felt their responsibilities were already too large.

*“I think having a **smaller crew size** as I believe having so many crew members meant that not everyone got to have a large role throughout the year.”*

Gradual transition

Similar to answers from a previous question, participants identified the need to gradually transition new crew members into roles, allowing them more time to adjust to expectations.

“I think if we let the new crew members hang back at the start more it would prevent them from becoming overwhelmed from the amount of work.”

“Allow year 10’s a primary role with a year 9 buddy, so as they learn from year 10’s and gain confidence.”

Positive group atmosphere

Several participants indicated that a more friendly and positive group atmosphere would be beneficial.

“Make them more peppy, comfier group atmosphere.”

“Try to keep it [meetings] upbeat and positive.”

What was your favourite part about being in the Crew?

Similar to last year’s responses, participants indicated that their favourite aspects of being in the Crew were opportunities to increase their learning about mental health, gain skills, meet people and make friends.

Learning and Skills boosting

Participants suggested that they had enjoyed the challenges that their role had provided them with and the opportunity to improve their own learning in this area.

“... having a better understanding of people with mental health problems. I have learned a lot and it has also boosted my confidence level, especially when talk[ing] to a large crowd.”

“Speaking in front of large groups of people.”

Social Contact

Social contact with others, and opportunities to make friends with like minded individuals that they may otherwise not have had the chance to meet was raised as a positive by a large proportion of participants.

“Being around cheerful and enthusiastic people.”

“Social aspect of getting to know the crew.”

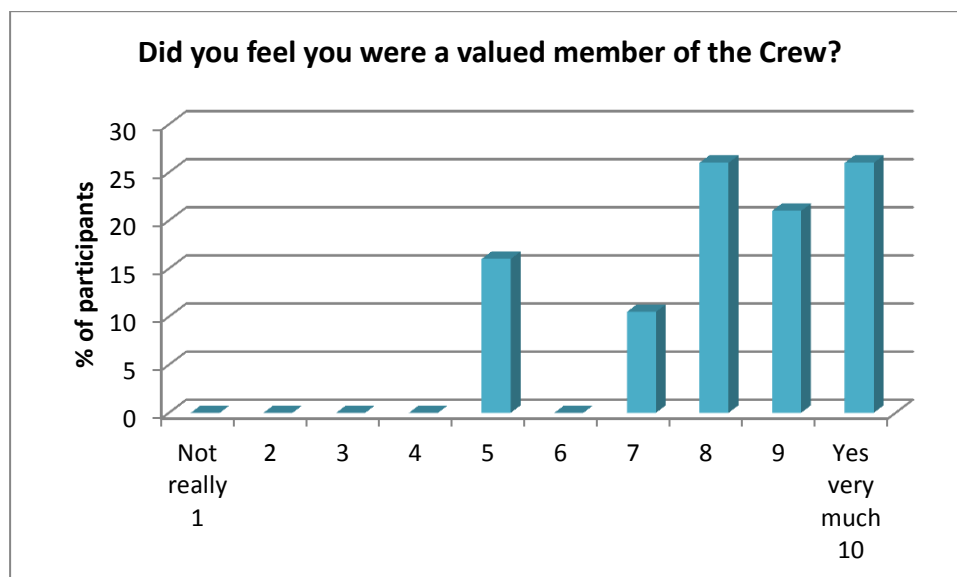
“...interacting with year 8’s during activities.”

Which forms of communication between the coordinator and other Crew members did you find useful or not useful? Explain.

Feedback to the question about preferred communication methods was mixed. There was a noticeable preference for Facebook (7 participants), however, nearly a quarter of participants also identified email as the most useful. Others mentioned talking in person and text messages as useful communication methods. All except two participants suggested an electronic form of communication was preferred. A mixed communication method appears essential with the current generation of students, who appear to expect to be informed of the same message via several different communication modes depending on which they regularly use, be that email, Facebook, or text message.

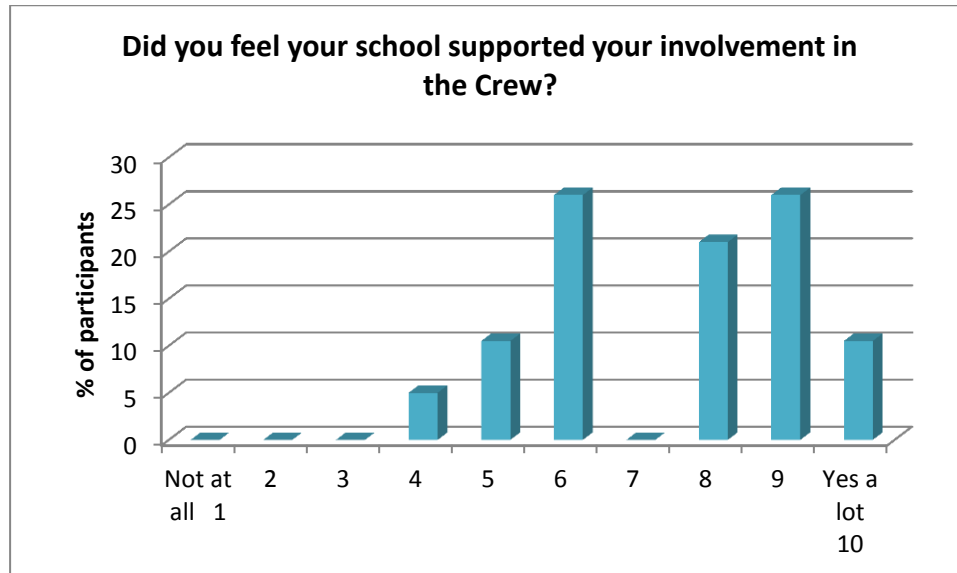
Did you feel you were a valued member of the Crew?

The majority of participants indicated that they felt that they were valued members of the Crew. A total of 83.5% of participants indicated a score of between 7 and 10 for how valued they felt as crew members post involvement.



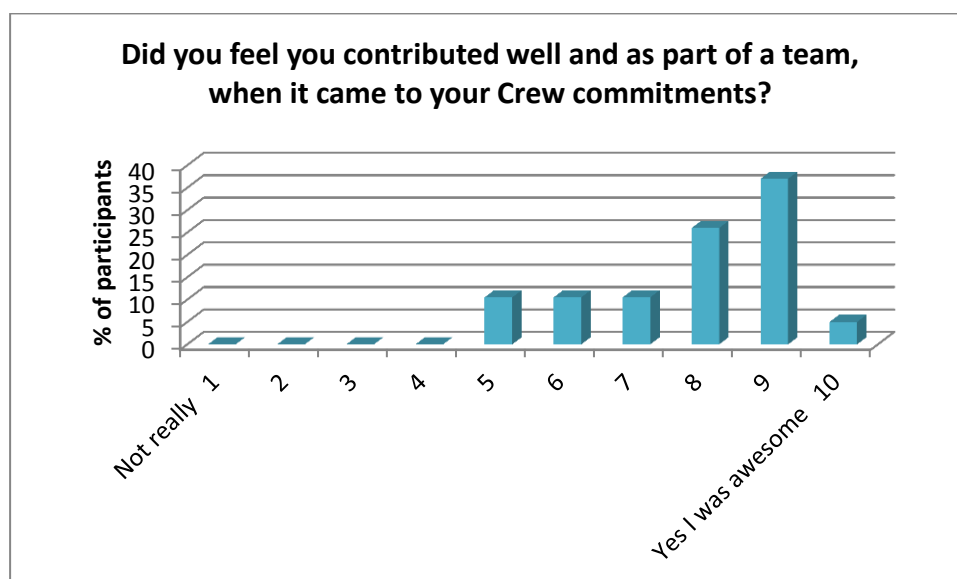
Did you feel your school supported your involvement in the Crew?

Participants reported differing degrees of support from their school for their Crew commitments from neutral to well supported as can be seen below.



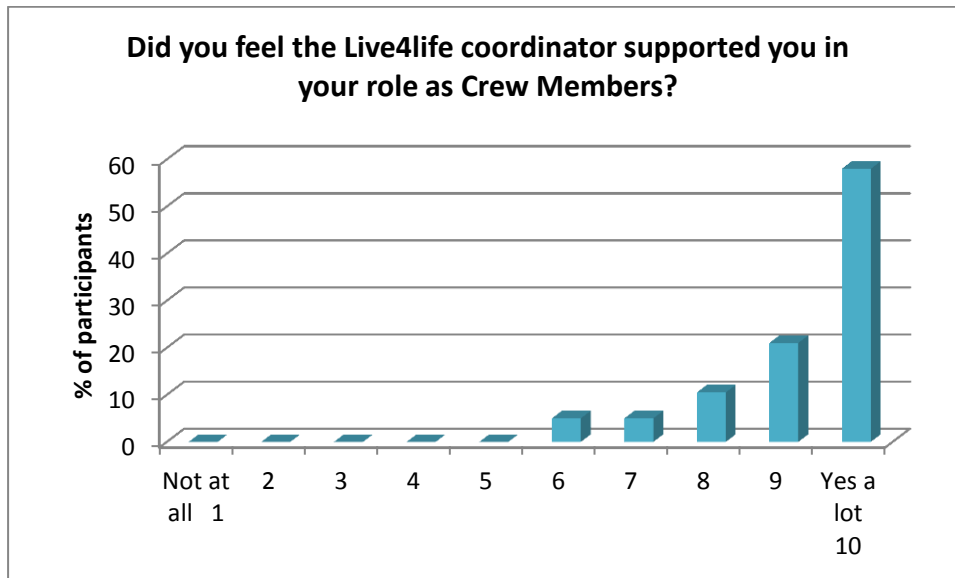
Did you feel you contributed well and as part of a team, when it came to your Crew commitments?

Generally participants did feel they contributed well to their Crew with the majority of responses being towards the positive end of the response spectrum, however some students indicated through neutral responses that they could have contributed to their team more.



Did you feel the Live4Life Coordinator supported you in your role as Crew Members?

Almost 80% of participants indicated through a score of 9 or 10 that they felt very well supported by the Live4Life Coordinator during the year. No participants felt unsupported by their coordinator as can be seen below.



Are there any other comments about Live4Life that you would like to make, either positive or negative?

Consistent with last year, participants who chose to respond to this question only left positive feedback, the following is a snapshot of some of these comments.

“I would like to thank-you for supporting me through the whole thing, and for giving me a valuable set of skills, like talking to a large crowd.”

“I think it’s a great program to have and I’m very glad that our schools are privileged enough to run it.”



“This year was amazing and I was so glad to be a part of it.”

“It’s a great program that seems to be improving every year.”

“I love live4Life, it is the bestest thing I’ve done in my highschooling, OMG. It has inspired me to take psychology as a subject. Thank-you, thank-you, thank-you!”

“Great experience that I will never forget. I learned heaps and gained so many new skills. Thank-you! It has been amazing.”

“Awesome year. Unique. “

Education Sessions

During 2014 four education sessions were offered to year 8 students at all six of the Live4Life schools, this was in addition to the Launch day, initial information session, and the Celebration event. This year Sunbury and Macedon Ranges Specialist School increased their involvement and took part in all aspects of the Live4Life program for 2014. Consequently, at least one of each session was run at each of the six Live4Life schools. The Launch day and Celebration event were, on the other hand, combined school events. Sessions were delivered by Live4Life staff and members of the Crew from that school.

The four education sessions were spread across the school year and the goal of these was to meet three key aims:

1. Improve mental health literacy
2. Destigmatise mental illness, whilst promoting positive mental health messages
3. Foster connections to local mental health services

Each of the four sessions had key messages to get across to the students. Given the success of the implementation of these sessions in 2013, content and structure remained the same as last year and was as follows:

Session 1: What's Up:

- ◆ Mental Health vs. Mental Illness
- ◆ Myth busting on anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicide, and eating disorders.

Session 2: In Your Head:

- ◆ How your thinking affects your mental health & what you can do about it
- ◆ Positive and constructive thinking styles

- ◆ Building resilience and promoting self-worth

Session 3: Body Talk:

- ◆ How your physical health affects your mental health & what you can do about it
- ◆ Relationship building with, friends, family and peers

Session 4: Helping Hand:

- ◆ Who can you talk to? School, family, locally, community, web-based activity through cyber life
- ◆ How should you treat others, bullying is a choice- say no
- ◆ Ways to stay and keep well – self-help/coping strategies

The main structure was different for each session, but generally included the use of multimedia, music, group work, discussion time, resource provision and handouts, a fun activity, summary, and an opportunity for questions and answers. This year educational videos were included from the Live4Life Crew, Sensibility, Headspace, Reach Out, and R U OK.

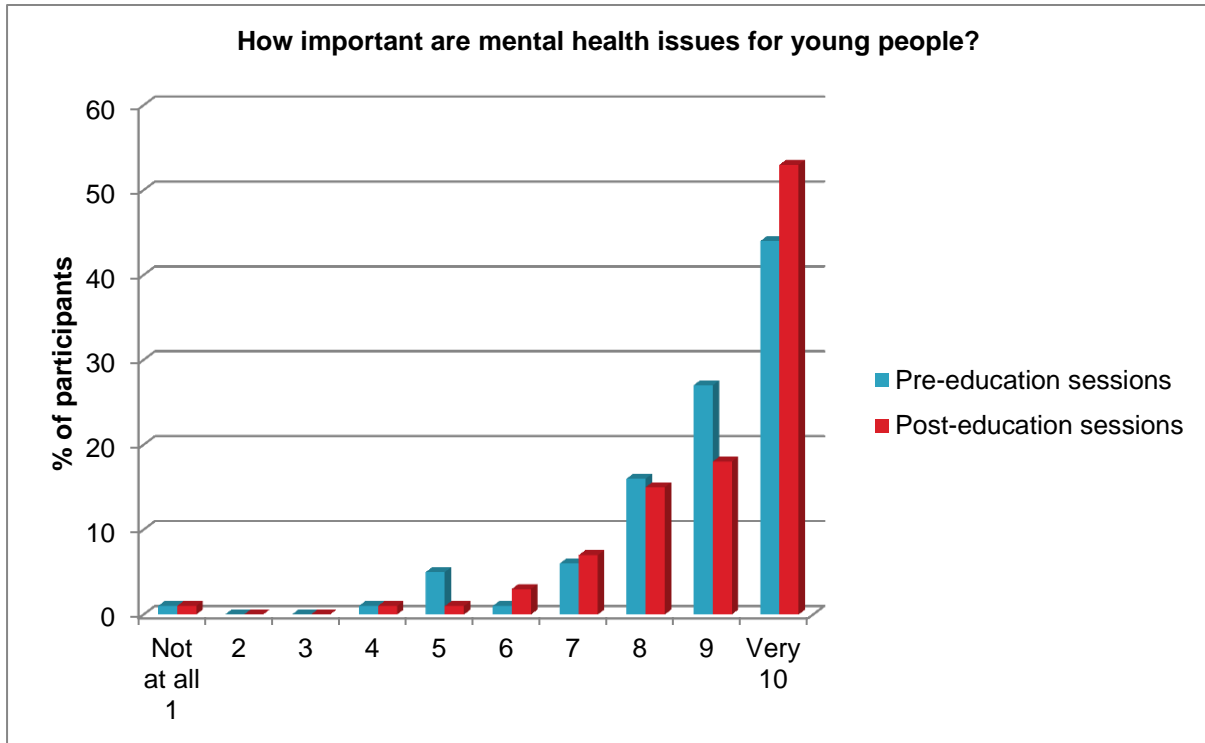
Feedback on the education sessions comes from three sources – the first was a questionnaire completed by a sample of participating year 8 students. The second source of feedback was through year 8 focus groups which took place at each school at the end of 2013. Data from the questionnaires will be presented first, followed by focus group data.

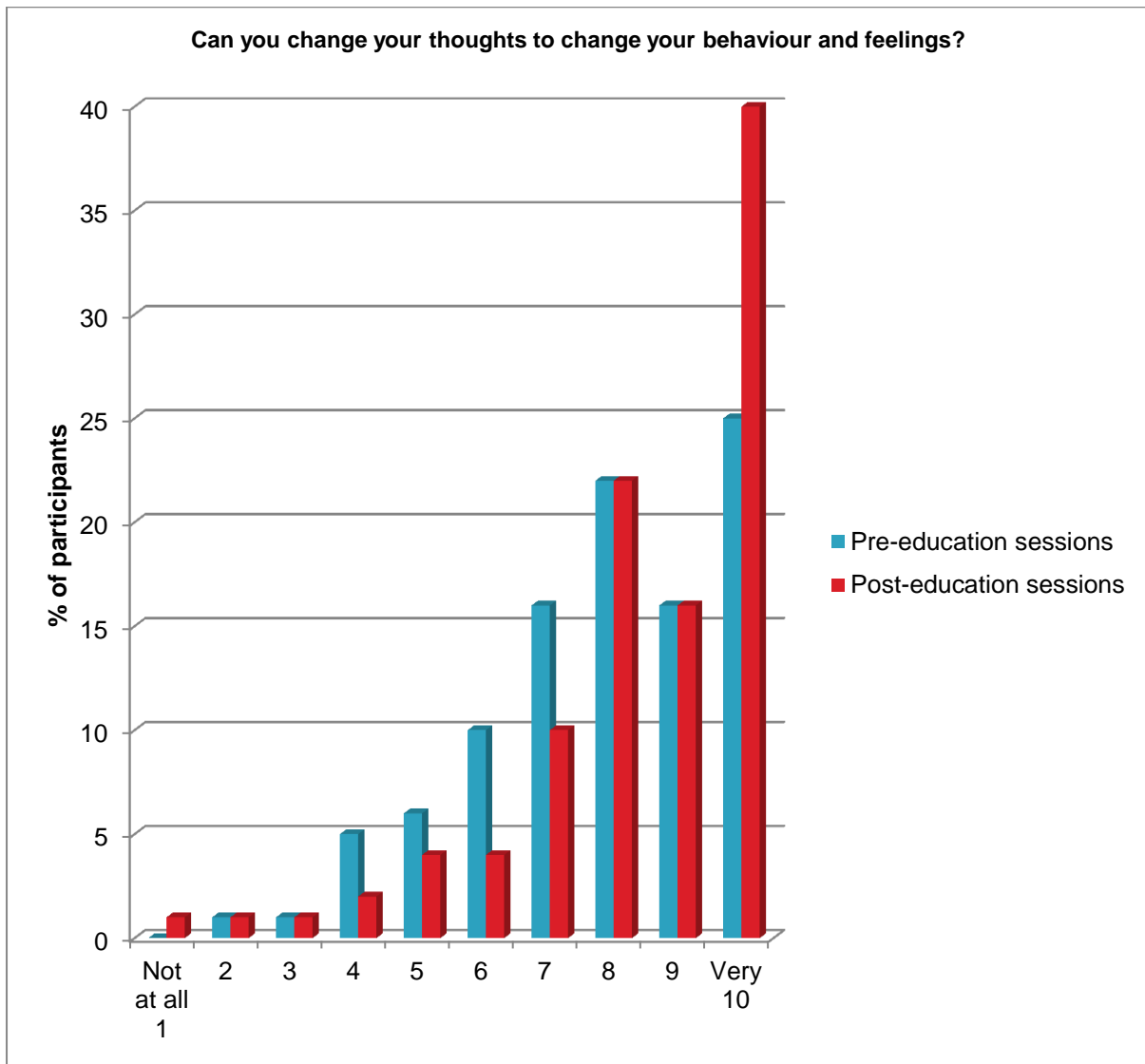
Questionnaire Data

Quantitative and qualitative data was gathered from a sample of the approximately 600 year 8 students who took part in the education sessions across the year, and all were given the opportunity to complete a pre- and post-questionnaire (see Appendix C) to assess the changes in their attitudes about mental health and seeking help. Students and their parent/guardians had to

provide voluntary, written consent to take part in this evaluation. Of those who took part, 179 students completed a pre-education session questionnaire, and 376 completed the post-education session questionnaire. Gender distribution data was not gathered. The following is a break-down of their results.

How important are mental health issues for young people?

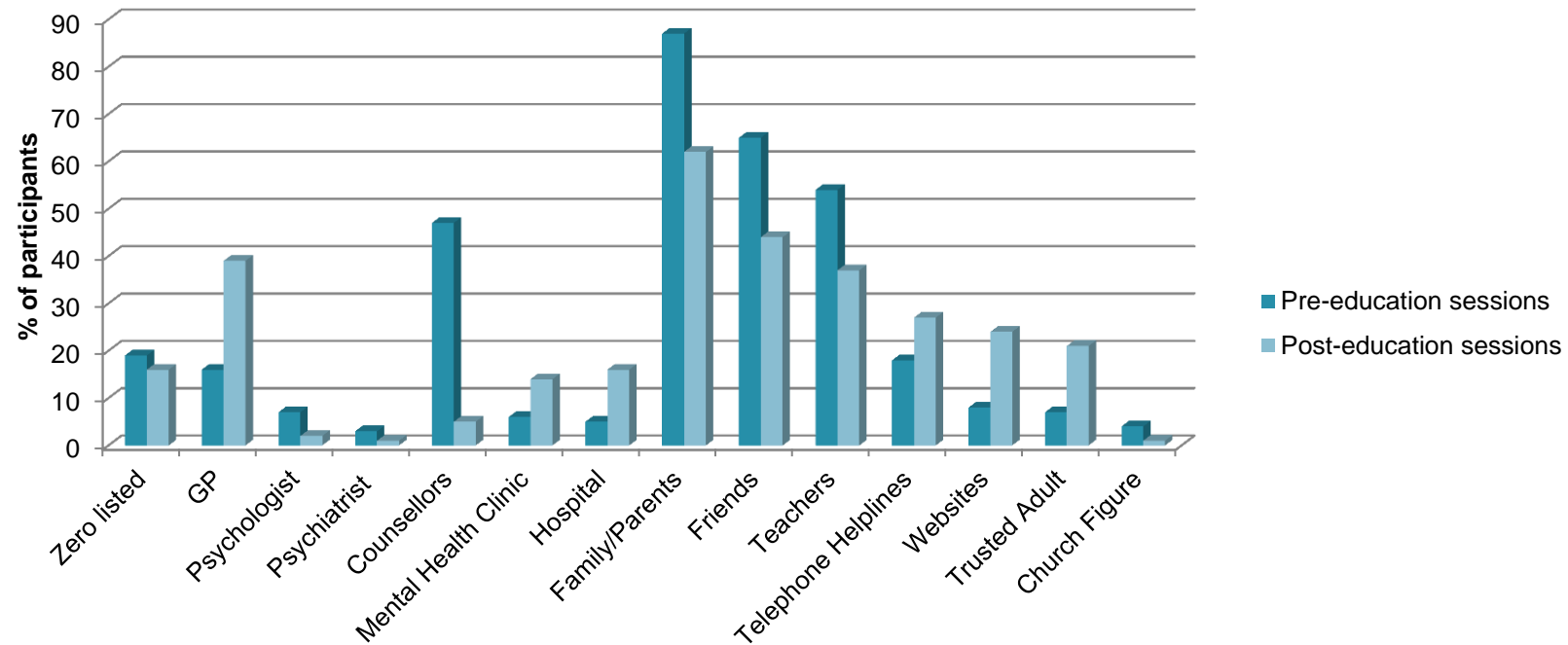


Can you change your thoughts to change your behaviour and feelings?**Please list where you could go for help if you were feeling depressed or anxious:**

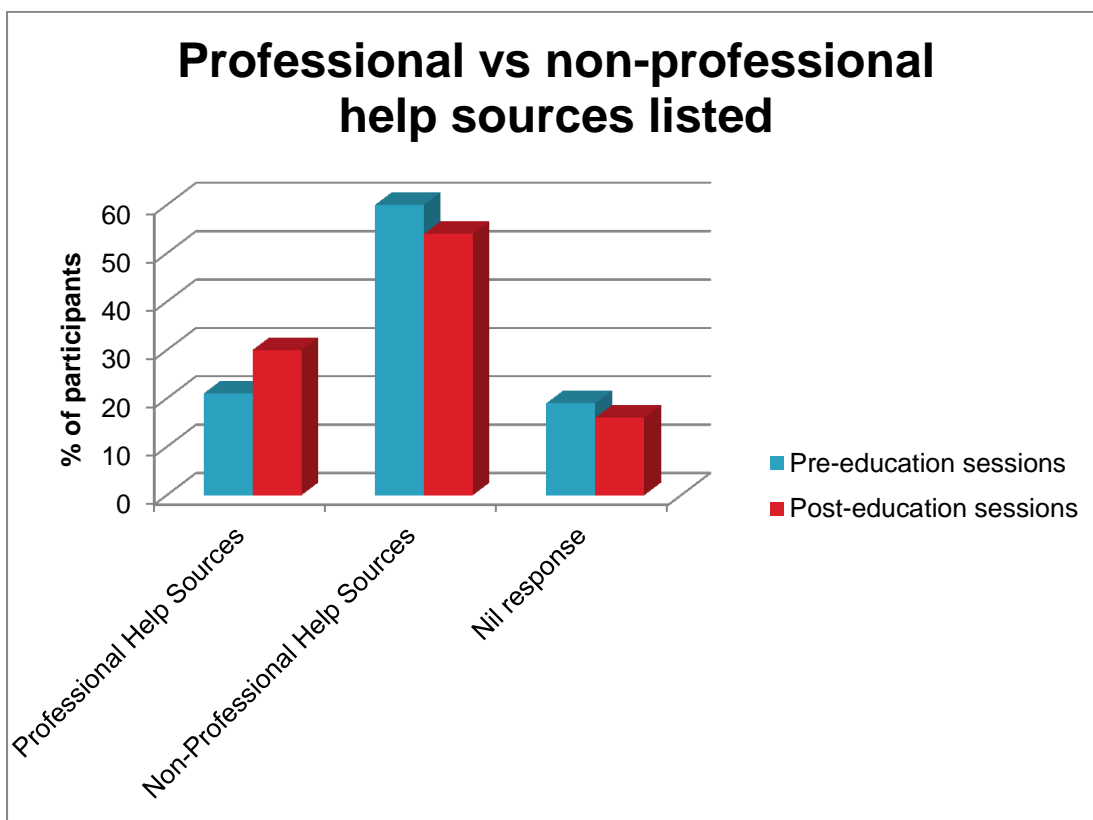
Participants were allowed to list a maximum of four places/people in answer to this question.

Although results were not negative, nor were overwhelming improvements in help source knowledge evident. The most encouraging changes were a decrease in preference to seek help from friends about a mental health issue which dropped from 65% to 44%, and at post intervention, there was also an increase in the number of participants aware that they could speak to their GP about a mental health issue, increasing from 16 to 39%. Please see following page for full results table.

Where could you go for help if you were feeling depressed or anxious?

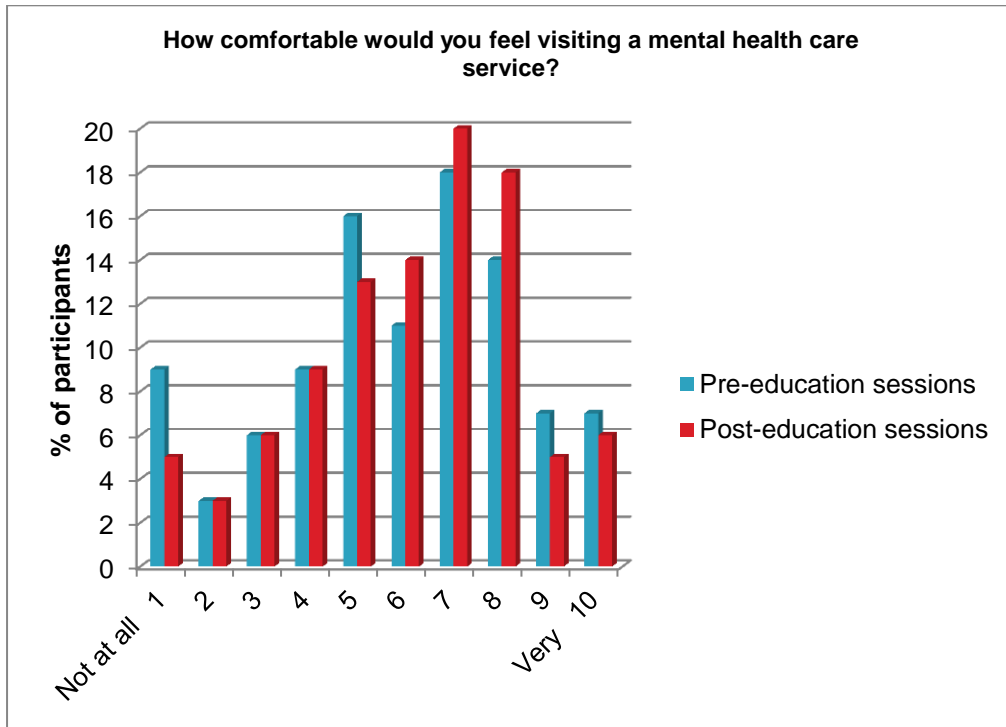


Additionally, results were broken down to show the changes in help seeking for professional and non-professional help sources. Keeping in mind that students were limited to four responses, results are a little more illuminating, and indicate an important trend post intervention towards help-seeking from professional help sources. This is an important and valuable change as a GP for instance, is in a much better position to assist someone with a youth mental health issue than a fellow year 8 student is. There does appear to be a trend post intervention for students to access their school counsellors less, it is difficult to determine whether this is due to a better understanding of other places that they can seek help, or genuine increased reluctance to talk to them.

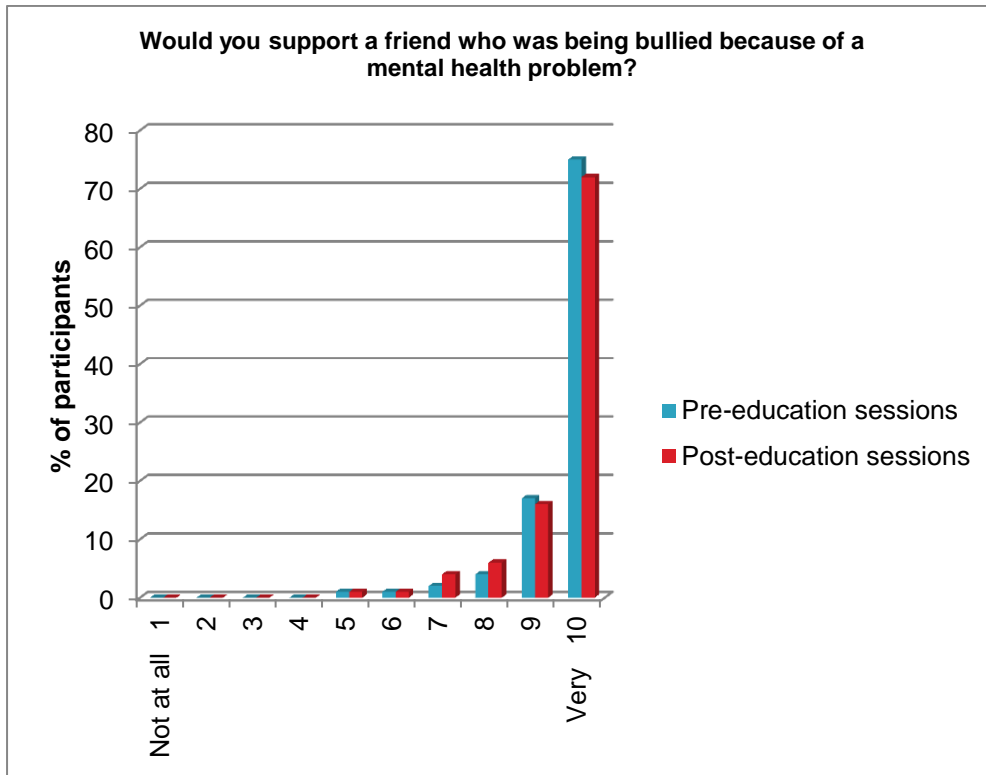


NB. Professional help sources included: GP, Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Counsellors, Mental health clinic, and hospital. Non-professional help sources included: Family/Parent, friends, teachers, telephone helplines, websites, trusted adult and church figure.

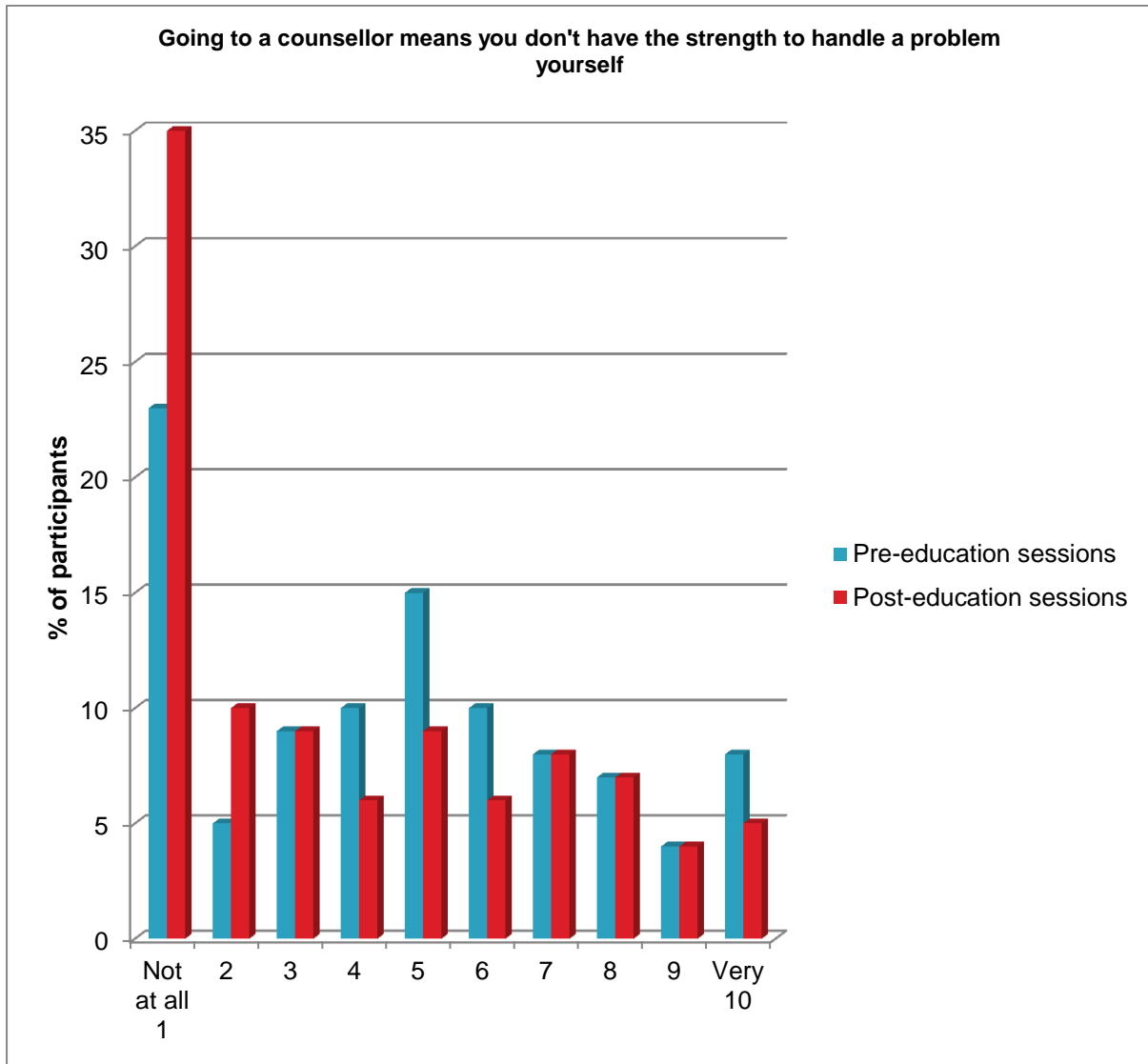
How comfortable would you feel visiting a mental health care service?



Would you support a friend who was being bullied because of a mental health problem?



Going to a counsellor means you don't have the strength to handle the problem yourself.

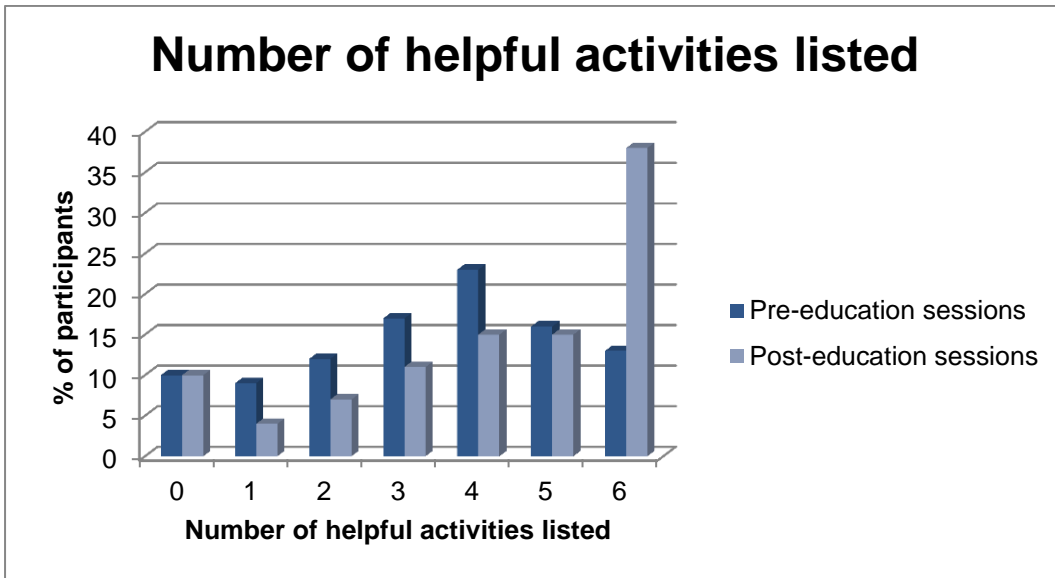


Please list some activities that might help your mental health:

Participants were asked to list activities that might help their mental health, as participants were able to write anything they wished, results have been simplified by collating some groups. As there are a broad range of acceptable responses, the number of helpful responses has been counted for each participant in order to show the change in knowledge base, and this data in the following graph.

Generally participants were able to list considerably more helpful mental health activities post intervention than pre-intervention, with 29% of participants able to list 5-6 positive activities pre-intervention, and 53% of participants post-intervention, an

increase of over double. This change is almost identical to that of 2013 (24% pre to 52.5% post) adding weight to the consistency of the results of this program.



Focus Group Data

What key messages did you learn in the Live4Life education sessions?

In response to this question, two main themes were raised. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided below.

Key messages learnt in education sessions:

- ◆ **Mental health issues are treatable, and where to go for help**
- ◆ **What you can do to look after your mental health**

Mental health issues are treatable, and where to go for help

Participants were able to demonstrate that they had learned that there were a range of help sources available to help treat mental health issues, and that some of these are quite easily accessed. Participants indicated that this had made them feel more comfortable if someone comes to them for help as they now know where to direct them.

“Where you can go for help, like what specific places”

(Participant no. 9, female, Gisborne Secondary School)

“I like the helpline thing. Like when people are upset/depressed there’s always a way to help them. I think that helped a bit, like if it’s something bad there’s always an option. Like doctors, yeah”

(Participant no. 2, male, Sacred Heart College)

“That there are like tons of different places to go to if you are experiencing a problem”

(Participant no.9, male, Braemar College)

What you can do to look after your mental health & others

A range of participant comments showed that they had started to learn some practical tips for keeping their mental health on track through their education sessions.

“I like the positive automatic and neutral thinking because it’s something they can use every day just to improve the simple things in life. ”

(Participant no. 2, male, Macedon Grammar)

“It’s important to have a good diet, get exercise, and stop working for a bit just to help your mental health”

(Participant no. 1, female, Braemar College)

“...one of the main things I learned is like how to identify someone who like may be suffering and on the verge of depression or anxiety and stuff. I kind of learnt how you should talk to them as a friend. Just be there for them because that’s one of the main important things when someone’s suffering.”

(Participant no. 8, male, Macedon Grammar)

What did you like about the Education sessions?

In response to this question, three main themes were raised. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided below.

What liked about Education sessions:

- ◆ High level of student participation
- ◆ Fun and Interactive
- ◆ Prizes

High level of student participation

Participants identified the way that activities included students no matter what their interests were as the content and delivery was so diverse. This resulted in a good degree of engagement by students.

“I liked when we um got out of our seats and did something like we pulled our chairs forward and we um sat on the floor and did that little poster? That was good. And I like the way you brought out the creative and the sporty and the quiet.”

(Participant no. 1, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“I liked kind of the dancing part where there was no judgement and you could just do what you wanted, and you saw people that weren’t very good at dancing but you did it anyway”

(Participant no. 3, male, Sacred Heart College)

“What I really like about the activities were that it helped to encourage people to just get up and do it and usually, we don’t usually do that kind of thing we just sit down and look at our feet.”

(Participant no. 3, male, Macedon Grammar)

Fun and Interactive

Interactive group activities were favoured by participants. Participants described enjoying the boxing, meditation, dancing and poster making activities.

“They included some activities that we could be included in and enjoy. So for example. Boxing and dancing”

(Participant no. 4, female, Braemar College)

“I liked how we also focused on physical and how like physical can lead to mental health as well so we got doing physical activities to describe how you can help with that because like the dancing and stuff like made us really happy and energetic, so it showed that physical activity helped with mental health.”

(Participant no. 8, male, Macedon Grammar)

“The quiet people could do the relaxing part, the creative people could do that poster and the sport people, everyone had the chance to like shine and I thought that was good.”

(Participant no. unknown, Kyneton Secondary College)

“I like how they included everyone, and it wasn’t just. You got into fun activities. It wasn’t just work- it was fun”

(Participant no. 7, male, Gisborne Secondary School)

Prizes

The provision of food as a prize and motivator for answering questions and listening to information in sessions was well received.

“I liked how the prizes influenced people on like answering questions and not to be like hmm I don’t know and all that kind of stuff... good coloured wristbands!”

(Participant no. 3, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“how they gave out prizes if you answered the questions correctly”

(Participant no. 6, male, Gisborne Secondary College)

What didn’t you like or could have been done better in the Education sessions?

In response to this question, two main themes were raised.

Areas for improvement in Education sessions:

- ◆ **Less repetitive**
- ◆ **More sessions and/or interactive activity time**

Explanation of these with supporting quotes are provided below. Additionally one other comment was made, but not sufficiently to qualify as a theme between groups. This was a request for a smaller education group size (Gisborne), or for a larger education room (Sacred Heart).

Less repetitive

Some focus group participants indicated that they found the content of the education sessions too repetitive.

“...it was kind of repetitive”

(Participant no. 8, male, Braemar College)

“Wait I just got to think about it. That we like learnt too much about like one thing. Like every session when ere were just sitting down getting taught about it we were told the same thing think we should have been told more about other things as well.”

(Participant no. 3, female, Braemar College)

More sessions and/or more interactive activity time

Participants expressed their enjoyment of interactive activities, however, they requested further time for interactive activities and more balance between sit down tasks and movement activities. Additionally, some participants suggested that they would like a double session for the education sessions rather than a single, and others suggested including more education sessions in the program.

“...we had 6 sessions right? Yeah, so if you have to fit a lot in during the year but is there any way we could have like an extra session?”

(Participant no. 2, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“Like longer times to do boxing or the running or dancing – we didn’t get much time to do it.”

(Participant no. 5, female, Sacred Heart College)

“If anything I would say like possibly manage the timing of the sessions a bit better like a lot of the time we’d spend the time doing comprehension and then you say “now we’re going to have a poster competition” and then we’d have about 5 minutes to work on it. I think we need something we can really put our minds to for about 10

minutes or so but not go like overtime into recess and stuff like that. I think that would be good.”

(Participant no. 4, male, Macedon Grammar)

Do you think student’s attitudes towards those with mental health problems have changed over the year? Why? Why not?

In response to this question, and consistent with last year’s results it is important to note that no one in the five focus groups thought that attitudes had not changed, so all responses are relevant only to how attitudes have changed. Similarly the two main themes

Student attitudes have changed because:

- ◆ **Increase in knowledge leading to less judging and bullying**
- ◆ **Developed empathy towards those with mental health issues**

raised were the same as those from last year. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided below. Although it wasn’t raised in other groups, thereby not constituting a theme, several students made suggestions that the program had helped out some students who had mental health issues to feel better about themselves as well, indicating a reduction in self-stigma, an important contributing factor for help-seeking.

Increase in knowledge leading to less judging and bullying behaviour

Participants reported that they thought that increases in student knowledge base about mental health issues was contributing to more acceptance of those with mental health issues. Several students also made comments about boys in particular being more mindful of the effect of their bullying behavior on others, and moderating this more now.

“I think that now that we know more about mental health issues, we can take the step towards understanding people with them”

(Participant no. 1, female, Braemar College)

“Yeah I do think that it’s changed because of how they’ve been warned about what things can happen and like if they don’t help them what could happen”

(Participant no. 4, male, Kyneton Secondary College)

“I think it has improved because the boys and stuff have thought about what people think if they’re bullies”

(Participant no. 7, male, Kyneton Secondary College)

“I think that it’s really influencing changing people’s minds about the way they should treat other people... a lot of people have changed their mind and got their act together”

(Participant no. 2, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“they’re not broken they just need a bit of help – treat them like you would treat your best friend.”

(Participant no. 8, male, Macedon Grammar)

“I think it might also have made a lot more people understand that like mental health problems... like it doesn’t make people like different – it just means that they struggle with more stuff than you might not expect. Which generally does mean that they’re different but it’s not different like they’re a whole different race.”

(Participant no. 4, male, Macedon Grammar)

Developed empathy towards those with mental health issues

Participants indicated that students had developed empathy for those with mental illness and that this had changed attitudes towards those people. Additionally, lower levels of fear were reported, and a better understanding of what it might be like to have a mental health issue, to need, and to receive help and kindness from them.

“It’s good to learn about it cause family members might have it and you don’t understand it quite well so I learnt quite a bit about it cause my brother has a mental issue so it helped me understand what he’s going through about it”

(Participant no. 7, female, Sacred Heart College)

“I guess we’re more aware of our surroundings and people and their feelings and stuff.”

(Participant no. 8, male, Macedon Grammar)

“...I thought that was really powerful how someone went over and helped that person out” [In response to a role play of someone who had a mental health issue and needed help]

(Participant no. 3, male, Macedon Grammar)

What did you learn about help-seeking for mental health problems after participating in the Live4Life education sessions?

In response to this question, two main themes were raised. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided.

There are lots of different help sources available

Participants indicated that they had learnt that there are a range of different help-sources available to them, and each group was able to suggest some of these unprompted including GPs, school counsellors, friends, phone lines and websites.

What learnt about help-seeking:

- ◆ **There are lots of different help sources available**
- ◆ **Confidential nature of help available**

“I learned there’s heaps and heaps of options, not just talking to a friend – there’s way more”

(Participant no. 6, female, Sacred Heart College)

“I found that even if you’re underage you can still go to the doctor by yourself or like talk to a Counsellor and get help that way”

(Participant no. unknown, female, Macedon Grammar)

“I learnt how and ways to support people and I learnt new and different things and ways to get help from other people”

(Participant no. 5, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“I didn’t realise how many like Beyondblue, was out there. I didn’t really know that you could call them and talk to them anytime. I thought that was pretty cool”

(Participant no. 3, male, Sacred Heart College)

“That there’s more people out there than you think that could help you”

(Participant no. 2, female, Gisborne Secondary School)

Confidential nature of help available

Participants reported that they now knew of confidential help sources, and the way that their information is treated by health professionals such as GPs. It was indicated that this had broken down some barriers to help seeking for participants.

“You don’t even have to like go somewhere you can just do it on line and talk to real people.”

(Participant no. 1, female, Gisborne Secondary School)

“To just add back on what (Girl) said I think the fact that it’s confidential that if people are worried about their families finding out – about family and friends finding out – like that its confidential you can do it online and you can just go into your local GP and just tell them and nobody needs to know and then that could just help you, you don’t even need anybody else’s help you can just do it by yourself. “

(Participant no. 2, male, Macedon Grammar)

“...it was really, really good about the websites ... it’s good because you might not feel confident talking or asking family because they could just like shut you down because they might be in denial that their child is like having depression

feelings or something along those lines. So it's good they listed some websites and places you can go to by yourself so you don't have to ask an adult..."

(Participant no.8, male, Macedon Grammar)

Do you feel more confident to seek help for a mental health problem if you needed to after participating in the Live4Life program?

In response to this question, only one main theme was raised. Explanation of this with supporting quotes is provided below. Please note that one participant stated that they were not more confident as they felt they needed to know more about what would happen after they sought professional help.

More confident to seek help because:

◆ **Know it's confidential**

Know it's confidential

The majority of participants in each of the five focus groups spoke about the confidential nature of any information shared with a help-source and how this has increased their confidence to seek help. One participant indicated that as a result of the program she had actually sought help during the year.

"Well knowing that it's all confidential and it won't like get out into the public and stuff like that – um I probably wouldn't hesitate to use any of the sites"

(Participant no. 4, male, Macedon Grammar)

"...at first at the start of the year I don't think I realised there are so many supportive people, and I don't think I would've had the confidence to go to someone especially wondering they would say someone to something else. But now I know it's all confidential and no one knows you're there and things like that and I would have more confidence if I wanted to go"

(Participant no. 2, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

"You can go to the doctor without having to like get your parents involved."

(Participant no. 3, female, Gisborne Secondary School)

Live4Life Competition

The competition was started in 2010, and has run each subsequent year as it has remained popular amongst students and an effective way to disseminate positive mental health messages. This year saw 101 individual and group entries from the six schools with 375 names put to entries – representing an increase in participation by approximately a third from 2013.

Crew members were an integral part of the competition in 2014, consistent with 2012 and 2013, they chose the theme, short listed, and then subsequently judged the entries, ultimately determining individual and group prize allocation.

The theme this year was “**What Makes you Smile**” with an emphasis on staying mental healthy and encouraging protective factors against mental health problems. In response to feedback in 2012 and 2013 indicating confusion about themes and inability to access or lost entry forms, an information session on the theme was held at each school, and information posters were also distributed to participant schools. Additional to this, in 2014 the competition theme was further explained for students in the Live4Life workbook and website. The website included links to the entry form. Copies of these can be found in Appendices D and E. Given the considerably higher student entry rate, it can be assumed that these measures were effective in addressing previously raised issues. This year prize winning categories were Individual, Group, Photography, Multimedia, Other, Crew's Choice, and Workbook puzzle. There were 18 cash prizes distributed which varied from \$20 to \$400, and in total \$2070 in prizes were handed out. Winning entries can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfI0KEkk3G4XmZ1--RACHqqm3YoXHZRM>

Feedback about the competition comes from students who attended the Year 8 focus groups. Responses were sought regarding positive and negative aspects

of the competition in 2014, and whether or not students felt the competition should be compulsory.

Positive Feedback about the Competition:

In response to this question, two main themes were raised. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided.

Positive Feedback about the competition:

- ◆ **Elements of choice**
- ◆ **Personal relevance of the topic**

Elements of choice

Participants expressed enjoying the competition task for a range of reasons. These included having the option to work with friends, in groups or on their own, and in a format or style that they were comfortable with.

“Getting to work as a group on something that people actually liked?”

(Participant no. 8, male, Kyneton Secondary College)

“...[I liked] how there was like all the different categories- so if you weren't an 'arty' person you didn't have to make a poster”

(Participant no. 3, female, Gisborne Secondary College)

“Watching, having a chance to see what everyone else took out of it, what they thought, and put into their work”

(Participant no. 6, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

Personal relevance of the topic

Participants indicated that as the topic pertained to what made them smile, it was easy for them to connect with the topic and to come up with a competition entry. They reported that this encouraged them to engage more with the task, as it felt relevant to them.

“I think the fact that when you do it, just the fact that you’re doing it and about something that makes you smile it gives you a better idea because you’re linking mental health to something that you like so when you orientate those two things together you’re going to have a better idea of what it means.”

(Participant no. 2, male, Macedon Grammar)

“I like that it’s a lot more personal um because I think the other competitions basically might have just been saying stuff that a lot of people knew but trying to do it in a creative way but this was actually a lot more personal and allowed for a lot more variation and different entries”

(Participant no. 4, male, Macedon Grammar)

Negative feedback and suggestions for the competition:

In response to this question, three main themes were raised. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided.

More prizes

Participants in two groups raised issues with prizes. One focus group focused on the need for more prizes, participants in another suggested that better quality prizes might be worthwhile pursuing.

“...maybe have more categories instead of ... having four categories and got a giant prize. Maybe make a few more categories so a few more people win instead of like 4 people- because not many people won.”

(Participant 8, male, Braemar College)

The participant who spoke next identified that there were in fact many more than four prizes handed out, but thought more prize categories were needed.

Negative Feedback about the competition:

- ◆ **More prizes**
- ◆ **Iron out some entry submission issues**
- ◆ **Display more competition entries**

“...instead of having an ‘other’ category with heaps and heaps of different things. You should umm. Branch out so if someone enters a cake there should be a cake category then.”

(Participant 4, female, Braemar College)

Iron out some entry submission issues

Participants from several focus groups raised concerns about the entry submission process. One issue was that participants had sent their entry from their personal email instead of from the Live4Life website as the directions outlined. Some participants indicated that they had not received the submission directions. Participants also indicated that they were disappointed in the push for some entries to be entered electronically rather than in person, for example, a sculpture was encouraged to be photographed and the photos of it entered via the website.

“They should really explain how to email it because I didn’t know how to do it”

(Participant 9, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“Making your submission – making entering a lot easier – I tried to do and I couldn’t do it. I tried to upload it and I couldn’t find it at all on the website”

(Participant 1, male, Macedon Grammar)

Display more competition entries

Participants expressed a desire to view more of the competition entries during the celebration event to view in person as well as on the PowerPoint presentation.

“I think that what you can do before next year um is when like at the final celebration, instead of having a slide show of pictures and stuff – you should put a couple of them on the stage or around the stage”

(Participant unknown, Kyneton Secondary College)

Should competition entry be a choice or compulsory?

Responses to this question have been broken into a sample of arguments presented for competition entry being compulsory or by choice. As a general rule, there were some participants for and against compulsory entry in every focus group, although generally there were more arguments for compulsory entry provided.

Competition entry by choice arguments

“for the people who want to do it, it makes it more fun if it’s not compulsory because then you don’t feel like you’re having to do it and it’s an obligation

(Participant no. 8, male, Braemar College)

“I don’t think it will like make a difference because the people who don’t want to do it their entry is going to be rubbish, so they’re not going to actually win anything. Where the people who want to do it they’re the ones who are going to actually win. So if you make it not compulsory it’s going to be the same except less people are going to be in it.”

(Participant no. 10, female, Braemar College)

“I think choice is good because instead of people going um we’re forced to do this so let’s just drag it out as long as we can, it actually like so OK I wanna do this so let’s actually do it? It actually motivates people to actually do it because they don’t have to. It’s their choice to do it. I feel like if it was compulsory it would like discourage some people”

(Participant no. 8, male, Kyneton Secondary College)

“It should be a choice because not everyone always like has the time to do it.”

(Participant no. 2, female, Gisborne Secondary College)

“If it was choice then I think you’d get a lot more wholesome entries but if it was compulsory I think you’d get a couple of people just putting in things they don’t really care about they just say “well here’s something that took me five minutes to make I’m just handing it in so that I don’t, like, get a detention””

(Participant no. 4, male, Macedon Grammar)

Compulsory competition entry arguments

“I think you should have to make an entry because it makes you reflect of the stuff you have learnt, but you shouldn’t have to submit it to the competition if you don’t want to.”

(Participant no. 3, female, Gisborne Secondary College)

“I think we should do it through, form the start first of all I think we should be made to do it, maybe throughout like we should get the teachers to give us a couple of days or periods at school so we just had time to do it. Kinda like a project cause you have to do it at school.”

(Participant no. 3, male, Sacred Heart College)

Live4Life Website

The purpose of the Live4Life website is to be a source of information for students and parents of students participating in Live4Life. Information on events, dates, competitions, and links to other reputable mental health websites can all be found there. Additionally past competition entries and photos of students at past events can be viewed here.

The Live4Life website has been in operation for four years now, and alterations have been made every year in response to suggestions from Year 8's on how it could be improved. This year although the structure remained the same, the website was given a new look. Additionally, advertising of the existence of the website was increased in response to feedback that students are still largely unaware of or not using this resource. The website was mentioned repeatedly during all Live4Life events, and was included on wrist bands given out as prizes to try to raise its profile.

Qualitative feedback was again sought from Year 8 focus group participants to gain an impression of the response to the 2013 version of the Live4Life website, whether they had used it or not and why. Responses have been broken down into those who used it, those who didn't and their reasons for this, and suggestions for improving the website in 2014.

Compared to previous years, this year only a minority of focus group participants indicated that they did not know the website existed, and the majority indicated that they knew about it and had used it.

Why used Live4Life website?

Those who had used the website reported they had used it to:

- Look up competition details and entries
- Sign up for the crew
- Find out information for Live4Life projects
- See photos of Live4life events

Why not used Live4Life website?

Those who claimed to not have used the website suggested this was for one of two reasons including:

- Had no reason to look at it, didn't think needed to
- Didn't know or forgot website existed

End of Year Celebration Event

In October 2014 an end of year Live4Life Celebration event took place at Braemar College. This year The Crew retained their ownership of the event and assisted in a range of tasks which are outlined below.

The purpose of this event was to celebrate the achievements of the students during 2014 who took part in Live4Life activities and to display and award prizes for successful "What Makes You Smile" competition entries. Students, school principals, year 8 teachers and some parents attended.

Crew Involvement in Celebration Event 2014

- ◆ **Organising the content of the event**
- ◆ **Writing and delivering Award speeches on stage**
- ◆ **Performing short skits during the Celebration.**
- ◆ **Taking the role of ushers for the Year 8's as they arrived**
- ◆ **Organisation of morning tea**

As part of this event, entertainment was also provided. This entertainment included performances by The Hyderabad Mind, The Ukelalas, and by two members of the Crew – Claudia Pearce who provided a poem recital, and Charlottle Gunter who sang.

Initially, a summary of learning's from the event will be presented, followed by the highlights of this event, and recommendations for future end of year celebrations. This feedback data originates from Year 8 focus groups.

What did you learn at the End of Year Celebration event?

Participants advised that through this event they had learnt more about the Crew and that they had consolidated learnings from throughout the year.

Learnings from Celebration Event:

- ◆ **Learnt more about the Crew**
- ◆ **Consolidation of lessons from other Live4Life events**

Learnt more about the Crew

Participants indicated that they enjoyed both seeing the Crew with such important roles, learning from them, and learning what it might be like to be in the Crew.

“...we also learnt about like, a bit more about the crew because it as a bit more of a focus on them. – So we got to see how to apply to be that and what they do and stuff”

(Participant no. 1, female, Braemar College)

“We got to watch the crew members having fun and it’s made me realise I really want to join the crew next year – it looks really good and there’s different things you can do and they just look so happy to help out other people with learning different things about mental health.”

(Participant no. 2, female, Kyneton Secondary School)

Consolidation of lessons from other Live4Life events

Participants reported that they had learnt many of the things that had come up during lessons during the year, indicating a consolidation of learning.

“I learnt not to be afraid of going to school. You know like out of all the sessions and the launch and the end of year Live4Life Celebrations I learnt about not to be scared about going and seeing people and letting my inner happiness shine instead of making my sadness come through you know what I mean?”

(Participant no. 5, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“...we learnt a lot throughout like all the sessions”

(Participant no. 4, female, Gisborne Secondary College)

“Well I guess people going into Live4Life thinking oh it’s just a few sessions or whatever, but what you get out of it like impacts your life. It like touches you.”

(Participant no. unknown, female, Macedon Grammar)

What were your favourite parts of the End of Year Celebration event?

In response to this question, four main themes were raised. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided below.

Favourite aspects of Celebration event:

- ◆ Socialising
- ◆ Entertainment/activities
- ◆ Crew Involvement
- ◆ Viewing competition entries

Socialising

Participants indicated that they enjoyed mixing with students from other schools, and spending time with each other.

“Seeing like friends and stuff from other schools and getting to socialise with them”

(Participant no. 4, female, Braemar College)

“how we got to go outside and have a break and how we get to interact with everyone else from other schools

(Participant no. 2, female, Gisborne Secondary College)

Entertainment/activities

Focus group participants reported enjoying the entertainment provided, and the outside activities.

“the music, and just like how you can go up on stage and dance with them- it’s pretty cool”

(Participant no. 7, male, Gisborne Secondary College)

“Basically the rapper and we could all ... get up and dance. It was a really good thin[g] and they like had more and I like the Ukulele players playing happy songs”

(Participant no. 8, male, Macedon Grammar)

Crew Involvement

Participants found the Crew to be accessible, involved and that they added an important and positive element to this whole event.

“With the crew and the end of year celebration they moved around a lot more and they came up to us, like at the start they like just stood out at the front and pretended to dance and everything but like at the end they were coming up to us and doing crazy things and getting us involved”

(Participant no. 5, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“Um I think that because the crew was really getting in and getting really involved and coming around to everyone and get everyone involved it made it more fun as well – put more enthusiasm into the whole thing”

(Participant no. 4, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

Viewing competition entries

Participants reported enjoying watching competition video entries, and seeing some of the actual entries brought in as well.

“Getting to watch all the videos and finding out who wins and all that”

(Participant no. 5, female, Gisborne Secondary College)

“All the performances that we got to watch and videos and such... you could tell how creative people were and umm how different[ly] they thought about the thing [topic]”

(Participant no. 6, male, Braemar College)

“The artwork being shown and the videos as well”

(Participant no. 7, female, Sacred Heart College)

What parts weren't so great or would you change for another time?

In response to this question, four themes were raised. Explanations of these with supporting quotes are provided forthwith.

More mingling time

Participants requested more opportunities to sit together and talk with friends from others schools.

Suggestions for improvement:

- ◆ More mingling time
- ◆ More time at the stalls/outside activities
- ◆ More food
- ◆ Bigger venue

“...if the schools could sit like where ever like if we didn’t have to sit in schools and like that makes it hard for the teachers to like keep the quiet and whatever but mmm.. it would be more fun.”

(Participant no. 2, female, Braemar College)

“[I wish] that we didn’t have to sit with our schools, that we could sit with our friends from other schools”

(Participant no. 2, female, Gisborne Secondary College)

More time at the stalls/outside activities

It was reported that outside time worked better during the event, partly due to the space restrictions inside, but also that this kept participants interested. Additionally, participants reported having to rush through the stalls as there wasn’t time to do anything else.

“Possibly a bit more time looking at the stalls cause I think a lot of people said ok there’s a short time lets go over and get all the wristbands we can and get all the lollies we can and get out.”

(Participant no. 4, male, Macedon Grammar)

“We were sitting there for a bit too long sometimes, like it got a bit boring because we were sitting there for ages”

(Participant no. 1, female, Gisborne Secondary College)

“Maybe just do different activities – like more maybe outside stuff not so much all inside – yeah it makes you tired.”

(Participant no. 4, female, Kyneton Secondary College)

“I thought maybe we could of had some a bit more games in the end Launch (Celebration) like instead of being a bit more downbeat that its ended there could have been tug-of-war between the schools and the winner got something. That would have been pretty cool – just something like that. Some big whole area game that we could play.”

(Participant no. 3, male, Sacred Heart College)

More food

Participants requested more food, and fairer distribution of food between schools.

“There wasn’t much to choose from- more pastries and stuff”

(Participant no. 1, female, Braemar College)

“We could get better food – because we have Subway here that takes amazing – but then we had hot cross buns, apples, bananas”

(Participant no. 3, male, Macedon Grammar)

“Uh all of the massive schools that got out before us raided all the donuts first. Girl – by the time we got there most of the food was gone”

(Participant no. 4, male, Macedon Grammar)

Bigger venue

Several participants raised the issue of crowding during the inside period of the event, and participants recommended finding a bigger space for next year’s celebration event.

“I don’t think there was quite enough space for all of us to go in. Maybe if we went outside if it was a good day – I think that would be pretty good.”

(Participant no. 3, male, Sacred Heart College)

“Yeah it was squished”

(Participant no. 4, male, Sacred Heart College)

Live4Life Awards Won to Date

2011

Honourable Mention – **Suicide Prevention Australia**. For contribution to youth suicide prevention.

NAB Schools First Impact Award. This award of \$50,000 was awarded to Gisborne Secondary College and Live4Life for its successful School and Community Partnership approach. The award funds will be utilized to pilot Live4Life in year 7 at GSC.

2012

In 2012 Live4Life received the first ever inaugural **Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) Australia award** for its work providing YMHFA courses to parents and teachers of Live4Life students. This recognised a community wide effort to increase mental health literacy, reduce the stigma of mental illness, and increase discussion of and help-seeking behaviour of young people.

2013

Live4Life is proud to announce that they won the runners-up award (Highly Commended) at the **VLGA READYS Awards** in Dec 2013. The READYS recognise excellence in delivery of youth services among local governance organisations.

Goals Achieved from 2013 Report Recommendations:

Networking

Networking opportunities have continued to be made available to students, school and community staff within 2014.

Crew Training

This year Crew members received further training than last year, they completed a two day leadership camp, which was well received by crew members. This year Crew members gave very positive feedback on their involvement in this initiative.

Youth Mental Health First Aid

Youth mental health first aid was not included in this year's evaluation due to consistently good feedback from participants over several years. It is important to note, however, that this was still run at no cost to parent and teacher participants during 2014. This year there were five parent groups, two school teacher/staff groups, and one council staff group ran. Additionally, the Teen Mental Health First Aid program was rolled out to four schools in 2014 at a cost of only \$20 per student. Gisborne Secondary College and Kyneton Secondary College fees have been subsidised by their respective town Rotary Clubs.

There are already six YMHFA courses scheduled, and four schools have signed on for the TMHFA course in 2015.

Education sessions/Launch and Celebration Events

As recommended last year's format was for the most part continued with some tweaking. Further activity time was included in education sessions, and this was very well received by participants. Additionally, feedback and collation of data suggests that participants are learning about mental health issues, developing a more positive attitude towards those with mental health issues, and are more willing and confident to seek help if they need it themselves after taking part in the program.

Competition

As recommended, the competition has continued, and has retained its degree of success with the students. The topic chosen by the Crew for this year's competition was much better understood by students, and more engaging for participants.

Expansion of Live4Life

Live4Life as it stands in the Macedon ranges is continuing parallel to the new Youth Live4Life Incorporated entity. Youth Live4Life commenced grant seeking, and gradual expansion of this will continue to take place as additional funding is sourced.

Summary

Live4Life Launch

- ◆ **Enjoyed Aspects of Launch:**
 - Combining with other schools
 - Interactive and entertaining delivery

- ◆ **Opportunities for Improvements:**
 - Changing seating arrangements
 - Different or more food

- ◆ **Key messages taken away from the Launch:**
 - Think positively and be yourself
 - Seeking help for mental health issues is worthwhile
 - How to help friends with mental health issues

The Crew

- ◆ **Enjoyed Aspects of Leadership day**
 - Meeting other young people
 - Being challenged
- ◆ **Opportunities for Improvement to Leadership camp**
 - Go longer
- ◆ **What else could be done to prepare you better for being a Crew member:**
 - Education session delivery practice
 - Buddy system
 - More bonding opportunities
- ◆ **Opportunities for Improvement to Leadership camp**
 - More interactive activities
 - Timing of day
- ◆ **Improvements in Leadership skills reported**
- ◆ **Changes in student attitudes towards those with mental health issues reported**
- ◆ **What liked about education sessions:**
 - Public speaking opportunities
 - Opportunities to influence and share knowledge
 - Making a tangible difference
- ◆ **What didn't like or could be improved**
 - Attempt to engage the unenthusiastic students
 - Dedicated crew members only
 - Smaller crew size
 - Gradual transition
 - Positive group atmosphere
- ◆ **Favourite parts of being involved in the Crew:**
 - Learning and skills boosting
 - Social contact
- ◆ **Preferred communication between Crew and Live4Life Coordinator were Facebook and email and a range of methods.**
- ◆ **Majority of Crew members felt valued, supported by their, that they contributed, and were well supported by the Live4life Coordinator.**

Education Sessions

- ◆ **The following increased from pre- to post- education sessions:**
 - Understanding of importance of mental health issues
 - Understanding that you can change your thoughts to change your behaviour and feelings
 - Increase in percentage of students who knew to contact their GP for a mental health issue
 - Increase in preference to access a professional help source
 - Increased knowledge of activities that could help their mental health

- ◆ **Key messages learnt in education sessions:**
 - Mental health issues are treatable, and where to go for help
 - What you can do to look after your mental health

- ◆ **What was liked about these sessions:**
 - High level of student participation
 - Fun and Interactive
 - Prizes

- ◆ **Areas for improvement in education sessions:**
 - Less repetitive
 - More sessions and/or interactive activity time

- ◆ **Student attitudes have changed because:**
 - Increase in knowledge leading to less judging and bullying
 - Developed empathy towards those with mental health issues

- ◆ **What learnt about help-seeking:**
 - There are lots of different help sources available
 - Confidential nature of help available

- ◆ **More confident to seek help because:**
 - Know it's confidential

Live4Life Competition

- ◆ Theme ‘What Makes You Smile’ determined by The Crew
- ◆ Positive Feedback about the Competition:
 - Elements of choice
 - Personal relevance of the topic
- ◆ Recommendations for the Competition:
 - More prizes
 - Iron out some entry submission issues
 - Display more competition entries
- ◆ Should competition entry be compulsory:
 - Arguments for both sides presented by participants, preference for non-compulsory entry

Live4Life Website

- ◆ Why used website:
 - Look up competition details and entries
 - Sign up for the crew
 - Find out information for Live4Life projects
 - See photos of Live4life events
- ◆ Why not used website:
 - Had no reason to look at it, didn't think needed to
 - Didn't know or forgot website existed

End of Year Celebration Event

- ◆ **What did you learn at the Celebration event:**
 - Learnt more about the Crew
 - Consolidation of lessons from other Live4Life events

- ◆ **Favourite aspects of Celebration event:**
 - Socialising
 - Entertainment/activities
 - Crew Involvement
 - Viewing competition entries

- ◆ **Opportunities for Improvements**
 - More mingling time
 - More time at the stalls/outside activities
 - More food
 - Bigger venue

Live4Life Awards Won to Date

- ◆ 2011
 - Suicide Prevention Australia – Honourable mention
 - NAB Schools First Impact Award

- ◆ 2012
 - Youth Mental Health First Aid Australia Award

- ◆ 2013
 - VLGA READYS Award - Runners up

Goals Achieved from 2013 Report Recommendations

- ◆ **Networking**
- ◆ **Crew Training**
- ◆ **Youth Mental Health First Aid**
- ◆ **Education Session/Launch/Celebration Events**
- ◆ **Competition**
- ◆ **Expansion of Live4Life**

Recommendations

Networking

- ◆ Continue networking opportunities between students, school staff and community staff
- ◆ This will require continued prioritisation and efforts from Live4Life management

Youth and Teen Mental Health First Aid

- ◆ Given the ongoing positive response to this program, I would recommend that it continues to be made available to parents, teachers, and other professional staff such as medical centre staff and youth workers.
- ◆ Continue to offer it free of charge for parents and volunteers who work with youth to make it available to those of low socioeconomic status
- ◆ Consider charging a fee to the organisations for others who wish to take part such as teachers, medical centre staff and paid youth workers
- ◆ **Consider evaluating the response to the Teen Mental Health First Aid course in 2015.**

Education Sessions, Launch and Celebration Events

- ◆ This appears to be quite a successful learning format, and quite popular with students
- ◆ Increase interactive components of education sessions, longer exercise components such as dance, meditation, and boxing.
- ◆ Consider running each education session over two periods instead of one.
- ◆ Consider putting a maximum on group sizes, and/or splitting up larger groups.
- ◆ Combining school groups more at launch and celebration events is consistently requested by students, but I understand unlikely to be practical.
- ◆ Continue to educate students through this format about help-sources, and possibly emphasise pathways of care – e.g. initially see the GP, or your school counsellor.

The Crew

- ◆ Keep the leadership day, but change the date to during school term
- ◆ Use a range of media to roll out all essential messages to crew members, with an emphasis on Facebook and email.
- ◆ Continue to keep them involved in all events in a similar way to that achieved in 2014
- ◆ Allow Crew members more time for Education session delivery practice
- ◆ Consider a more gradual transition in responsibility between new and experienced Crew members
- ◆ Better inform crew members for what their responsibilities will be so they can make an informed decision about joining or not in order to attract dedicated members only.

Competition

- ◆ The competition is a chance for students to think about mental health in a variety of different ways, open up the conversation about mental health issues and reduce the stigma of mental health.
- ◆ It receives a positive response each year, and I would recommend keeping it in its current format.
- ◆ Issues around compulsory or non-compulsory entry are irrelevant as this will always be influenced by individual schools.
- ◆ I note that this year's topic was considered much more favourable to students as it was more personally relevant to participants, worth keeping this in mind for future years.
- ◆ Alternations to competition entry formats to allow for physical entries should be considered.
- ◆ Consider alternative competition entry displays in order to make entries more visible or accessible to students, options might include video links to entries, stage display, or more walk through displays.
- ◆ Another opportunity might be to encourage each school to leave physical entries somewhere accessible and visible to all students at their school for a period of time. This would be at each school's discretion.

Expansion of Live4Life

- ◆ Continued requests are made for expansion of Live4Life, and the process of considering options in this area are underway and need to be continued.

Appendix A: Year 8 Focus Group Questions

Launch:

1. What things did you enjoy about the Live4Life Launch at the start of the year?
2. How do you think the Live4Life Launch could have been improved?
3. What was the key message for you from the Launch?

Live4Life Education Sessions:

4. What key messages did you learn in the Live4Life 4 education sessions?
5. What did you like about these 4 sessions?
6. What didn't you like or do you think could have been done better in these 4 sessions?
7. Do you think student's attitudes towards those with mental health problems have changed over the year? Why? Why not?
8. What did you learn about help-seeking for mental health problems after participating in the Live4Life education sessions?
9. Do you feel more confident to seek help for a mental health problem if you needed to after participating in the Live4Life program?

Live4Life Website:

10. Have you used the Live4Life website this year? Why? Why not?

Competition:

11. For those of you involved in the competition, what did you enjoy about this experience?
12. If the competition was to run again next year, is there anything you think should be done differently?
13. Should the competition be a choice or compulsory part of Live4Life? Why? Why not?

End of Year Celebration:

14. What did you learn at the end of year Celebration?
15. What were your favourite parts of the end of year Celebration?
16. What parts weren't so great or would you change for another time?

General:

17. Are there any other comments about Live4Life that you would like to make, either positive or negative?

Appendix B: Crew Survey

Leadership and Training:

1. What things did you enjoy about the Live4Life leadership day at the start of the year?

2. How do you think the Leadership day could be improved?

3. What else could we do at Live4Life to prepare you for your role as Crew member?

4. Do you think your leadership skills have improved as a result of being involved in the Live4Life program?

Circle your response:

(Not at all)

(Yes Heaps)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Education:

5. Do you think student's attitudes towards those with mental health problems have changed over the year? Why? Why not?

6. What did you like about being involved in the education sessions?

7. What didn't you like or what do you think could have been done better?

8. Do you feel more confident to seek help for mental health problems after participating in the Crew?

Circle your response:

(Not Confident)

(Very Confident)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Contribution and Support:

9. How can we improve the Crew for next year?

10. What was your favourite part about being in the Crew?

11. Which forms of communication between the coordinator and other Crew members did you find useful or not useful? Explain

12. Did you feel you were a valued member of the Crew?

Circle your response:

(Not really)

(Yes Very Much)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

13. Did you feel your school supported your involvement in the Crew?

Circle your response:

(Not at all)

(Yes a Lot)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

14. Did you feel you contributed well and as part of a team, when it came to your Crew commitments?

Circle your response:

(Not really)

(Yes I was Awesome)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

15. Did you feel the Live4Life Coordinator supported you in your role as Crew Members?

Circle your response:

(Not at all)

(Yes a Lot)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Anything we've missed:

16. Are there any other comments about Live4Life that you would like to make, either positive or negative?

Appendix C: Pre and Post Education Session Questionnaire

Please circle a number you feel most represents your response to the scale questions:

1) How important are mental health issues for young people?

Not at all important

Yes Very Important

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2) Can you change your thoughts to change your behaviour and feelings?

Not at all

Yes Agreed

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3) Please list where you could go for help if you were feeling depressed or anxious?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

4) How comfortable would you feel visiting a mental health care service?

Not at all

Yes Very

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5) Would you support a friend who was being bullied because of a mental health problem?

Not at all

Yes Always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6) Going to a counsellor means you don't have the strength to handle the problem yourself.

Not at all

Yes Agreed

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7) Please list some activities that might help your mental health?

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

Appendix D: 2014 Competition Information Sheet



Live4Life 2015

'What Makes You Smile' Competition!

Theme: What Makes you Smile?

Entries Open: Wednesday 16th July 2014

Entries Close: Friday 12th September 2014

What (who or where) makes you smile?

Think about why it is important to have good mental health and what you need to maintain good mental health: @ Home, School OR on the weekend. Think about the people in your life, places in the community or activities you participate in.

You can enter with a group of friends, on your own or both!

(Maximum of 2 entries per person)

Categories:

1. Photography (people, places, things etc)
2. Multimedia (video, animation, film clip, podcasts etc)
3. Other (could be a poster, poem, artwork, sculpture...anything! Just create your entry, take a photo of it & send in)

Competition Rules:

1. All entries need to **clearly support the theme 'What Makes You Smile?'** and promote positive mental health
2. You **must** include the Live4Life Logo on your entry (Live4Life stickers will be provided at you school, or you can download a .jpg from the website at www.live4life.org.au)
3. You **must** also submit 50 words or less about who/what/where makes you smile, and your favourite message from Live4Life 2014!
Without these 2 things you won't be eligible to win the prize money!
4. You can submit your entry electronically (formats: .jpg, .mp4, .pdf) on the Macedon Ranges Shire Council webpage from 21st July. Files bigger than 10MB need to be submitted via your Year Level Coordinator on USB or CD/DVD.
5. Entries must be accompanied by a completed Live4Life Competition entry form
6. All entries must be original and your own ideas
7. Please don't include any names on your entry
8. If entries are not appropriate or don't relate to the theme they will not be considered in the Competition
9. Entries will be judged by the Live4Life Crew (Year 9 & 10 students from the 6 Live4Life schools)
10. The Live4Life Competition is open to Year 8 students from the 6 partner schools participating in Live4Life 2014.

Winners will be awarded a Visa/Mastercard gift cards (Individual, Group & Category Winners) or iTunes vouchers (Judges Choice):

- 1 x \$400 Individual Winner (all categories)
- 1 x \$800 Group Winner (all categories)
- 3 x \$200 Category Winners (Photography, Multimedia & Other)
- 10 x \$20 iTunes Judges Choice

Total Prize Pool = \$2000!



Appendix E: 2014 Competition Entry Form



Live4Life 2014
'What Makes You Smile' Competition!

Please fill out this form and return it with your entry (on a USB, CD or DVD) to your Year Level Coordinator.

Name/s:

School:

Tick which category you are entering in:

Individual [] OR Group []

Photography []

Multimedia []

Other []

What Makes you Smile?

In 50 words or less tell us what/who/where makes you smile, and your favourite message from Live4Life 2014!

.....
.....
.....

Entries close on Friday 12th September 2014. Macedon Ranges Shire Council reserves the right to use or reproduce entries to promote Live4Life and/or the Youth Development Unit. By submitting your entry you agree to the Competition Rules (as outlined above):

Agree [] Signed:

If you have any questions about your entry or the Competition please contact Lauren Proudfoot at lproudfoot@mrsc.vic.gov.au

