



CCCaresh at Canberra College

Schools First 2009 National Winner

Partner: Child Youth and Women's Health Program ACT Department of Health

2010 Schools First: Power Through Partnership

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"Using the power of partnership to address important educational and social welfare needs"

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Background

CCCaresh has established extensive partnership links locally and nationally to support pregnant and parenting young people maximise their life chances.

Partnerships are central and pivotal to engage pregnant and parenting young people. Without them, the opportunity to reach out, connect with and support groups of pregnant and parenting young people, who typically don't engage with mainstream schooling and community structures, is severely diminished.

If schools and community groups don't connect with these young people, evidence tells us that they will have reduced life chances. This is documented in the following:

1. A young women's chance of completing secondary school, once she becomes pregnant, and makes the decision to continue the pregnancy are very low. Boulden (2000)
2. Early School leaving is a major factor in shaping a set of circumstances, which is more likely to lead to a life of poverty and hardship, Marks and Ainley (1999) and Gregory (1999)
3. "Teenage mothers are much more likely to participate in long term welfare than older mothers and overall life satisfaction is somewhat lower than older mothers" "that teenage mothers current circumstances are less favourable long term compared to older mothers at similar ages Jeon, Kalb, Vu (2008).
 - i. for a range of health measures (Physical and mental)
 - ii. in the labour market
 - iii. as less likely to be partnered
 - iv. as less likely to have employed partners
 - v. are less likely to have completed secondary education"
4. "The entrenchment of disadvantage has been demonstrated as perpetuating into the next generation – the children of these young parents" Every Child Matters (2010)



Evidence also tells us that one of the most effective ways to minimise the risk of such outcomes is to support young pregnant women, young mothers and fathers to stay connected to schooling and complete secondary education, Boulden (2000). Opportunities to engage with schools should be possible in all Australian jurisdictions. This is supported at the Ministerial level as evidenced in the Melbourne Declaration of Schooling (2008) which states that "Schooling should develop fully the talents and capacities of all students and should be socially just". Across Australia, there were approximately 16 live births per 1000 young women of 15-19 year olds in 2007 ABS(2009). This equates to over 10,000 young mothers of secondary school age across Australia. Unfortunately, mainstream approaches don't necessarily enable appropriate avenues for engagement by pregnant and parenting young people.

It is not evident to CCCares staff that there is adequate provision of suitably coordinated and networked national school and community programs, that can ably cater for the volume of young pregnant and parenting people across the country.

This is the story of CCCares and how it has endeavoured to make connections for young pregnant and parenting young people in the ACT region. This also describes how the program is contributing to the formation of a national network to support pregnant and parenting young people. At both the local and national level, formation of partnerships is central to making sustainable improvements.

CCCares background

CCCares is a specific program designed to support at risk young people to engage with a senior secondary educational setting. CCCares is based on the Weston Campus of Canberra College. The Woden campus of Canberra College is 5 kilometres away and provides year 11/12 educational programs for approx 800 students. Early in 2000, several college staff identified a need to try and provide an alternate program for specific groups of young people who were unable to succeed in the mainstream setting. After significant research and consultation with local and national community groups, the CCCares program was established. It formally commenced in 2005 after initial enrolments of 4 young pregnant and parenting young people in 2003. This number has increased dramatically each year. See attachment 1. There are now 100 students attending the CCCares program in 2010. Of these, 79 are pregnant or parenting and the vast majority of their 88 children aged under 5 join them at school. One brief case study of how the program supports young people is included as attachment 2.

Input from community partnership groups input has been pivotal - through the establishment, developmental and ongoing daily operational phases of CCCares. The additional network connections created by partnership groups are the key to engaging and supporting pregnant and parenting young people. Without these connections, the educational arm of CCCares would be limited. It is the joint provision of holistic health and wellbeing wrap around services, with educational certification, that works. This blended service delivery model creates the flexibility and support that enables these young people, with their complex lives, to engage with educational, health and wellbeing services.



Significantly, research of students has been undertaken to analyse which attributes of CCCares encourage participation of young people in the program. Whilst students rate supportive transportation, childcare and health and welfare support highly, they consistently rank the feeling of not being judged as the number one factor that encourages their participation in the program. Hay (2010). This is testament to the high level communication skills of all current partnership staff and the importance of staff selection and training.

CCCares Program overview

CCCares, with partnership support from significant community agency groups, endeavours to provide a best practice model for pregnant and parenting students and other at risk young people to access education in the ACT.

CCCares offers Year 12 Certification; personal health and wellbeing support; advocacy and support services; goal oriented learning packages, on-line learning and employability skills within a mainstream ACT Government College context. Current educational and community programs undertaken at CCCares are outlined below.

Educational programming

CCCares uses Personalised Learning Programs to:

- provide certification pathways towards an ACT Year 12 Certificate which can include vocational components
- develop the social and emotional intelligences needed to become connected to their chosen community
- improve student's literacy, numeracy and IT skills
- develop each individual's awareness of local and global issues
- provide a supportive environment which encourages young people to identify and manage their personal circumstances
- design Pathways Plans with young parents to develop the necessary skills and personal strengths they need to become marketable and employable in the future
- assist our young people to become financially independent.



Community Partnerships (Linking agency)

- On site Maternal and Child Health nurse twice weekly (ACT Health)
- On site monthly antenatal nurse visits (ACT Health)
- On site adjunct care child-minding model (young parents)
- On site Playgroup (CCCares is a registered Playgroup)
- Access to community learning programs (Canberra College Community Education)
- Training and well being programs include;
 - ACT Dental Health (ACT Health)
 - SIDS
 - Sexual Health and Family Planning (SHFPACT)
 - Skills session for hairdressing and beauty therapy (SASSY Hair and beauty)
 - Donations (Canberra Milk)
 - Relationships training (Relationships Australia)
 - Financial Management (NAB)
 - Transition support (University of Canberra)
 - Transport assistance (Rotary)
- Advocacy and support programs
 - Male Mentor program (Mens Link)
 - Shared Client referrals (Canberra Hospital maternity unit)
 - Support programs (Rec link / PCYC)
 - Shared client support (Care and Protection)
 - Drug and alcohol support and referrals (DIRECTIONS ACT/Ted Knoffs/Arcadia House)
 - Local Medical doctors and Nurses (Fisher Family Practice)
 - Domestic Violence (Domestic Violence Crisis Service)
 - Child and Mental Health Service (CAMHS – ACT Health)
 - Young families support (Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre)
 - Family Support program (Marymead Child and family Centre)
 - Refugee support (Companion House)
 - Migrant support (Migrant Support Centre)
 - Mothers' refuge (Karinya House)
 - Youth accommodation (Oasis/Llowana/George Lloyd House /DORIS /Tumladden /Louisa womens refuge/St Vincents/LIONS)
- E learning toolbox champion (Canberra Institute of Technology)
- PhD Case study of CCCares (University of Canberra) -
- Steering Committee (University of Canberra/ACT Health/ACTDET)
- Road Ready and Driver Training (on site driving instructor)
- Fresh fruit and vegetables program (ACT Health)
- Volunteer and mentoring program (community Volunteers and ex graduates)
- post-school transition options (Employment Coordinator – Funded by Schools First)
- Australian Young Pregnant and Parenting Network

CCCares Resourcing

ACT Department of Education & Training allocates staffing points and funding to the Canberra College based on student enrolment. Canberra College allocates funding to CCCares.

CCCares has also been awarded significant additional funding from a variety of grants and awards. This has enabled the current operational structure to include:

1. Program coordinator (executive teacher)
2. 1 x Community liaison support worker
3. 3 x qualified teachers
4. 2 x Administrative officers (one is also the qualified driving instructor)
5. 2 x 12 seater buses
6. Dual control vehicle for student instruction
7. Employment consultant
8. e-Learning consultant
9. Schools First Project officer and Australian Young Pregnant and Parenting Network member

CCCares transport program

There is a daily transport program provided by the school to facilitate school attendance. Administrative staff and volunteer Rotarians support this role.

CCCares - National Recognition

In 2008, CCCares was the recipient of an Excellence in School Improvement Australian Government National Award for Quality Schooling.

In November 2009, the program was recognised for its outstanding partnership achievements with ACT Health and other community organisations to improve outcomes for pregnant and parenting young people by taking out the \$750 000 Inaugural Schools First National Award. This award has generated significant community support and has enabled CCCares to undertake additional activities. The award program and initiatives are outlined in attachment 3. In an endeavour to influence national progression of support programs, CCCares has allocated more than one third of the award funding to the establishment of the Australian Young Pregnant and Parenting Network.

CCCares - Long term vision

CCCares, in conjunction with ACT Government and community partnership organisations, aims to continue to provide regional holistic health, education and welfare support and connections for young people that assist them to optimise their outcomes in our society. Specific local aims include further development of incorporating vocational competencies for all students. CCCares also aims to continue to inform and support the development of core, holistic support services for pregnant and parenting young people across Australia.

What Next – Think and act local – Think and act National

CCCares staff have endeavoured to be informed by and connected to like minded organisations and individuals to further progress approaches to provide equitable access to education and health and wellbeing services for this marginalised group of young people.

Whilst CCCares has established a localised approach to supporting pregnant and parenting young people, it is evident that this is a national issue. There are approximately 10,000 young women who have children under the age of 19 each year across Australia. It is well known that many of these do not complete secondary education and that characteristically they have long term reduced life choices and outcomes. Jeon, Kalbu, Vu(2008)

In August 2009, CCCares staff attended and presented at the National Symposium on Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Young People, organised by the Association of Women Educators (AWE). A major outcome of this symposium was the agreement to form a national network to support pregnant and parenting young people and their children. This collaboration has facilitated the establishment of the Australian Young Pregnant and Parenting Network.

Australian Young Pregnant and Parenting Network

Work for this network is being facilitated by creating a company titled "Australian Young Pregnant and Parenting Network", which is limited by guarantee. The objectives of the Company include:

1. Providing accurate and reliable information to pregnant and parenting young people on a range of issues critical to the well-being of themselves and their children.
2. Gathering accurate information on, and identifying gaps in, service provision and government policy and programs across all jurisdictions.
3. Advocating for the development of a consistent national framework to address teenage pregnancy and to appropriately support pregnant and parenting young people and their children.
4. Contributing to the development of national benchmarks in service provision for pregnant and parenting young people and their children.
5. Lobbying governments at all levels to ensure all pregnant and parenting young people are able to access appropriate high quality services.
6. Ensuring that the needs of pregnant and parenting young people are taken into account in the development of significant government policy initiatives.
7. Fostering effective communication between service providers, researchers and policy makers across all states and territories, and to share practices, ideas and knowledge.
8. Challenging the negative stereotypes of pregnant and parenting young people in the Australian community and to promote awareness of their capacities as well as their needs.
9. Showcasing models of effective practice
10. Ensuring that our practice is, in all regards, evidence-based.

Schools First national award revenue has already enabled employment of a national coordinator commencing January 2010, a staff member to map existing national services and the development of the AYPPN website. Kay Boulden is the national AYPPN coordinator. She is the author of *Pregnant Parenting and Proud* and *Step by Step –Side by Side how to make your school a great choice for pregnant and parenting students*. Schools First funding will also support research programs, national forums and various other activities. Two CCCares staff are on the small working party to establish AYPPN.

National partnerships

AYPPN aims to establish new national partnerships and to further develop existing national partnerships between government, service providers, researchers, young people and their families. AYPPN aims to improve communication, coordination and connectedness to ensure the best possible services are delivered to young pregnant and parenting young people nationally.

Whilst no single national solution will improve outcomes for all pregnant and parenting young people, the formation of these partnerships will help find diverse solutions that will help nationally and at the local level to improve outcomes for young people and their children.

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Attachment 1 – CCCares Student statistics

	2003*	2004*	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
No of enrolled pregnant and parenting students Year 11 & 12	9*	10*	14	30	47	66	73	79
No of children under 5 years	9	11	10	26	57	74	80	88
Babies Due	2	1	4	6	5	6	6	13
Year 12 Certificates	-	1	3	7	12	20	12	25**
Family groups seeing nurse			8	18	30	51	65	79
Children's Protective Services Involved				6	6	5	3	4
Housing issues				23	35	49	60	70
Centrelink				30	47	66	73	79
Justice Involvement				5	5	3	2	3
Domestic Violence Issues				4	4	7	5	2
Able to access paid childcare				1	2	2	3	2
Graduates linking to transition program								4

* = The program was formally launched in 2005 but had enrolments prior to this as part of the mainstream school structure

** = Anticipated graduates as for December 2010 (note low graduation for Dec 2009 due to large enrolment of year 11 students)

Please note – many students complete their year 11/ 12 study program over a 3 year time period. ACT year 12 certification processes allow for this option.



Attachment 2
CCCaes - Case Study
Partnerships creating productive families

A young mum struggling to hold her young family together came to us in 2008. Accommodation for her, her partner and their two children was inappropriate. The children were showing signs of malnourishment and emotional distress due to the complex relationship between their parents.

The on site ACT Health MACH nurse identified serious issues within the children which she proceeded to deal with, involving additional support from the wider health community. She engaged the services of a nutritionist, and behaviour therapist to come on site to work with the children, and referred the mum to our local child and family support centre.

We assisted the mum and dad to secure government housing, working with our local charities to furnish their new home. Our transport program contributed by driving the family to and from school daily.

Dad's mental health issues became a major issue. He is also enrolled as a student with us. We encouraged him to seek the support of mental health services, and worked closely with him to engage effectively with his workers.

At school, mum and dad found warmth and understanding from their fellow students, and the children found a stimulating environment in which they could just be kids.

In 2010, mum will graduate with an ACT Year 12 Certificate; dad is working closely with our Schools First employment consultant to secure a traineeship. Number 1 son has begun pre-school, so far without issue, and daughter is enjoying being a pre-pre schooler with us.



Attachment 3

Schools First funding utilisation for CCCares

National recognition

In November 2009, the CCCares program was recognised for its outstanding partnership achievements with ACT Health and other community organisations to improve outcomes for young people by taking out the \$750 000 Inaugural Schools First National Award. This award has already generated significant community support and has enabled CCCares to undertake significant additional activities to its normal operations. Embedded in all these additional processes are connections with community partners.

1. Funding an onsite employment coordinator
 - o To conduct personalised interviews for goal setting, training opportunities and future planning
 - o Has already reconnected and interviewed 50% of last years graduating students (not previously feasible without this funding)
 - o Has already interviewed 20% of 2010 student group
 - o Has developed significant linkages with traineeship companies, Chamber of Commerce, Employment agencies etc.
2. Focusing on the development of online curriculum and incorporating vocational competencies into young people curriculum packages
 - o Connections have already been made with relevant CIT providers
3. Funding the extension of programs for young parents in conjunction with ACT Health
 - o Planning has commenced for ACT Health to produce educational DVD's on healthy children utilising CCCares student groups
 - o Planning has commenced for connecting young parents across the ACT onsite at CCCares for network support and playgroup and educational forums.
 - o Activities have commenced to increase wellbeing activities for CCCares students and their children including first aid training, driver education, nutritional support etc
4. Funding to establish and develop the recently formed Australian Young Pregnant and Parenting Network(over 35% of award funds have been allocated for this purpose)
 - o AYPPN is being formed as a non for profit Company
 - o A National coordinator for AYPPN has been funded from Schools First funding (a non Canberra College employee Kay Boulden Author of Pregnant Parenting and Proud (2000) and Step By Step Side By side How to make your school a great choice for pregnant and parenting students(2003))
 - o A national website is being established for AYPPN - funded by Schools First
 - o A consultant has been employed from Schools First Funding to map national services which are available to pregnant and parenting young people in all jurisdictions in Australia (a non Canberra College Employee)

- Targetted research projects will provide updated evidence of needs and issues facing pregnant and parenting young Australians – funded by Schools First
- A national forum will be hosted in Canberra in October 2010 and funded by Schools First
 - to present the latest relevant national research influencing pregnant and parenting young people
 - to celebrate the launch of the website and
 - to celebrate the acceptance by Ms Quentin Bryce - Governor General of Australia to be the PATRON of AYPPN.

Schools First Overview

Schools First

Schools First is brought to life by NAB in partnership with the Foundation for Young Australians and Australian Council for Educational Research. In 2009, 68 Impact Awards and 20 seeding funding awards were provided across Australia. In 2010, a further 108 school – community partnerships will benefit from Schools First with over \$5 million committed. Further information is available on www.schoolsfirst.edu.au



Attachment 4

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