



Victorian Local Governance Association

## Child Friendly Cities & Communities Network Meeting

Thursday 14 November 2019 10am – 12pm

VLGA Offices 60 Leicester St, Carlton VIC 3053

**Attended:** Annabel Barbara (Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare), Kate Beveridge (Cardinia Shire Council), Carmen Cappello (City of Whittlesea), Amy Carson (Moreland City Council), Trish Cooper (Knox City Council), Ben Cooper (Kids Thrive), Hayley Crawford (City of Port Phillip), Nicole Frey (Boroondara Council), Penny Karagaslis (City of Whittlesea), Evaline Keves (Moonee Valley Council), Nicole Lindsey (Brimbank City Council), Caroline Meier (Knox City Council), Sherryn Prinzi (Banyule Council), Vivian Romero (CQ University), Sharon Rooney (City of Melbourne), Councillor Collin Ross (Cardinia Shire Council), Claire Sideras (City of Monash), Amy Treyvaud (City of Ballarat), Ann Addinsall (City of Casey), Rosie Vescio (John Henry Primary School), Neil Rogers (City of Whitehorse), Anne McGregor (Darebin City Council), Jenny Wallace (Waratah Special Development School), Barbara Gomez (St Pius X Catholic Primary School).

### Meeting Theme: Celebrating and Reflecting on Children’s Week!

Agenda	Notes/Action
Acknowledgement of Country Welcome and Introductions	Claire welcomed members to the meeting and acknowledged the traditional land owners. Brief round table introductions.
<b>Children’s Voice Initiative</b> - Slideshow “Why should adults listen to children?” Video features from Cardinia Shire and City of Casey, Literacy Friends program from City of Port Phillip. - Top 5 responses	Background:  The Victorian CFCC Network upholds the universal right of all children to be heard and participate freely in their community. At times, it may be difficult for adults, organisations and communities to grasp why listening to children is important. Earlier in the year the CFCC Network decided to help adults understand why they should listen by asking children one simple question: <i>Why should adults listen to children?</i>  To capture a broad range of voices from children across cultural demographic and geographic areas in Victoria – all Network members were invited to pose the question to their communities of children and young people, and share the responses. The voices of children will be used to promote the value of listening to children during Children’s Week, October 2019.  A slideshow was presented, summarising how the children and young people answered. <i>See attachment 1: powerpoint presentation..</i>  A survey was created to capture the responses. 120 responses were received in total. <b>The top 5 reasons cited by children as to why adults should listen to children were:</b> 1. Teach us how to listen by listening to us



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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. Our opinions matter as we are the ones that have to live with the decisions</li><li>3. It's a good way to understand us – we are growing up in a different world and we want to talk about and express how we feel</li><li>4. Adults could learn a thing or two – our ideas can be so thoughtful and creative that they could possibly change the world</li><li>5. We need you to listen so we feel safe to speak out if something does not seem quite right (this safety element reinforces child safe standards 7: empowering children)</li></ol> <p>Thank you to everyone that participated - if you haven't already, take the time to reflect with your community.</p>
<p><b>Celebrating Children's Week</b> - Discussion: What did you do in your organisation to celebrate children's week?</p>	<p>Cardinia – students were asked to write 2 minute speech as part of a leadership day. Video shown of snippets of students speeches on the day.</p> <p>Casey – quite a large family children and youth department spanning ages 0 -25 years. Officers went out to their community and discussed with groups of children from playgroups to youth services. Childrens voice is part of new department strategy to guide them through the next 3 years (very important to their programming and planning over the next 3 years).</p> <p>City of Melbourne – all departments that work with children came together for a calendar full of free activities – promoted on What's On Melbourne, culminating in an Art Play session – old toys were collected, children reinvented them into new toys. Child safe standards was also promoted through internal messaging to staff.</p> <p>Ballarat - employed a consultant to coordinate a calendar events. The final Saturday was a family event held at an animal park, 150 vouchers for discounted entry were provided to vulnerable families.</p> <p>Brimbank – picnic in the park during the week, transport was provided to collect children from their playgroup centres to the picnic.</p> <p>Knox – drop in space at shopping centre – staff provided information to help parents access early years centre. Slideshow of children's answers to "why should adults listen to children" was shown on screen at drop in space.</p> <p>Monash – family fun day for children up to 5 years. Also during the regular school visits the Junior Mayor group were able to ask Councillors questions. Found that some parents don't even know it is Children's Week is or what it is about so week also drew attention to theme and purpose.</p>



	<p>Moreland – family picnic organised in partnership by one of neighbourhood house at neighbourhood reserve. About 300 children attended.</p> <p>Banyule – worked with Sustainable Macleod Inc. Volunteers organised veggie picking and planting.</p> <p>Cardinia – free fruit for children at all MCH clinics, home visiting nurses. Healthy lunch tip sheets. Dietician attended supported playgroup.</p> <p>Whittlesea – sensory play experiences at a park and surveyed families on parenting experiences. Partnered with a community health service – tapped into story times, family day care playgroup – plus education on nutrition.</p>
<p>Guest speaker</p> <p><b>Jaimee – Grade 6 Student from Pakenham</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why should adults listen to children?</li> <li>- What being child friendly means?</li> <li>- CEO for a day! Jaimee shared her experience as a CEO of Cardinia for the day.</li> </ul>	<p>Jaimee presented her ideas on why adults should listen to children – and explained that children are the future, because they have different perspectives, they are the citizens of both Cardinia and the world. Having a big imagination is what kids are good at. Adults need to understand how we see the world – imagine the world as a giant puzzle, sometimes you need a different perspective to be able to put the puzzle together. Most importantly children have the right to say what they think.</p> <p>Being child friendly means children are included in decisions Councils make – they might actually surprise you with ideas they have.</p> <p>Jaimee then shared her experiences as a CEO of Cardinia Share for the day, shadowing CEO Carol Jeffs. Activities she took part in included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Touring My Place – a local youth facility</li> <li>- Visited local supported playgroup</li> <li>- Participating in an accessible playgroup</li> <li>- Robert Gordon Pottery and Kitchen</li> <li>- Attended a meeting with the Recreation team to talk about open spaces in the Shire</li> <li>- Afternoon tea with Children’s Ambassadors</li> <li>- Jaimee highly valued getting involved in and learning a lot about her local community.</li> </ul> <p><i>See attachment 2: CEO for a Day flyer</i></p>
<p>Guest speakers</p> <p><b>Jenny Wallace, Principal, and students from Waratah Special Development School</b></p>	<p>interviewed some students and pieced these together into a short video. I asked ‘why should teachers listen to students?’ and then asked them to talk about their involvement in the SRC.</p>

<p>- How students have a voice at Waratah SDS - 'Why should teachers listen to students?' Video segment.</p>	<p>Jenny spoke about Waratah SDS and how staff use a range of communication tools to give students, some with significant verbal communication challenges, a voice. These include augmented communication systems, books, electronic devices, sign language and less formal systems such as body language and positioning. It is crucial for staff to take the time to listen to students and develop these communication systems specific to each student's abilities. If students do not feel heard, they are not going to keep trying to communicate.</p> <p>Students spoke about their involvement in the SRC and how they work to make the school better. Examples included improvement to the bike track, having a bike rack attached to school bus to allow for bike rides beyond the school, and organising a footy day. They surveyed their peers about their favourite activities at the school, collated the responses and worked with the school to implement more of these activities.</p> <p>The students answered questions from the network and introduced a video of student's responses to the question "why should adults listen to students."</p>
<p><b>Advisory Group Update</b> – nominating for 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is involved in being an Advisory Group member – Kate (Chair)</li> <li>• Hard copies of TOR and Framework Pack</li> </ul>	<p>Kate Beveridge, the 2019 Chair, explained the role of the Advisory group – to oversee the network meetings, look at themes based on feedback from attendees and schedule meeting topics and guest speakers. For example, the change of meeting location and time today was based on feedback from attendees who cannot make Friday meetings. The Advisory group members commit to a calendar year, and attend quarterly advisory group meetings and one planning day in Feb to plan whole year.</p> <p>There are about 12 people on advisory group, you do not have to be a signatory to Charter to be involved.</p> <p>Hard copies of the Terms of Reference and Framework Park were provided</p> <p>For more information, please contact any of the Advisory group members or Kate Beveridge (Chair).</p>
<p><b>Welcome new signatories</b> 1.</p>	<p>Traditionally Councils were the only holders of CFCC signatories to the Charter – but Sherryn explained how the City of Banyule have opened it up to other organisations and services e.g. Kindergartens and Early Learning Centres, Primary Schools, Special Development Schools, and Neighbourhood house. Welcome to the following new signatories:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Blyth Street ELC, July 2019</li> <li>2. Leap Ahead Learning, July 2019</li> <li>3. St Faith's Childcare and ELC, July 2019</li> <li>4. Fairy Hills Kindergarten, Aug 2019</li> <li>5. Greenhills Primary School, Aug 2019</li> <li>6. St Helena Preschool, Aug 2019</li> <li>7. St Pius X Catholic Primary School, Aug 2019</li> <li>8. Cheeriokids Heidelberg, July 2019</li> <li>9. Waratah Special Development School, Aug 2019</li> <li>10. Greenhills Neighbourhood House, Sept 2019</li> <li>11. Ivanhoe Children's Community Co-operative, Oct 2019</li> </ol> <p>Barbara from St Pius X Catholic Primary School in Heidelberg West spoke about their school becoming a CFCC signatory – practices at their school include encouraging children and building capacity through inviting students to be active at the table for leadership meetings - students co-design curriculum based on their thoughts on how students can be active and engaged.</p>
<p><b>Feedback &amp; Wrap Up – around the table</b></p>	<p>Questions posed to the group:          What benefit did you get from participating in today's meeting?          Any recommendations on how we can improve on these network meetings for 2020?          What do you want to get out of these meetings and how can it improve your work?</p> <p>Neil – today has been inspiring and we have heard a lot on what young people think – our job as Advisory Group and network is to take these 5 key themes and to turn this into very clear actions for next year and beyond.</p> <p>Claire – a lot of people mentioned they want to connect and find out more information – please contact any members of Advisory Group if you would like more information.</p> <p>Sharon– there is a Child Safe Standard network group – they meet quarterly, to try and maximise our use of time could include CFCC. There is an online platform, Loomio, where people –can upload things and communicate to the whole network. Many people in this room are already doing this, it's complimentary. This group has been good at communicating with MAV. Email: <a href="mailto:Sharon.Rooney@melbourne.vic.gov.au">Sharon.Rooney@melbourne.vic.gov.au</a></p>

**Next meeting: TBA**