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**The Centre for Participation is advising of a Tender Opportunity to evaluate the youth crime prevention program “Connecting the Service Puzzle”**

Please register your interest and questions with [robbie@centreforparticipation.org.au](mailto:robbie@centreforparticipation.org.au)

**Name of Tender: “Connecting the Service Puzzle for Youth at Risk – Outreach to Mentoring”.**

**Background:**

Through the governments Community Crime prevention Program, the Centre for Participation was awarded a further \$100 000.00 for the ‘Connecting the Service Puzzle for Youth at Risk – Outreach to Mentoring’ project to continue to provide case management and support for highly vulnerable young people through the projects framework for identifying, engaging and providing linked services through a collective partnership during the 2021-2022 year.

The Youth Crime Prevention grants program aims to address offending behaviours and recidivism among young people aged 10-24 years who have had contact with or have demonstrated risk of being involved with the criminal justice system by building strong community involvement, address service gaps and improve service accessibility. The ‘Connecting the Service Puzzle for Youth at Risk – Outreach to Mentoring’ project is a multi-agency approach to supporting our most vulnerable and at-risk young people in the Horsham area.

The project was designed to focus on young people exhibiting risk factors that are classified by the Department of Justice and Community Safety as demonstrating offending and recidivist behaviours and considered “highly vulnerable” of becoming involved with the justice system.

Risk factors for “highly vulnerable” young people include behaviours such as criminal activity, drug and alcohol consumption, disengagement from family and/or family violence, left home or homelessness, not engaged with the education system and/or truancy, frequent unprotected sex and mental health issues affecting their personal and social functioning, and contact with Victoria Police.

The Project Governance Group has allocated \$15,000 to undertake the scope of work. Conforming tenders would need to be within this monetary amount.

**Project Aim:**

The Connecting the Service Puzzle for Youth at Risk project was funded to address offending behaviour and recidivism by young people aged 10 to 24 who have had contact with, or are at risk of involvement with, the criminal justice system. The project aims to support highly vulnerable young people to minimize risk factors and develop protective factors through effective intervention that influences the risk of transitioning to the high risk cohort and potential involvement with crime.



### **Project Goal:**

Connecting “highly vulnerable” youth that are demonstrating offending behaviour and recidivism to mentors and outreach youth workers to develop and facilitate pro-social activities and protective factors to avoid their transition to becoming “high risk” and their involvement in the justice system

### **Project Sustainability Goal:**

Whether and how the project partnerships, systems, mentoring and other benefits and outcomes can be sustained beyond the funding period.

### **Project Model:**

This four-year partnership project based in Horsham, has focused on the development and delivery a new framework for identifying, engaging and providing linked services to young people considered vulnerable to the risk factors associated with young people (10-24 years of age) demonstrating offending behaviors and recidivism.

The program offered young people case management, within an outreach capacity. This approach included supporting identified vulnerable young people through engagement with services to reduce offending and recidivist behaviour, such as, but not limited to, alcohol and other drug use, disengagement from the education system, complex family issues, anti-social behaviour and health issues.

The project also included a mentoring component whereby selected and matched mentors provided support and guidance to identified youth.

The program has evolved from its initial design, to primarily a co-ordination, case management and evaluation structure designed to reflect the complexity of the cohort of participants and the ongoing and extensive support required for the young people with the program.

### **Project Objectives:**

Project objectives focus on reducing the risk of re-offending of existing youth offenders and preventing at-risk youth from becoming engaged with the criminal justice system.

- Objective 1: Decreasing known crime related risk factors and increasing protective factors
- Objective 2: Achieving sustained improvement in engagement in school, training and/or employment
- Objective 3: Increasing connectedness with the community.



The project is also expected to develop or consolidate strong, effective partnerships among community organisations and across government initiatives.

**Project Partners:**

- Centre for Participation
- Grampians Community Health
- Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN
- Horsham Rural City Council
- Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative
- Headspace
- Horsham College - Alternative Pathways
- Wimmera Drug Action Taskforce
- Uniting Wimmera
- Wimmera Primary Care Partnership
- Victoria Police

**Tender Requirements:**

The Centre for Participation wishes to evaluate key questions, and sustainability.

**Key Questions**

1. Has the project achieved the project objectives to date? If not, why or what can be done to achieve these objectives?
  2. What, if any, were the facilitators and barriers to implementation?
  3. What factors contributed to the project in achieving the outcomes?
  4. What role has collaborative partnerships in the delivery of the project?
  5. What gaps need to be addressed to ensure the program remains sustainable\* post 30/6/2022, without further Victorian government funding.
  6. What would a sustainable model for this project look like?
- Sustainability includes an examination of whether and how the project partnerships, systems, mentoring and other benefits and outcomes can be sustained beyond the funding period.



Sustainability reporting will include recommendations for enabling the longevity of the project actions required to sustain project benefits.

**The evaluation team must provide their methodology to:**

- Engage with project partners, project workers, mentors, and participants.
- Analyse and report on project objectives, partnerships, and sustainability

**Key Dates:**

**Applications open:** 10 September 2021

**Applications close:** 27 September 2021

**Commencement date:** 11 October 2021

**Completion of report:** 30 November 2021