

Chapter Two

Overhead Transparencies

The following overhead transparencies are primarily used to explain the program to the stakeholders who are considering involvement in the project. They can also be used to promote the program to other regions/prospective new sites.

Whilst the OHT's are a complete package, you may choose particular slides to show to various groups eg pages 18 to 26 are a useful set to show to potential mentors and slides 22 to 28 are a good set to show mentors from businesses/organisations who may be considering supporting the program by allowing their staff to act as mentors.

Plan-It Youth

A partnership between:

NSW TAFE Commission Board

Hunter Institute of Technology

NSW Department of Education & Training

Central Coast Active Retirees & Mentors (ARM)

Hunter Valley Training Company Limited

Central Coast Adult & Community Education

Dusseldorp Skills Forum

Kellogg's

The Research

Dusseldorp Skills Forum:

Reality and Risk (1998) and The Deepening Divide (1999)

Australian Council for Educational Research

Brotherhood of St Laurence

The Monash University - ACER Centre for Economics and Training

Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne

National Centre of Social and Economic Modelling, University of Canberra

National Centre for Vocational Education Research

National Institute of Labour Studies, Flinders University of South Australia

Australian National University: Centre for Economic Policy Research

School Retention Rates

- **national Year 12 retention rates have fallen from 77% in 1992 to 71.3% in 1996**
(as opposed to the Finn Targets of 95% by 2001)
- **the decline has been more rapid for males (6.6% to 65.9%) than females (5% to 77%)**

Australia: Youth Unemployment

- 40% of all Australia's unemployed people are under the age of 24
- The unemployment rate for teenagers is three times the level experienced by older workers
- Youth unemployment has been above 20% for more than a decade

Marginalisation of young people

Almost 15% of Australian teenagers or 187 000 young people, are neither in full time work or full time education:

unemployed and not studying	78,000
working part time only and not studying	67,000
not studying and not in labour market	42,000
	187,000

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Australian Statistics

- 18% of dependent children live in a family in which no parent is employed. Twenty years ago the proportion was 11%.

There is no evidence of a reversal of this trend.

- 28.5 % of dependent children now live in a family where no male is employed. Two decades ago the proportion was 16.2%.

It is probable that this proportion will continue to increase.

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- It is not known what proportion of their first fifteen years of life children spend in a jobless family but it is quite conceivable that half our children spend five or more years in a family without work.
- The average period of time in a family without an employed adult male is higher, probably eight years or more.
- Joblessness among families is concentrating on families where both partners are early school leavers.

**A possible response to some of
the problems created by these
statistics?**

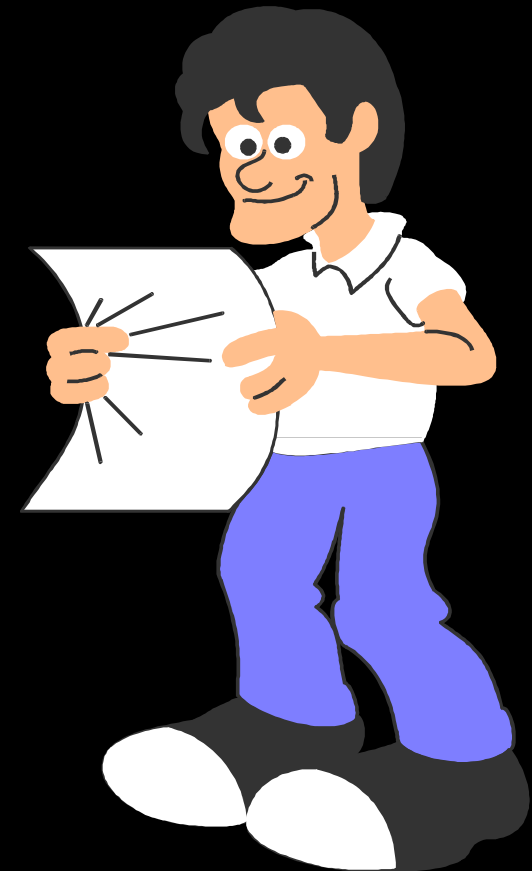
The Plan



To offer young people
effective support
at critical transition points
in their lives

What are these critical transition points?

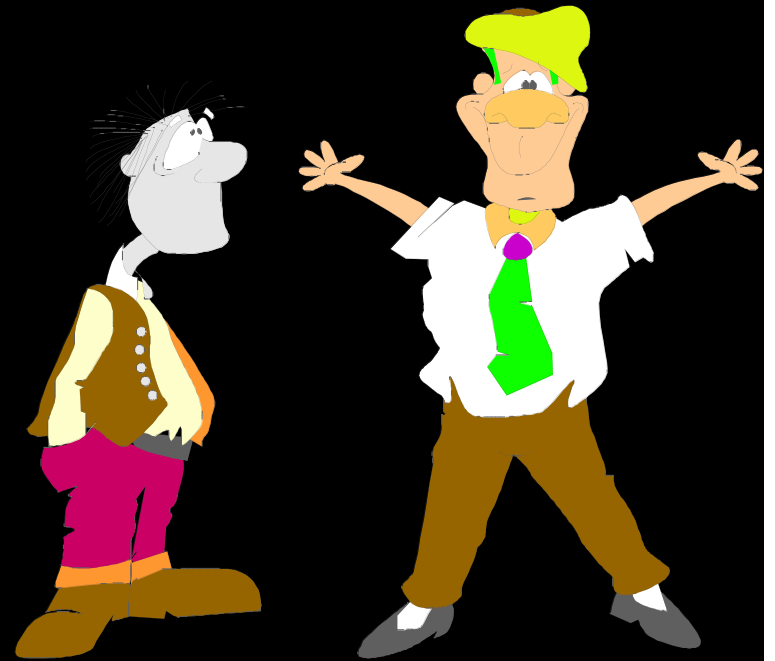
- Primary to High School
- Post Compulsory School
- Leaving School
- First Employment

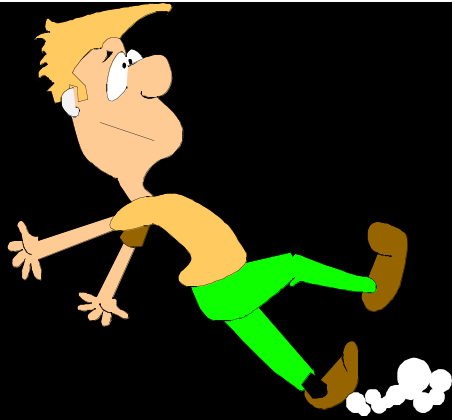


Could mentoring meet these needs?

Big Brothers /Big Sisters

- Big Brothers /Big Sisters programs maintain 75,000 active matches (1998 in USA) between a volunteer adult and a young person.
- Carefully established procedures and criteria govern both the programs and matches.





Evaluation Study

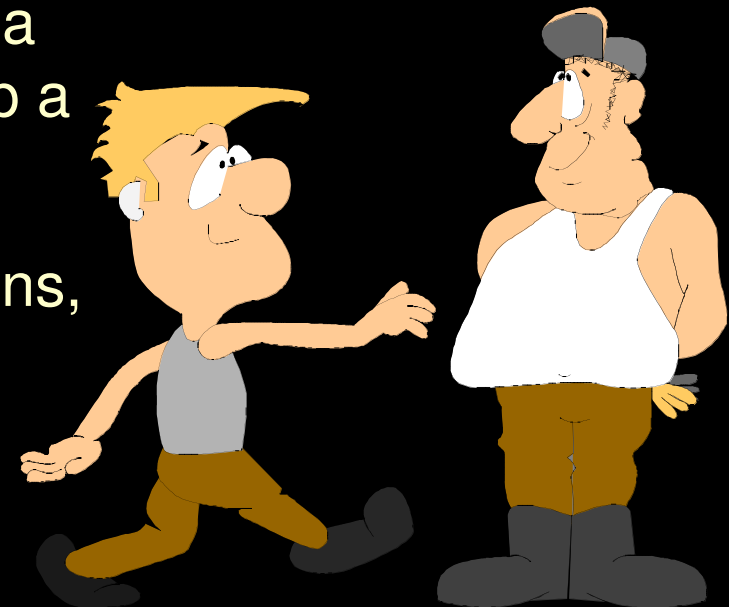
A Comparative Study of the BB/BS Program by Public/Private Ventures:

- Most of the youth in the research sample were between the ages 10 and 14;
- Nearly 60 percent were members of a minority group;
- More than 60 percent were boys;
- Most were near poor to poor
- Many live in families with histories of substance abuse and/or domestic violence.

The Results

Little Brothers and Sisters who met with their "Bigs" regularly for about a year were:

- **46%** less likely than their peers to use illegal drugs and **27%** less likely to start drinking;
- **52%** less likely than their peers to skip a day of school and **37%** less likely to skip a class;
- more trusting of their parents or guardians, less likely to lie to them, and felt more supported and less criticised by their peers and friends.





*A Mentoring Trial at Berkeley Vale
Community High School*

Plan-It Youth

- Initially a Dept of Education Pilot Project (school-to-work) with no mentors
- Mentors were introduced to work with students in the project



Why Plan-It Youth?

- Students who don't complete their Year 12 certificate are three times more likely to become engaged in marginal activities for extended periods
- Students who have a goal to work towards - a reason for being at school - cope with school better and are more likely to "stick with it".



What is Plan-It Youth?

- Community Mentors being matched with a student in year 10 to investigate post-school options
- Mentors meeting with the students on a weekly basis at school, during school time
- Mentors using their previous experiences, skills and knowledge to assist the student's investigations.



Student Selection

All Year 10 students are surveyed to determine whether they intend to leave school at the end of Year 10

All students who intend to leave school are offered the opportunity to participate in Plan-It Youth



Timing

- During sport time or class time every week - approx 1.5 hours each session
- Approximately three months, finishing with a presentation of findings and a celebration
- Continuing the partnership for 6 - 12 months after completion of the program



Matching

- Based on personality and interests
- Mentors and Mentees have an opportunity to request a match after initial group activities



The Mentors

LOCAL BUSINESS

Commitment of staff time

TAFE OUTREACH PARTICIPANTS (mature-aged jobseekers)

RETIREEES (approx 50,000 on Central Coast)

Mentor Characteristics?

- good listeners
- like young people
- have some spare time
- make a regular commitment for a period of time
- willing to participate in TAFE training
- satisfy a police check - no criminal record or dubious background
- care about the future of young people



The Commitment

Approximately 2 hours per week for a year



8-12 weeks of training with TAFE OUTREACH



10-12 weeks of supported mentoring practicum



Continued Placement

Are the Mentors Trained?

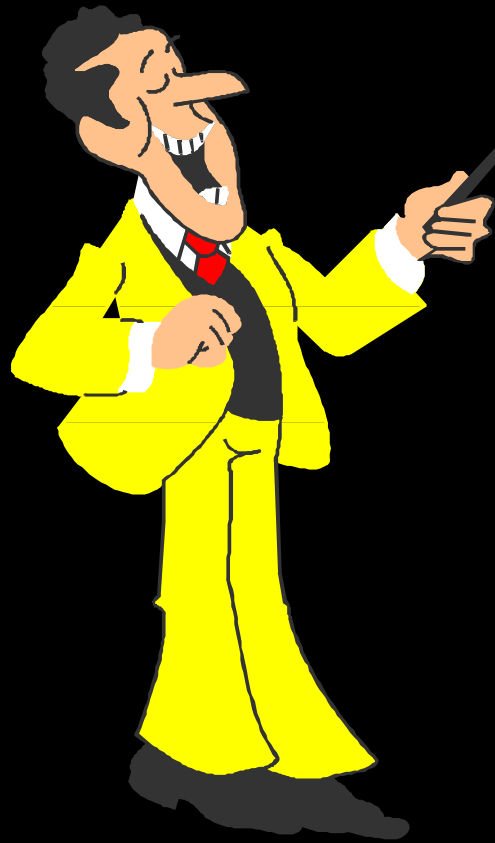
Yes - through TAFE Outreach

The training helps the mentors:



- Understand the issues involved in mentoring
- Become more confident
- Be better prepared
- Demonstrate commitment
- Have the support of fellow mentors

What Does the Course Entail?



- Interpersonal Skills
- Effective Listening
- Conflict Resolution
- Mentor roles, rights & responsibilities
- Problems faced by today's youth
- Managing difficult behaviour
- Child Protection Legislation
- Confidentiality
- Employment & Training Opportunities

Survey: The Value of Mentoring Skills

Skills learnt and demonstrated through mentoring:

For Example:

- ✓ Ability to maintain working relationships
- ✓ Demonstrated understanding and tolerance of different types of people
- ✓ Ability to problem solve
- ✓ Ability to identify and respond to the needs of other people
- ✓ Willingness to help others
- ✓ Willingness to take responsibility
- ✓ Willingness to seek out and learn new skills and knowledge
- ✓ Ability to set goals and priorities
- ✓ Demonstrated understanding of own strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ Demonstrated motivation for the task at hand

The Survey: The Conclusion

Those who participate as Mentors will gain skills that will be valuable in a workplace context and.....

Employers whose staff participate in these programs will also benefit from their employees developing those skills.



The Future

To support every potential
“early school leaver”
by matching him or her
with a community mentor
to work through a planning program
and then offer support
for the next six to twelve months - whatever
the student’s decision

Tips and Traps

- Partnership between schools, TAFE and the community
 - all stakeholders should have a say
- Co-ordination is essential
- Don't skimp on the training
- Adherence to Mentoring Australia Guidelines for Effective Practice
- Go for quality over quantity
- Start small
- Value and support your mentors
- Screening is important - you can't afford one mistake!