

# ABC - Adolescent Building Connections A Respectful Relationships Program



# Program Aims

The Adolescent Building Connections program is a trauma informed evidenced based program that was developed to provide tools and strategies to assist adolescents:

- To understand the impact of their behaviours on those around them.
- To encourage positive behaviour choices and positive growth for young people to form and maintain healthy relationships in their lives.



# What the data told us

- Data collected from July 2011 to June 2016 by the Melbourne Children's Court: 6,228 applications were made for family violence intervention orders where the respondent was identified as 17 years or younger.
- In more than half of the cases reported the affected family member was the female adult parent.



# Concepts and Foundations

- Emotional regulation – assisting young people to identify triggers and push points for them, enabling the use strategies and tolls to dysregulation.
- Emotional literacy – helping young people to development emotional intelligence and literacy through activities and games.
- Relaxation and mindfulness meditation techniques. The use of various techniques depending on the age and ability of the young people in the room to work on mindful activities stillness exercises and guided meditations.



# Concepts and Foundations *cont'd*

- Gender equality – development of understanding of the importance of Gender equality and its impacts.
- Family violence – building the foundation of understanding of family violence, the impacts of family violence and the longer term effects for those affected.
- Respectful relationships – developing the tools and strategies for the individual to build strong respectful relationships moving forward, knowing how to identify healthy and respectful relationships and how to communicate in relationships.



# Program Eligibility

- Young People between 12 and 17 years
- Case managed by a Community Service Youth specialist agency, Youth Justice or secondary School Welfare team



# Referral Pathways

- Youth Justice
- Specialist Case Managed Youth Program.
- School Welfare Officers for education based program



# Delivery Model

## Group Readiness Assessments

- Pre program assessments are completed by facilitators to assess group readiness
- Parent/carer or a significant person in adolescent's life completes tool to gauge impacts of behaviour
- Facilitators communicate with case managers regarding concerns / session content that may be triggering to the individual

## Program Delivery

- Designed to be delivered to 12- 17 year old adolescents in single gendered groups
- Up to 10 adolescents in each group
- Facilitated by 2 facilitator's role modeling respectful relationships
- Delivered as ten 120 min sessions over 10 weeks

## Evaluation and Assessment

- Completion of self assessment each session , GEM evaluation tool at week 1,5 and 10
- Evaluation form at program completion
- Interactive activities designed to assess knowledge and understanding





# How it works



## Session Check in

Discussion previous week

Strategies employed, and outcomes

Respectful input encourage from other participants



## Topic Content and activities

Interactive and input from all is expected and encouraged

Activities that relate to the topic are used to maintain interest and reinforce the learnings for the topic



## Relaxation and mindfulness

At the conclusion of the session participants will be led in a relaxation or guided mindfulness meditation activity to promote effective relaxation



# Challenges

- Transport
- Difficulty obtaining ongoing funding
- Buy in from parents and carers
- Maintaining engagement and motivation during wait times as programs are closed groups
- Measuring the change for evaluation purposes
- Case management support periods not meeting program timelines
- Capacity of education providers to include program



# What do Participants think : What worked Well and Why ?

- The leaders used appropriate language and presented well.
- Everything about the program. Safe space. Privacy
- The people. They know how to say things in the right way.
- Everything. I always used to get angry but I don't as much anymore because I learned how to control it.



# What do participants think : Has the program made a difference?

- Yes I've begun handling conflict better
- Helped to look at things different and try new things to help
- I don't get pissed off as much as I use to
- I think before I do
- I just hit people without thinking. But now I think about it and just walk away
- I don't get anger that much anymore
- Yes it has made me understand and do things differently
- This program is amazing. You have help me control all my anger I would like to say thankyou
- Yes cause I would still be with (ex-partner)
- So far I have been able to detect my early warning signs and work on my anger



# Current funding and evaluation 2019/20

- Funding for the 2019 /20 year has been provided by the Latrobe Health Assembly, in acknowledgment of the vast health impacts to young people and the community of the impacts of Adolescent Family Violence.
- External evaluation is currently underway this will be the third evaluation of the program throughout its lifespan.
- This is the first year accessing the local area secondary schools to provide the program.



# Evaluation

## **Self assessment /Outcomes measurement tool**


Quantum developed the GEM Plus tool to assist with this . It is an outcomes based tool that allows the young person to track their journey from week one to week 10 to see for themselves any movement in thoughts and behaviours, in addition participants complete a weekly check in sheet identifying feelings and emotions for the week

## **Impact Statements**

facilitators make observations on a sessional basis and complete a statement of these for each individual identifying any positive and strength areas or area for concern that may need to be followed up on


NOTE :The ABC program also uses program evaluation tools for the participants as well as pre and post evaluation for Parents/Carers



A decorative curved line at the top of the slide, transitioning from light blue on the left to dark blue in the middle, and then to light orange on the right.

“With Knowledge and empowerment  
comes positive change”



A decorative curved line at the top of the page, transitioning from light blue on the left to orange on the right.

Quantum Support Services  
Phone: 03 5120 2000

Adolescents Building Connections (ABC) Program

Tania Hancock – [tania.hancock@quantum.org.au](mailto:tania.hancock@quantum.org.au)  
Crystal Milesevic- [crystal.milesevic@quantum.org.au](mailto:crystal.milesevic@quantum.org.au)

