

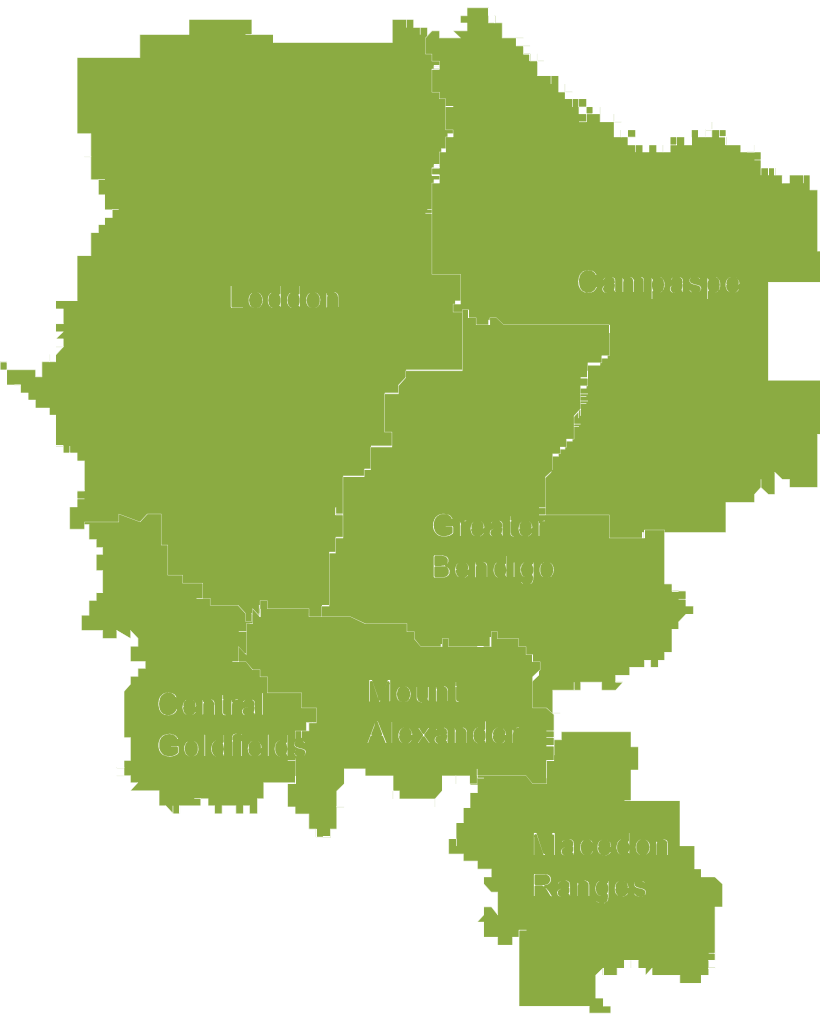
# What have we heard to date?

Report on consultation for **Loddon Children & Youth Area Partnership**

September – December 2014

# Introduction

# What is the Loddon Children and Youth Area Partnership?



**Purpose** *What will it take in our local community to keep vulnerable children safe from harm and have every opportunity to succeed in life?*

**Focus** To be determined through a local planning process, but will include:

- The creation of safe and supportive communities and environments in which children live free of abuse and neglect.
- Support the learning and development of all children and young people, particularly those who are at risk of disengaging or who have disengaged.

**Steering Group** DEECD Regional Director, DHS Area Director, Directors from 6 local govts, Dept Health Regional Director, Dept Justice Executive Director, Bendigo Health, Bendigo Community Health, Bendigo District Aboriginal Cooperative, Njernda Aboriginal Cooperative, Principals' Network, Family Services Alliance, Victoria Police, Loddon Mallee Family Violence Consortium, Commonwealth.

**Workplan** Key priorities and working groups to be developed in 2015.

## Engagement to date – Loddon Children and Youth Area Partnership

- July 2014**      **Launch Group** met for the first time and invited members to join Steering Group.
- Sept 2014**      **First Steering Group Meeting**, Mount Alexander Shire Council, Castlemaine. Principal Advisor commenced.
- Oct 2014**      **Stakeholder Forum, All Seasons Bendigo**, 91 attendees from community sector, health sector, schools, LLENs, State Government, Local Government and Victoria Police.
- Oct-Dec 2014**      **Over 30 meetings with key partners**, including State and local government, community and health sector, existing networks and forums.
- Nov-Dec 2014**      **Stakeholder survey**, 68 responses (refer to appendix).
- Nov 2014**      **Second Steering Group meeting**, DEECD, Bendigo.
- Dec 2014**      **First priority setting workshops, Bendigo** with Steering Group and invited stakeholders, BCHS, Eaglehawk.

**1. What should we focus on?**

# What do stakeholders think the critical issues are?

% who identified in their top three priorities



**Most** people selected these in their top three priorities

**Some** people selected these in their top three priorities

**Few** people selected these in their top three priorities



<b>Ensuring all children develop well in their early years</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Improving parenting skills and capacity</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>Supporting kids who are disengaging from school</b>	<b>48%</b>
Reducing the impact of family violence on children	<b>38%</b>
Supporting youth towards healthy life & employment	<b>30%</b>
Improving outcomes for kids in out of home care	<b>20%</b>
Reducing impact of alcohol & other drugs on children	<b>20%</b>
Better assisting Aboriginal children and families	<b>14%</b>
Reducing impact of ice on children	<b>7%</b>
Better assisting refugee or CALD children & families	<b>3%</b>

[From stakeholder survey]

# What came out of the forum?

<p>The <b>community as a whole</b> must be engaged - not only government and service agencies. This must include families, parents, friends and peers, neighbours, school communities, business.</p>	<p><b>Language and literacy, safety and participation</b> are key aspirations for children and young people - so that they are 'happy and healthy, doing well at school, supported by, parents peers and networks, engaged and not needing services'.</p>	<p>Seek <b>more detailed and localised data</b> (including LGA-specific) to better understand the stories of vulnerability and underlying causes. Consider the regulatory environment for sharing data.</p>
<p>Emphasise the <b>control and agency of the child</b> (and family) – what are their aspirations, “do it with them not for them”.</p>	<p>Build <b>trust and relationships</b> – between the child and support networks - lots in our aspirations for the kids about the strength of friend networks, peers and relationships - as well as between agencies.</p>	<p>A partnership like this will need <b>greater flexibility</b> in the system (e.g. child protection) and <b>new capabilities</b> in agencies.</p>
<p><b>Engage with parents</b>, build their strength, self-esteem and ability to support their kids, "be their own case managers".</p>	<p>Support <b>prevention</b> through protective factors, early intervention, addressing underlying causes and managing transitions.</p>	<p>We will need to look for and <b>learn from what is working</b>.</p>
<p>Having <b>hope and belief</b> in the child, and build this in themselves.</p>		

[From Stakeholder Forum]

# What issues arose in conversations?

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[Ordered so the most frequently mentioned are towards the top]

**Supporting families and parents and building their capacity – before things become critical**



**Early years and prevention**

Including in rural areas

**Youth disengaging from school**

Impacts of family violence

Improving outcomes for kids in out of home care

Alcohol, other drugs, ice



Particularly in Echuca

**Suicide**



Particularly in Macedon Ranges

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[Summary from conversations with Steering Group members and other stakeholders]



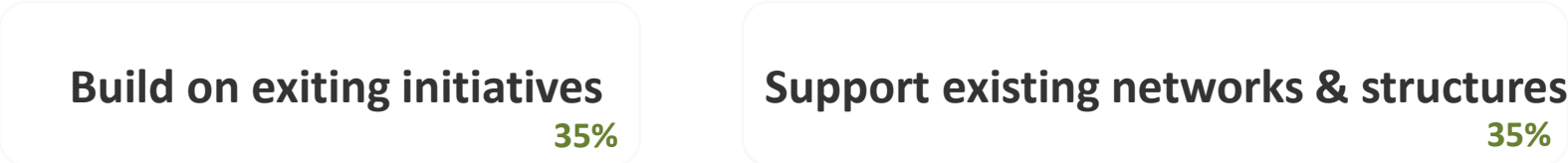
## **2. How should we work?**

# What do stakeholders think is most important for us to work on?

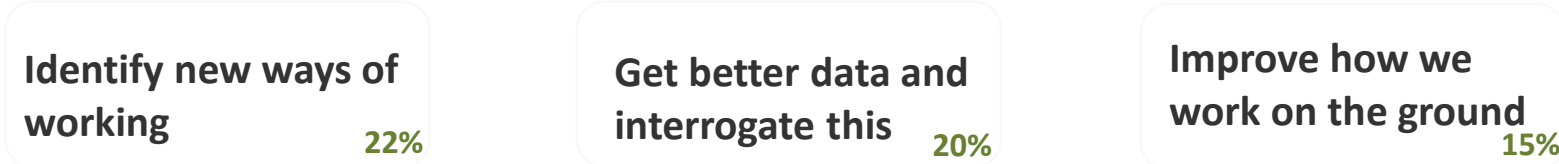
## Equal most ...



## Next ...



## And also ...



56% ↑  
Proportion who identified in top three areas of focus for AP

[From stakeholder survey]

# What has the Steering Group said?

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**123** Choose a **small number of priorities** to work on: identify **common areas of interest** for action



Build on **existing activity and networks** and strengthen them, don't replicate them

Connect and **build capacity of existing services (particularly universal)**, don't create new ones



Focus on **strengthening families** to help themselves



Work with the **voice of kids & families** in developing solutions

Act at a **systemic level**, but strengthen the **skills of workers on the ground** – and learn from them



Recognise we may need **different approaches in different areas**



Strengthening our **partnership**, and develop **shared responsibility**

**Community needs to play a central role**, not just services



Support and **share amongst our members**



**Don't be armchair experts** – deep dive into the data and issues: what is the *real* story?

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[From conversations and Steering Group meetings]

# What complementary initiatives exist?

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## Early years

Bumps to Babes program with Koori families  
Shonkoff (Harvard) and Oberklaid (Australia)  
TFQ Early Childhood Group  
Go Goldfields  
Loddon Early Years Strategy  
Bendigo Early Years Strategy  
Talking Matters Speech Pathology Partnership  
Njernda work with unborn notifications – support prior to DHS getting involved  
Good collaborative work between BDAC and Bendigo Health on MCH  
Kid Space multi-disciplinary service  
MCH & enhanced MCH  
Cobaw & Macedon Ranges Early Years Network

## Family Violence

Regional Action Plan - Women's Health Loddon Mallee  
Ending Violence Against Women and Their Children Strategy  
Family Violence Advisory Group  
Family Violence Consortium  
Go Goldfields  
Respectful Relationships worker in DEECD

## Aboriginal kids and families

Aboriginal Justice Agreement and RAJAC committees  
Latrobe Valley – building Koori trust of police, and in changing community attitude to family violence  
BDAC community forums, soon to run a youth forum  
Njernda  
Collaboration between BDAC & Bendigo Health on MCH

## Youth disengagement

Connect Central Castlemaine	Maryborough CLDP
Macedon Ranges Youth Alliance	CoGB Youth Alliance in
Youth Partnerships FLO and	Heathcote
governance sites	Macedon Ranges Youth Alliance
Kyabram Youth Partnerships /	Live for Life Program (Macedon
Kyabram Community Learning	Ranges).
Centre	“Passions and Pathways”
TFQ Youth Coordination &	FLO options in Bendigo (TFQ
Young Adult Groups	Youth Coordination)
LLEN engagement, pathways and	“Get kids to school bus” – shared
employment work	service set up by Meeting Place
MAS Attendance Summit	(Castlemaine)
(organised by MAPN).	Macedon Ranges Youth Service
Go Goldfields	consultations Community Safety
Goldfields Macedon Ranges	Committee
SSSO network	

## Strategic alliances & networks

The First Quarter  
Go Goldfields  
Communities for Children  
Services Connect

## Child protection & out of home care

Child FIRST / Family Services  
Alliance  
Education Partnering  
Agreements  
DHS Out of Home Care  
Operations Group  
Services Connect

## Family support, preventative

North Central Vic Family Alliance  
Child FIRST  
Haven supported community  
Family services programs  
Njernda work with unborn  
notifications.

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[Selected examples from conversations....]

# How do our stakeholders want us to engage with them?



**80%**

Keep us in the loop with regular newsletters



**65%**

Seek out opportunities for informal conversations about what we are each doing



**45%**

Come and speak to our group or network formally



**30%**

Have a representative join the steering group



**50%**

Look for opportunities to join work formally, including through working groups



**30%**

Provide a webpage

[From stakeholder survey]

**3. What is our emerging vision for all children and young people?**

# What do we want for all kids?



## Developing

In school or learning setting  
Engaged with education/training  
Developing employment skills



## Loved and supported

Stable supportive family  
Supportive peer group  
Support network available  
Someone that is committed to them  
At least one significant adult in their life  
Parents have skills and capacity to give children the best start



## Healthy

Key age and stage  
Good access to health – all checks  
Immunised



## Opportunity to thrive

A fair go  
Equal opportunities and aspirations

## Sense of choice and agency

Hopeful, aspirational  
A voice in decisions  
Expressing needs, happy  
Expressing independence



## Connected

Positive relationship with family  
Strong connection to peers  
Sense of belonging to culture and community  
A strong identity



Building respectful relationships  
Being able to respect and practice their culture



## Resilient

Raised self-esteem / hope filled engagement  
Building of resilience

## Happy

Able to play



## Safe

living in a non-violent environment

[From Stakeholder Forum and Steering Group Workshop]

**Next steps**



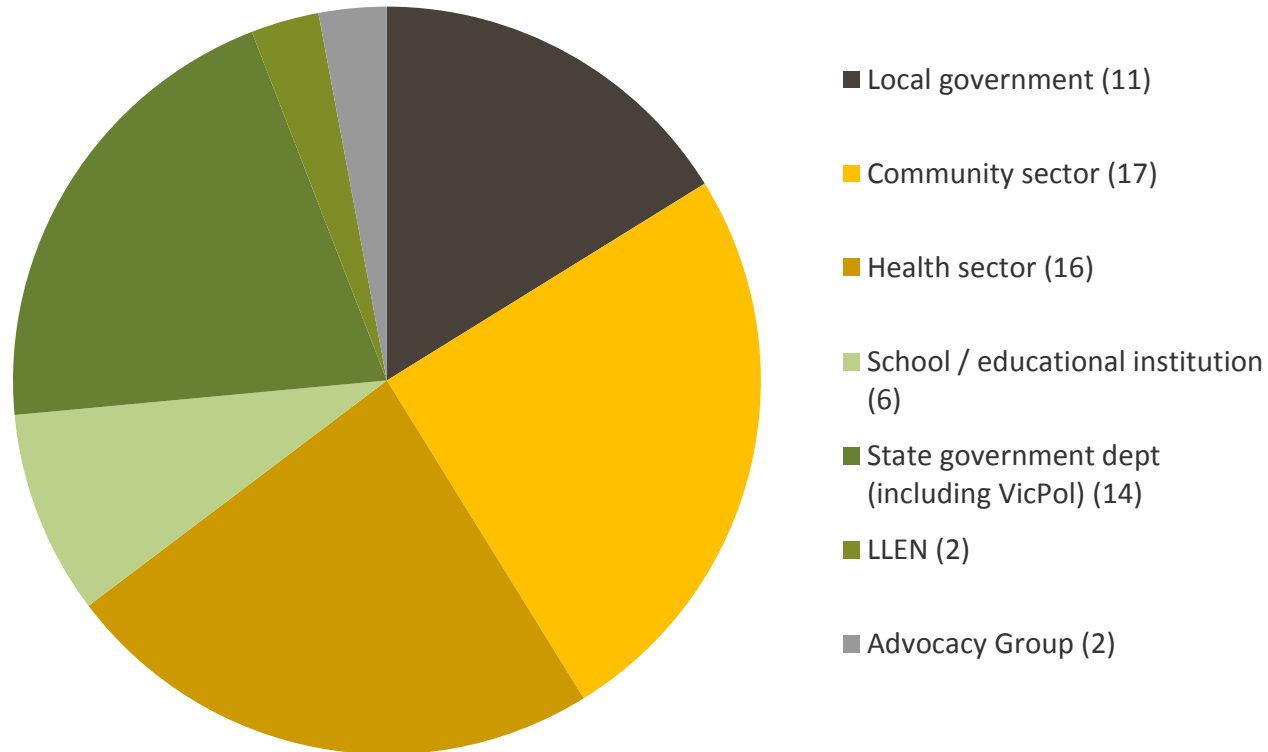
## Next Steps – Loddon Children and Youth Area Partnership

- Feb 2015**      **Steering Group meeting** to confirm priorities for 2015-16.
- March 2015**      **Report to Children Services Coordination Board** on Area Partnership progress to date.
- Mar - June 2015**      Form **working groups** for priorities, and  
Draft **Area Partnership work plan** for 2015-16.
- Early-mid 2015**      Plan **stakeholder forums** to be held in 2015.
- Ongoing 2015**      Commencement of **broader community engagement** and work with children and families with lived experience.

# Appendices

# Who responded to the survey?

What best describes your work organisation?



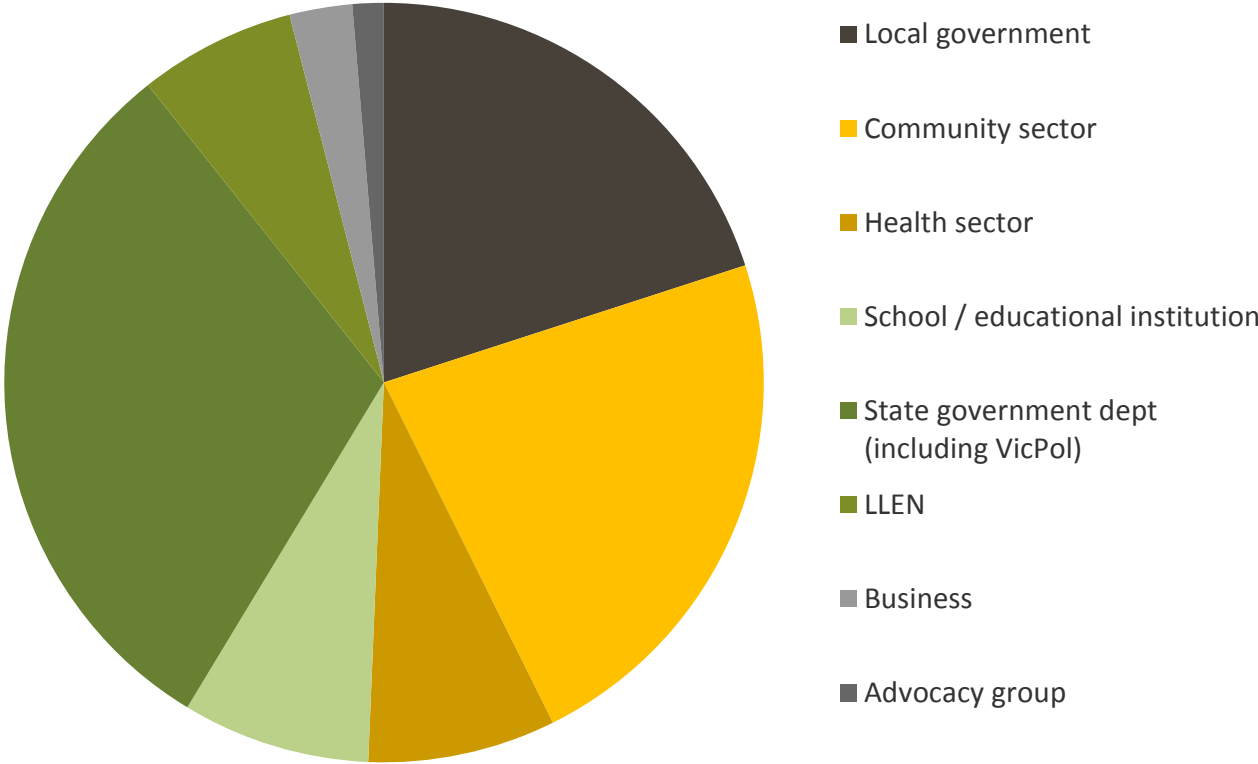
**68**

Total responses

Open 6 November 2014 – 8 December 2014

# Who attended the Forum?

What best describes your work organisation?



**91**  
Participants

# What did people think of the Forum?

As a result of the Forum I have.... (average responses)	What worked? (in order of importance)	What didn't? (in order of importance)
Increased my understanding about what the Area Partnership is and does – <b>Yes, quite a bit</b>	<b>Diversity</b> of people and organisations in attendance	Need <b>more time</b> for group discussions
Improved my knowledge about the situation for children and youth across Loddon – <b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Group work</b>	Could do with <b>more background</b> on Partnership and relationship with other work / networks
Learned about the collective impact approach and how it can be practically applied – <b>Yes, quite a bit</b>	<b>Speakers</b> (especially Go Goldfields)	Need more time and <b>more detail on data</b>
A clearer view of how my work can relate to the Area Partnership – <b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Logistics</b> , location, venue, timing etc	<b>Introductions</b> too general and too long
Better understood the views of others working with vulnerable children and families – <b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Facilitation</b>	Pitch too <b>simplistic</b> for some
Challenged or changed my own views – <b>Not really</b>	Use of <b>technology</b>	Need <b>more schools</b> present
Reflected on what more we can do to support children – <b>Yes, quite a bit</b>	<b>Data</b> presentation	