

**Learn to reflect positively on experience**  
**Engage and manage your emotions**  
**Adapt your thinking attitudes and behaviour to situations and challenges**  
**Demonstrate a willingness to work on yourselves and contribute positively to a group and community**

# CATALYST Leading Change

## Information Guide



# CATALYST 2012 'LEADING CHANGE'

## WHAT IS IT?

A funded youth intervention for young people at risk that involves training, coaching, mentoring and experiential learning.

## PROJECT INTENT AND PURPOSE FOR 2012

To support 'at risk' young people (14 – 15 yrs) to make positive life choices and experience a full and meaningful life.

In the broader community many factors can be identified as contributing to a young person at risk. Essentially there are three levels of protection for raising a child the Community, the Family and the child. The six areas to be assessed to determine a young person at risk are:

- Physical Health
- Mental Health and Emotional Well Being
- Relationships
- Material Well Being
- Learning and Development
- Safety

The absence of these protective factors at the individual, family or community level can contribute to a reduced self awareness, self esteem and poor self control. These are the primary drivers that lead a young person into criminal behaviour or crime related activity. Criminal behaviour and crime related activity is one of the most negative and expensive outcomes for young people, families and the community.

PCYC Bornhoffen recognises that the Catalyst project is a crime prevention project, is core business for both PCYC and the Blue Light Association (the funding body) and a worthwhile investment.

Central to the project is a partnership with the Department of Education or Learning centres and Regional PCYC Branches to affect positive changes for these young people, their families and community.

PCYC Bornhoffen has recognised through research, consultation and experience that we need to take a holistic approach in working with young people at risk. We adopt an early intervention approach to work with not just the individual, but families, schools, and the broader community through our engagement with the school and a community partner.

With Crime Prevention as the primary driver the following are the proposed project goals for 2012

### **To provide a positive intervention that enhances existing learning approaches in the support and development of young people at risk and their families by**

- **Partnering with Learning and Education centres that already have a behavioural management or learning engagement process in place**
- **Engaging parents and other community organisations/members to support the change process for young people – Raising parent awareness and participant mentoring**
- **Developing protective factors, positive self awareness and resilience in young people**
- **Evaluating the short and long term outcomes of the project to develop its effectiveness**

'One off' programs have little value, but well designed interventions in partnership with the school or youth agency as well as the local PCYC can have a positive footprint for a young person. If a person is at risk there is a high probability that it will affect the whole family at some level. The family while trying to do their best becomes at risk by default.

Figure 1 below is a Holistic Assessment and referred to as a Common Approach to Assessment Referral and Support (CAARS). It is used to help assess 'gaps' that exist for the individual from a whole of community perspective. This approach helps to explore areas of improvement for the individual and encourages interagency collaboration. The Catalyst experience works to address the imbalance that can be observed for a young person; it primarily works in the Learning and Development, Mental and Emotional Wellbeing and Relationship areas to improve individual resilience. Strengthening these areas in a protective manner helps to minimise the sometimes unavoidable factors present in other areas of the young person's life.

Specifically participants and the families involved are encouraged to LEAD themselves first.

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We see the implementation of these four outcomes as basic leadership behaviours as protective factors and are a sound starting points to personal effectiveness

### SOLUTION FOCUSED EXPERIENCE

PCYC's adventure programs are challenging for young people and involve participants actively taking considered and appropriate risks. Over time as young people take a risk and experience a positive outcome the experience puts something back "in the account" for a young person growing their self esteem.

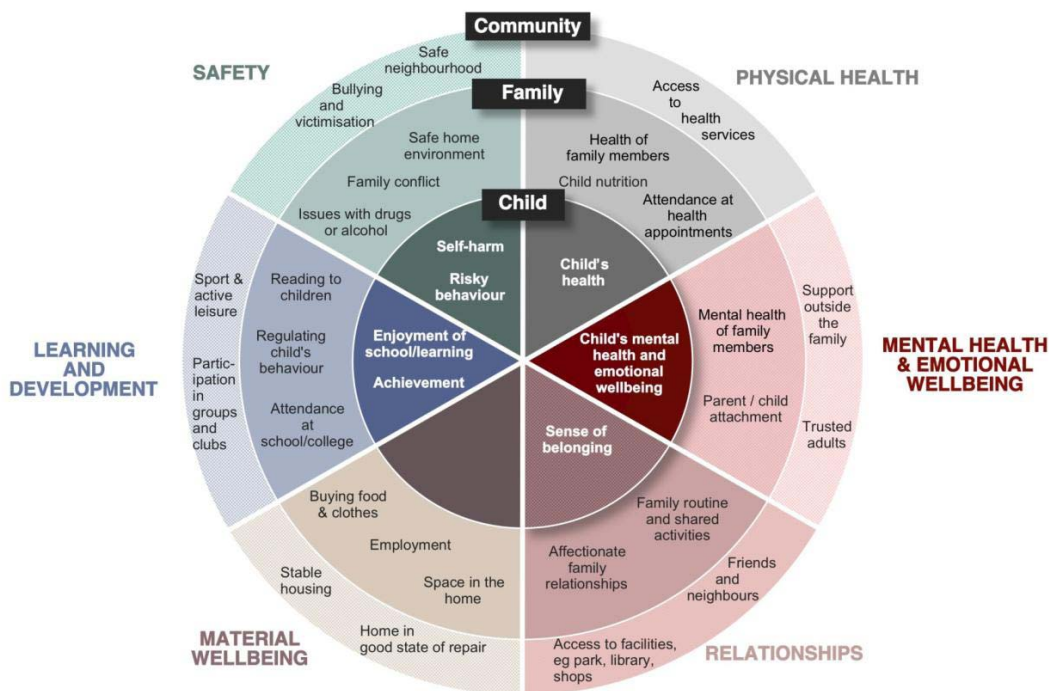
Providing young people with an opportunity to see themselves in a 'different light' is what it is all about. Participants get to feel differently about themselves. Even everyday teachers see the participant differently, enabling participants to explore new behaviours and possibilities.

### FEEDBACK FROM CATALYST

#### Q. What was your highlight of the experience and why?

"From looking at the group of students, there were too many little moments throughout the group. Seeing one student step up and accept with pride the mantle of leadership, watching a younger student change from a negative thought process to a positive one. Another child never gave up. Another one learnt how to ask for help. Another one received respite and the opportunity to be himself. The list is endless".

Principal Sandra Parrett, Mitchell State School - 2008



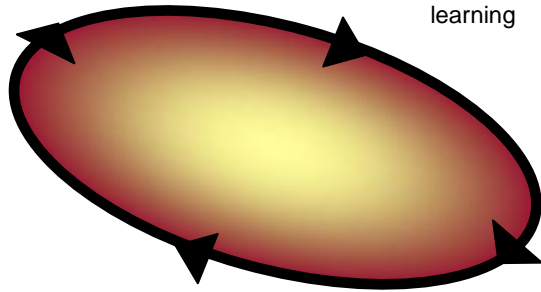
**FIGURE 1 - A Common Approach to Assessment Referral and Support (Released by the Australian Research Association for Children and Youth ARACY 2009)**

## WHY EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

The following diagram illustrates the experiential learning cycle used in Adventure Development programs. This is how we grow self esteem

### Experience

We create powerful challenges that engage participants and act as metaphors for daily life.



### Reflect

We provide opportunities for participants to look back at the experience and identify learning

### Generalise or Theorise

We are able to recognise consistent patterns of behaviour or we may introduce models or theory that assists participants to understand particular issues

### Apply

Participants are supported to identify ways that the learning is relevant to their everyday life

**To hear something is better than not to hear it,  
To say something is better than just to hear it,  
To know something is better than just to say it  
To practice something is better than just to know it**  
(Chinese proverb – unknown)

A well designed experience enables a young person to recognise new social skills they need and then practice the new skills is an effective process to help change their response.

Canfield tells us in his work on self esteem that people have preferences on how they take-in information (visually, auditory and kinaesthetically). Research on the percentage effectiveness of learning styles suggest that visual (seeing) is 10%, auditory (hearing) is 20% and kinaesthetic (doing) is 90%. We remember more when we experience it. Experiential learning is effective because it enables leaders to provide solution focused counselling which helps to reinforce the positive attributes of the individual from the experience.

### Answers from a reflection of 'self' with a young person from Catalyst Cloncurry - March 2010

**Q. How has catalyst improved your life since you returned from the program?**

I think I am a better person than I was

**Q. Since returning from Catalyst, can you name one goal that you have set yourself and have you achieved or not achieved that goal? If not reasons?**

I have set myself a goal of not smoking the bad stuff - I haven't smoked at all in the last three months and maybe only once or twice since Catalyst – I used to smoke all the time.

**Q. Have your experiences on catalyst helped you with relationships in your life?**

Yes it has – I have more communication and listening with mum and my brothers

(Questions asked and answered in August 2010 – Post Program)

We cannot quick fix the process of change or fast track the learning experience. Once a participant chooses to change, the behaviour change can be relatively quick and long term. The secret is to find the best way to reach them. The affect of the 'experiential approach' is the Catalyst for Change.

## PROJECT DETAIL

The project for 2012 is aimed at young people currently attending secondary school, in age bracket of grades 9 - 10 (14 -15 yrs)

Each program would have the following key elements:

- Community and Partner Identification and Liaison
- Partnership Agreement Established
- PCYC or Blue Light contact within the chosen partner or region - Selection of participants and profiling
- Commitment from parents to attend progress meetings with the school
- Eight Mentor Sessions conducted by the school (teachers/councilors) throughout the program (**1 hour in duration**) -
- Contact with parents / guardians through out the program
- Pre Assessment of Participants using Baron Emotional Quotient Youth Version Questionnaire and individual and group profiles.
- PCYC Adventure Development – 2 Day Lead in
- PCYC Adventure Development Adventurous Journey (10 Day intervention)
- PCYC Adventure Development - Follow up day and Participants Evaluation – Baron EQ Questionnaire revisited
- PCYC Adventure Development - Wrap up day and graduation

The Catalyst project is designed to implement the change process for the young people involved. The existing education process and teacher/youth worker contact is designed to provide context and consistency. The time and human resource commitment is essentially the partner's contribution to the process. PCYC fosters the community connection and the intervention expertise.

## AWARD WINNING PROGRAM

The Catalyst program has seen many success stories of personal growth and commitment to change from the participants that have been involved. The power of Catalyst was recognized by being presented the 2010 Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation award for Excellence in Outdoor Instruction and Education.

## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

PCYC Bornhoffen recently completed a literature review. The premise of the review is to 'lead change' and look at what we do and how we do it with a fresh perspective, find new solutions to the challenge of improving professional practice.

The review attempts to answer three critical questions:

- What are the key success factors in effective adventure program design and delivery?
- What is the most appropriate method of evaluating adventure based learning programs?
- What can we do to improve the Catalyst project – short and long term recommendations?

Our intent is to use this review to address questions of value, improve practice, share information, inform decision making and help secure repeat or new funding opportunities to continue to deliver the Catalyst program. In 2012 we need to partner with more Schools as we have undertaken to externally evaluate the program and have secured funding for program evaluation.

If you would like to know anymore information about the Catalyst Project or you are interested in working with us please contact:

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