

Australian Global Youth Mental Health Forum
20th October 2018
AMES Multicultural Hub, Melbourne Victoria

Theme: “understanding the importance of youth mental health today for peace and development”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Introduction:

The forum was developed in response to the growing need to communicate and engage with professionals and the youth of the community to the issues associated with Youth Mental Health and the stigma associated with those individuals who may seek help. One of the outcomes is to ensure that positive psychology becomes a household term that ensures the youth of our community are including and not discriminated against.

The forum was to ensure that unique people with the same agenda (including international political leaders, youth activists, celebrities and journalists) were able to discuss the most crucial issues facing the domain of Youth Psychology. The forum focused on youth psychology, child psychology and child mental health, amalgamating youths, youth activists, NGO's, and psychologists from across many nations.

The forum is the initiative of the International organisation and was supported by organisations including White Ribbon Australia, Multicultural Consulting Services, Progressive Care Solutions, OZATV, Zaborn, Future Voices, Ethnic Community Council of Victoria (IYAL), GriefLine Community & Family Services, and ISANA.

Outcomes to be achieved

- Understanding mental health from a psycho-social perspective.
- Demonstrating the linkages between mental health, discrimination, poverty and access to justice.
- De-stigmatizing mental health issues and promoting mental health care among the most marginalized communities
- Understanding Intergenerational trauma: Trauma is passed down from its first generation of survivors who directly experience or witness a traumatic event on to future generations, particularly indigenous communities.
- Effective Methods of Mental Health Advocacy. How “easy” is it for the youth of today to access these advocacy services, by accessing these services does it raise the level of anxiety that may exist within the person? How do we break this cycle?

Planning / Advisory Committee

Each member of the planning (31) and advisory committee volunteered time and resources towards the development of the forum. Each member was tasked with various responsibilities including;

- Development of forum objectives
- Location and timing of the event
- Communications and engagement
- Venue administration
- Social media engagement
- Flyers and Brochures (Promotions)
- Catering / support
- Photography / Broadcasting

Community Engagement / Involvement

- Email invitations were initially sent to numerous professional organisations associated in/directly associated with or responsible for providing support with the youth mental health care sector
- Invitations for corporate support and interest to attend and or present at the forum were sent to,
 - all political parties within Victoria,
 - all Victorian Members of Parliament responsible for portfolios associated with health, mental health, community services, multicultural affairs and policing
 - Professional organisations directly responsible for providing and or supporting assistance to the youth community
 - Tertiary organisations and individuals associated with youth mental health issues.
 - Associated organisations related to anxiety and depression
- The committee received 200 bookings of attendance from the public, with the majority through the “Facebook”

Global Youth Mental Health Forum Program and Presentation outcomes

Masters of Ceremony: ...

Opening Address: ...

Guest Presenters:...

Key Outcomes associated with Presentations:

- The key to appropriate management of Youth Mental Health issues is the collaboration of services
- Isolation and shame is worse than the mental health condition
- Individuals need to understand what helps and what hurts and communicate those feelings to everyone.
- Connections are the key to help individuals, those connections can be formal and structured e.g. Organisational /institutional or informal and casual e.g. Family/friends
- The key support is “Love is the answer no matter the question”

- Psychological First Aid
- Don’t need qualifications to support and an individual in distress
- Establish an emotional connection with individuals, as everyone can administer Psychological First Aid
- Keys are
 - Listen
 - Talk
 - Determine what is causing the stresses
 - Establish routine with the person
- There are many forms of conflict that causes emotional stress
- The major cause of youth relationship conflict is dating violence.
- There are four key processes associated with effective youth relationship conflict resolution. This includes:
 - Dialogue (one-on-one communication)
 - Mediation
 - Dignity
 - Respect.
- At any point you don't know what to do, treat each other with respect and dignity.

- The importance of information management and youth mental health include
 - Understanding what information, you have or don’t have
- Knowing how to gain access to information and knowing who to ask
- Spend less time on the issue that may be causing the health issue and more time on finding out how to overcome the issue (i.e. find the information that helps overcome the issues)

- Step back from the issue and detach yourself from the stresses that are creating the issue
- Revitalize your life
 - What makes you happy
 - What brought you happiness / joy
 - Reconnect with yourself
 - Reengage with your life, what do you want in your life

- Youth violence / youth mental health are intrinsically linked
- Keys to breaking the cycle of violence is to share experiences, develop a sense of identity, and develop resilience.
Majority of youth:
- Suffer anxiety and depression due to a lack of identity; lack of positive relationships at a domestic level as well as socially
- Mental health issues create environmental isolation but in so doing there is a gravitation towards a culture of violence that replicates what the individual experiences on a daily basis.
- There are clear signs of anxiety and stress within this age / social sector with typical violence as the perceived “norm”

- Promoting education and engagement with individuals who may suffer signs of mental health issues requires equal power to all participants within the program
- Individual youth direct the programs content and directions, they are the Pilots” to the program
- The basis of the education program is to build connectiveness which expands the individual’s ability to share experiences, stresses and issues
- One of the key successes to the program has been the ability of participants to communicate their emotions through artistic expressions that describe their personal journey

- Un/Employment directly affects youth psychology
- Employment builds psychological resilience
- Unemployment challenges youth at all turns, hope to change the situation builds hope

- Stress management that affects anxiety and depression can and are affected by
 - Change in one's life circumstances from what we perceive as the normal to what it should be
- Positiveness affects a person's management of stress that affects anxiety / depression
 - Positive Action
 - Positive Thoughts
 - Positive Networks
 - Positive Connections
- 50% of adults who suffer from mental health issues occur before the age of 18
- The key to addressing youth mental health is
 - Identifying a sense of one's self worth
 - Discovering one's identity
 - Discovering a sense of inner power
 - Connections / relationships
- A theme that should be used is "I am me, You are You, We are connected"
- Research – early intervention reduces the impact of Mental Health on normal development
- Lobby for Youth Mental Health First Aid training in the community, schools, work place etc.
- More skills-based learning – school staff and youth leaders
- 1% Improvement???

 - Youth Mental Health First Aid-
 - Early intervention
 - Social media- create awareness
 - Your 1%

- Find the one thing that makes you feel that you have self esteem
- Understand that self esteem comes from within but is also built from the positive connections that you have or build
- Failure is just a part of the process and not the end

- The keys to disputes and the resultant anxiety and stress is
 - Communications
 - Perceptions
 - Put yourself in the other persons shoes
 - Collaboration to achieve an outcome
 - Confidence to communicate
- Optimism breeds positiveness and trust in yourself
- Self-efficiency is a part of being positive