beyondblue
the national depression initiative
www.beyondblue.org.au

Submission to:

Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety

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beyondblue: opening our eyes to depression throughout Australia

Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety

About beyondblue: the national depression initiative

beyondblue: the national depression initiative is a national, independent, not-for-profit organisation working to address issues associated with depression, anxiety and related substance use disorders in Australia. Of particular relevance to the Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety is *beyondblue's* aim to develop and implement depression and anxiety prevention and early intervention programs, and to initiate and support depression and anxiety-related research across the lifespan.

beyondblue works in partnership with health services, schools, workplaces, universities, media and community organisations, as well as people living with depression and their carers, to bring together their expertise. Specific population groups that *beyondblue* targets are young people, men, Indigenous peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, gay, lesbian, bisexual, intersex and transgendered (GLBTI) people, people living in rural and remote areas, and older people. *beyondblue* also works to support the wide range of health professionals in the mental health sector.

Youthbeyondblue

Adolescent depression is one of the most frequently reported mental health problems in Australia. For many young people, the transition to work, travel, employment or unemployment and changes in family and school structures can be difficult. *beyondblue*'s youth agenda concentrates on preventing depression at different ages in a young person's life at school, home or in the community. It is built on strong partnerships and an evidence-based approach.

beyondblue's Youthbeyondblue community awareness campaign aims to educate family and friends about behaviour that places young people at risk of depression and encourages and assists young people to seek help for themselves, their friends and relatives. It is supported by a dedicated website www.youthbeyondblue.com. Many fact sheets on youth depression and related topics, including Cyberbullying, have been produced and are available at this website (see page 6). Youthbeyondblue's fact sheet on Cyberbullying is provided with this submission.

Background – depression in young people

Depression has its peak incidence in mid-to-late adolescence,[1] therefore, significant investment is required in the prevention of depression, anxiety and emotion problems in this population group.

Risk factors for depression, anxiety and mental health problems

A substantial body of evidence shows that the quality of parenting children receive has a major effect on their development. Family risk factors such as poor parenting, family conflict and marriage breakdown strongly influence children's risk of developing mental health problems. Specifically, a lack of a warm positive relationship with parents; insecure attachment; harsh, inflexible or inconsistent discipline practices; inadequate supervision of and involvement with children; marital conflict and breakdown; and parental psychopathology (particularly maternal depression) increase the risk that children will develop major behavioural and emotional problems, including depression and conduct problems.[2]

Anxiety experienced by young people in their early and middle years is a pathway to depression in later adolescence. The school arena is a key setting for social and emotional development. Anxiety can increase dramatically during the transition from primary school to secondary school, and is a known marker for a large increase in emotional problems. Furthermore, recurrent bullying or victimisation in Year 8 also predicts symptoms of depression and anxiety in Year 9, especially for girls.[3]

Low self-esteem as a predictor of adolescent depression is supported by longitudinal research which shows that children who perceive themselves as academically, socially, or physically incompetent are more vulnerable to depression than are children who perceive themselves as competent.[4] Such beliefs develop during middle childhood and early adolescence and arise from feedback children receive from their parents, teachers and peers.[5]

Life events involving loss are specifically associated with depression.[6] Depressing life events can include exposure to family or community violence, chronic poverty, child physical and sexual abuse, bereavement, or parental divorce or separation.

There is a growing body of evidence, both international and Australian, to suggest that non-heterosexual people experience anxiety and depression at higher rates than their heterosexual peers and are at greater risk of suicide and self-harm.[7] In relation to the impact of stigma and discrimination, the literature suggests that depressive symptoms in non-heterosexual people are associated with both 'distal' discriminatory events (that is, objective social acts or events in which non-heterosexual people are subjected to prejudice and discrimination), and 'proximal' processes (which include the subjective interpretation of discriminatory events, and the internalisation of discrimination and negative stereotypes). Research evidence relating to the high rates of abuse and victimisation of young non-heterosexual people is particularly pertinent in the context of cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying

Being a victim of negative or abusive relationships or of traumatic life events, or being affected by bullying and cyberbullying may contribute to the likelihood of young people experiencing depression, or of not seeking help early. Given this, cyberbullying is an avenue of risk for young people, warranting attention in national policy.

Peer relationships are influential in a young person's ongoing development and life experience, potentially providing secure spaces in which to socially adapt and grow, yet also creating avenues for harm. The occurrence of bullying and harassment from peers can result in environments becoming unsupportive and unsafe for young people, and these environments can be technology based such as chat rooms on the Internet, mobile phones etc.

While bullying behaviour was once regarded as physical abuse at the hands of peers, the definition has extended over time to include physical, emotional or psychological abuse, including the spreading of rumours and exclusion from peer activities. Psychological and emotional bullying, sometimes known as covert bullying, is generally less direct, involves less face-to-face conflict, is harder to detect, and may involve the use of third parties and technology.[8] The use of cyber environments (through technology) has led to the expansion of cyberbullying, and it must be acknowledged that bullying, in all its forms, is linked to depression and anxiety in young people.[9]

Anecdotally, it is reported that boys are more likely to bully physically, while girls are more likely to pursue avenues of harassment that involve emotional and psychological abuse. Young women are more likely to bully and be bullied emotionally and psychologically using covert methods, such as cyberbullying, and such harassment can increase the risk of experiencing depression and anxiety.

Cyberbullying has been viewed as a modern take on more traditional methods of bullying behaviour (such as sending a nasty text message instead of a note, or posting information online rather than graffiti on a locker), however, the pervasiveness of technology redefines the scope of these behaviours,[10] and also enables the bullying taunt to be viewed publically. Technology also grants access beyond otherwise distinct spaces in which children and young people exist (home and school). While young people may have previously received protection from peer harassment when out of the school environment, now bullying can persist in a bridging, virtual space. Emerging cases of cyberbullying show a disturbing potential for damaging relationships, fraud, and even death through self-inflicted harm.[11]

Recommendations

1. Support research to develop an evidence base on cyberbullying issues and identify effective intervention strategies, including the key components and activities of cyberbullying, prevention and awareness approaches to reduce incidence and impact.

2. Define and target strategies that address emerging cyberbullying trends.

3. Work with human service, education and justice departments in developing anti cyberbullying strategies, with a focus on early detection, intervention and prevention.

4. Develop, promote and share "what works" protective mechanisms and information for young people in easy to understand language and relevant mediums broad based and free to access, including through IT / social media i.e. via facebook, twitter, YouTube.

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beyondblue's youth focus, research and programs

beyondblue has adopted a public health approach to raising awareness, changing attitudes and preventing depression in young people, reaching young people in a range of settings (for example, at school or university) and utilising a variety of approaches. *beyondblue* supports strong school based, parenting, family and community connections throughout its prevention and early intervention projects. For example, the KidsMatter initiative provides a capacity for schools to engage in preventative strategies to support the specific mental health and wellbeing needs of their student population (see KidsMatter section below).

Conducting quality research to address gaps in knowledge about depression and substance use disorders is a high priority for *beyondblue*, particularly in relation to the evidence base for community education and prevention. *beyondblue*'s research agenda includes the early (0-7) middle (8-14) and older (15-24) years. *beyondblue* builds upon previous and current research and other evidence based research by commissioning quality, strategic and targeted research in these key priority areas and promoting the results.

A range of evidence-driven, developmentally appropriate *beyondblue* programs (described below) have been designed to promote positive environments and teach life skills that can potentially decrease prevalence, reduce severity, and delay the onset of depression. These are grouped into the following categories: National Youth Campaign, School-based initiatives, Youth initiatives with a focus on Cyber-safety and other relevant Youthbeyondblue initiatives.

National Youth Campaign

In April 2009 *beyondblue* launched a series of TV, cinema, radio and print advertisements and its new Youthbeyondblue website (www.youthbeyondblue.com) aimed at raising awareness of the signs and symptoms of depression, anxiety and associated drug and alcohol problems among young people - and where to get help. Produced by Frontier Advertising and Zealot Films, in close association with *beyondblue*, the TV ads provide a candid insight into the experiences of young people with these conditions.

In addition, the new Youthbeyondblue branding has been integrated across the range of *beyondblue* information resources, including wristbands, factsheets, temporary tattoos, t-shirts, stickers, postcards, sweatbands, flipper cards and posters. From May 2009 to May 2010 over 5 million Youthbeyondblue resources have been distributed.

The youth website includes a wide range of fact sheets on depression and anxiety-related topics, including how to help a friend, effective treatments, alcohol and depression, cannabis use, bullying and eating disorders. Since the launch in April 2009, the site has had 145,000 visits and over 729,000 pages have been viewed. The most popular sections are:
- Share your Stories (where young people can share their experiences and read others' stories – see below for further information)
- Fact sheets and information
- Information on depression and anxiety.

The three TV community service announcements produced by Frontier Advertising have had a combined total of over 29,000 views on the Youthbeyondblue website. This is in addition to the extensive reach achieved via *beyondblue's* TV and print advertising.

Share your stories

A popular and important part of the Youthbeyondblue website is the Share your Stories forum. This forum provides a safe space for young people to talk about their experiences of depression and anxiety, including first symptoms, help seeking, treatment and recovery. Many of the stories posted on the forum talk about experiences of bullying both at school and in virtual environments. Some key quotes are provided here:

Below are excerpts from a story relating to cyber-safety from one of the users on the Share your Stories forum. "Cheyyanne" a 16 year old young woman seeking advice. Edited replies from another young person using the site ("Sadaf") and the clinicians who moderate and monitor the forum are also provided here.

Cheyyanne: this morning i signed onto msn thinking everythinf was all good, then one of my close friends sends me a message and says "what happened with you and mitch?" and I had no idea what she was on about so i asked her and shes like "he posted on facebook yesterday""yay im single now" and i said to her "not as far as I know" so I log into facebook and search for him in my friends list but hes not there so I went to the search engine and typed in his name and clicked on his page… only to discover I had been dumped on facebook…

Sadaf: Cheyyanne i was realising that how similar my problem was to u 2…listen to music talk to ur sisters and brothers do some sports go shopping stop punishing urself….i am sure their is heaps of other good guys out their who like u and wanna give u a lot of happiness so stop wasting ur time thinking of ur ex boyfriend that he is enjoying life and u r suffering cuz of him. Hpe this information help u…

Cheyyanne:…just the other day my ex and i started talking again but im so angry at him at the moment. we started to text each other back and forth…
and he started saying stuff like "i love yoou soo much i need you back" blah blah blah
until i found out that it wasnt even my ex sending those messages… it was his best friend
and yesterday i was talking to him on facebook and he was talking about when we were together and how badly he treated me…
oh… yeah… he dumped me on facebook and didnt tell me…

Youthbeyondblue Team: Thanks for coming back to the site to get some extra support. Have you gone to the GP yet? That would be a good thing to do…. Your GP can check out the physical stuff and make some suggestions about how you can get some more emotional support. There is help out there, but you need to take the first step in finding it. This can be hard to do but you owe it to yourself. All the best, Youthbeyondblue Team.

Source: www.youthbeyondblue.com

Importantly, the forum is monitored and moderated by Senior Clinicians from Orygen Youth Health. In addition, young people provide powerful peer to peer advice to each other with a strong focus on help seeking.

Fact sheets

beyondblue produces a range of fact sheets on a wide range of depression-related topics, often jointly developed with other health and community organisations. *beyondblue* has developed a set of youth factsheets with information on a variety of topics including depression, bullying, dealing with stress, and caring for others. The following Youthbeyondblue factsheets are available to download from the Youthbeyondblue website (www.youthbeyondblue.com), or printed versions can be ordered online or through *beyondblue*.

- Cyberbullying - Fact sheet 23
- Bullying - Fact sheet 20
- Suicide: knowing when to get help - Fact sheet 14
- Managing self-harm - Fact sheet 15
- Depression in young people - Fact sheet 1
- Dealing with anxiety disorders - Fact sheet 2
- Getting help for depression or anxiety - Fact sheet 3
- Treatments for depression and anxiety - Fact sheet 4
- Antidepressants for the treatment of depression in children and adolescents - Fact sheet 5

- Helping a friend with depression or anxiety - Fact sheet 6
- Dealing with stress - Fact sheet 7
- Drinking, depression and anxiety - Fact sheet 8
- Drug use and your mental health - Fact sheet 9
- Cannabis and your mental health - Fact sheet 10
- Recovering from depression or anxiety - Fact sheet 11
- Staying healthy - Fact sheet 12
- Getting the sleep you need - Fact sheet 13
- Dealing with loss and grief - Fact sheet 16
- Coping with family break-up - Fact sheet 17
- Understanding eating disorders - Fact sheet 18
- Making the most of studying - Fact sheet 19
- Information for parents - Fact sheet 21
- Depression and anxiety in young people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex (GLBTI) - Fact sheet 22

School-based initiatives

beyondblue's school based initiatives aim to promote resilience in young people and to provide early intervention and prevention of depression and anxiety. This work complements national strategies that aim to increase the safety literacy of young people in cyber environments.

beyondblue Secondary Schools Research Initiative

The *beyondblue* Secondary Schools Research Initiative examined the effectiveness of a program aimed at reducing and preventing depression in high school students. Under the leadership of South Australian academic/ researcher, Professor Michael Sawyer, this multi-level program was trialled over five years (2003-2007) in 50 schools across South Australia, Queensland and Victoria.

The initiative commenced in 2003 and was implemented in partnership with schools, local communities, the health sector and researchers. The initiative consisted of a universal school-based intervention that was delivered to students aged between 13 and 16 years. The broad aims of the intervention were to:
- reduce levels of depression experienced by young people
- engage whole school communities to promote emotional wellbeing and social connectedness
- increase awareness and understanding of adolescent depression
- increase the capacity of school communities to effectively utilise interventions relevant to the prevention of depression.

The intervention took place in 25 schools located in South Australia, Victoria and Queensland. A further 25 schools, which did not receive the intervention, formed a comparison group. The intervention consisted of:
1. a school community forum highlighting mental health issues affecting students and local service providers
2. a classroom curriculum teaching core skills for resilience
3. a program to improve the quality of support in the school environment (called "supportive environments")
4. a program to improve the service pathways for adolescents who need additional help or educational support (called "pathways for care and education").

High levels of school engagement were achieved, with all 50 schools that enrolled in the study in 2003 remaining as participants throughout the whole of the intervention. This was a major commitment for school staff and students. It demonstrates a high level of success and dedication to the project by the participating schools.

The project has demonstrated that it is possible to build a strong partnership between the health and education sectors to undertake a large-scale research aimed at reducing adolescent depression. High levels of cooperation were received from individual schools participating in the project and from the

government, Catholic, and independent education systems. The project also showed that *beyondblue* has the capacity to build and maintain over several years a large collaborative research team drawn from multiple universities, the education sector, and the non-government sector.

Dissemination of Materials and Resources
The curriculum package for teachers targeting student skills for resilience has been made available to all secondary schools in Australia since 2006. Evidence of the interest and enthusiasm of schools and close involvement of education systems can be seen in the uptake of these resources (see Attachment). To date, over 900 education, health and community services have ordered hard copies of the program. There is a dearth of high quality curriculum programs to support the development of social and emotional competencies in students in secondary schools and schools have provided very positive feedback on the *beyondblue* program.

beyondblue SenseAbility Program

In 2008, *beyondblue* supported the University of Queensland to update and repackage the *beyondblue* Secondary Schools Research curriculum program to make it more flexible and provide additional resources for schools, particularly senior secondary.

The program builds on the initial pilot materials targeting six 'life senses' shown to be protective of mental health. These are:
- Sense of Self-worth
- Sense of Control
- Sense of Belonging
- Sense of Purpose
- Sense of Future
- Sense of Humour

KidsMatter Primary

KidsMatter Primary is a mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiative developed for primary schools by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, *beyondblue*, the Australian Psychological Society and Principals Australia.

KidsMatter Primary has three aims
- improve the mental health and wellbeing of primary school students
- reduce mental health problems amongst students
- achieve greater support for students experiencing mental health problems.

KidsMatter Primary is based on the current research evidence relating to the risk and protective factors for children's mental health and draws strongly on the World Health Organization's health promoting schools framework. It involves the people who have a significant influence on children's lives – parents, families, carers, teachers and community groups – in making a positive difference for children's mental health during this important developmental period.

Implementation
KidsMatter uses a whole-school approach, providing schools with a framework, an implementation process, and key resources to develop and implement evidence-based mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention strategies. The KidsMatter framework consists of four key areas:
1. Positive school community
2. Social and Emotional Learning for students
3. Parenting support and education
4. Early intervention for students experiencing mental health difficulties.

KidsMatter Pilot
KidsMatter began in late 2006 with a national two-year pilot involving 101 primary schools. Schools were represented from all States and Territories; all three education sectors (Government, Catholic and Independent) and from metropolitan, rural and remote areas.

Evaluation

Flinders University of South Australia conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the KidsMatter Primary pilot. The Final Report, released in November 2009, is available on the KidsMatter Primary website (www.kidsmatter.edu.au/evaluation).

The findings show KidsMatter Primary had a positive impact on schools, children and parents/carers. These include:

- Improved student mental health and well-being such as optimism and coping skills
- Reduced mental health difficulties such as emotional symptoms, hyperactivity, conduct and peer problems
- Improvements in students' school-work
- Improved teacher capacity to identify students experiencing mental health difficulties
- Improved teacher knowledge on how to improve students' social and emotional skills
- Increased parent capacity to help children with social and emotional issues
- Facilitated the placement of mental health as an issue on schools' agenda and provided a common language to address mental health and well-being issues

KidsMatter Post Pilot:

Since 2009, KidsMatter Primary Partners have been collaborating with education jurisdictions in each State and Territory to develop dissemination models that will enable more schools to undertake KidsMatter. As of March 2010, 143 schools have commenced KidsMatter Primary post pilot.

Youthbeyondblue initiatives with a focus on Cyber-safety

beyondblue coordinates and supports a range of programs which focus on positive outcomes for young people and information on cyber-safety outside the school setting. These programs are detailed below.

Phunktional 'Calling the Shots'

Calling the Shots is a peer to peer education resource that began development in 2008 through working with local schools in the Mildura and Epping regions of Victoria. These locations were chosen due to their cultural diversity and breadth of issues experienced by youth, including truancy, crime rates, alcohol and drug use, cultural diversity, drought and lack of social cohesion.

Through 'Calling the Shots' Phunktional works with schools conducting workshops in dance, drama and music in partnership with local police, health, council, legal and community services. These workshops have culminated in live community performances and contribute to the development of an interactive, peer-to-peer education DVD resource that can be distributed nationally. The themes of these developing stories include depression, bullying, cyber-safety and relationships.

Streetsmart

Youthbeyondblue has partnered with Country Wide Media since 2008 to develop the Streetsmart Handbook for all Year 11 students nationally. With a tailored handbook for each state and territory, the aim of the book is to provide information and referral as an 'essential guide to adulthood.' The booklet addresses issues of health, wellbeing and includes a Youthbeyondblue chapter on depression and anxiety. There is also content on cyber-safety.

Red Frogs

The Red Frogs Australian Chaplaincy Network is a volunteer based program comprising welfare and community organisations which aim to provide recent school leavers and tertiary students a support network. From 2007, *beyondblue* has partnered with Red Frogs across two significant projects.

1. University wall planner promoting positive mental health and drug and alcohol messages.
2. Distribution of Youthbeyondblue materials to recent school leavers and tertiary students across Australia.

beyondblue also support Red Frogs to conduct schools education for Year 11 and Year 12 students. This education program includes information on the transition out of school and safe behaviours, including safety in the schoolies environment. The new Red Frogs DVD for School leavers is supported by *beyondblue* and is currently under development. Drafted content includes information on cyber-safety and effective communication in the online space.

Generation Next

beyondblue have supported the Generation Next forums since 2009. These forums are run nationally and are targeted at parents with school aged children. The aim of the forums is to provide parents with skills to communicate effectively with their children and to promote healthy outcomes. National specialists provide information, advice and referral on themes that include depression and anxiety, drinking and cyber-safety.

Wakakirri

Wakakirri is a national, free to enter performing and visual arts festival where participating schools create stories using dance, song, story telling, film, arts and writing. Wakakirri Live Festivals are held in 28 locations in major cities and towns around Australia and involves 30,000 young people in every state and territory.

Wakakirri has separate programs for City, Country and Outback schools which focus on outcomes promoting sustainability, understanding, respect and inclusion. These are also important themes that integrate into performances, with primary school aged children developing content on supporting each other and getting through tough times. Wakakirri promotes the Youthbeyondblue key messages of look, listen, talk and seek help together! The performance space also provides an opportunity for young people to develop socially and work together.

Other Youthbeyondblue initiatives.

Youthbeyondblue also coordinates a range of other key programs for young people aged 12-25 years, with a specific focus on indigenous young people. While this list is not exhaustive and the specific focus on these programs is not cyber-safety, the content aims to improving lifestyle outcomes, increasing resilience and promoting positive life choices.

Rock Eisteddfod

Youthbeyondblue proudly collaborated with the Rock Eisteddfod Challenge in 2007, 2008 and 2009 to raise awareness about depression and anxiety in young people. The Rock Eisteddfod Challenge was a performing arts event incorporating dance, drama and design which provides Australian secondary school students with an opportunity to express their creativity through music and dance by producing an eight minute performance. The focus of the Rock Eisteddfod Challenge was on young people being the best they can be without the use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.

The Rock Eisteddfod Challenge staged around 45 live events, travelling 50,000 kilometres across Australia. Youthbeyondblue materials were distributed to all participating schools. Youthbeyondblue Crew members also ran information stalls at the Grand Final Show in capital cities.

National Youth Week

From 2005-2010 *beyondblue* has partnered with the Office's for Young People across the country to deliver events during National Youth Week (NYW),. Many of these partnerships support events run by young people, for young people. Events are targeted at the local level, with partnerships developed between local governments, not-for-profit organisations, schools and youth services. The aim of these events is to promote the achievements of young people, and also to provide a platform for issues that are important to young people. Mental health and wellbeing is a major focus of NYW and *beyondblue*

sees this as an important forum where Youthbeyondblue messages (Look, Listen, Talk and Seek Help Together) can be provided.

Partnerships with Office's for Young People have ensured successful outcomes with youth appropriate events engaging many thousands of young people, with an estimated 100,000 young people engaged in activities and events.

Victoria University Mental Health Literacy Project

beyondblue, in partnership with Victoria University and Orygen Youth Health has supported the Victoria University Mental Health Literacy Project. The aim of the project is to provide a mental health literacy intervention at a number of the Victoria University campuses, whilst the other campuses function as the control condition. Several thousand students across all conditions are being recruited to undergo surveys at points in this process to assess the effectiveness of the intervention. In the first six months of this project and to date, extensive consultation has occurred with staff and students across campuses. All participants from which data will be collected have been recruited and the intervention is planned to commence in the coming months. beyondblue has provided extensive support with resource development and intervention focus. Intervention themes to date include building community, increasing resilience, promoting peer relationships and increasing help seeking. Cyber environments are being explored as appropriate avenues for intervention strategies.

Community Festivals

beyondblue has partnered with several major festivals from 2002 to raise awareness of depression and anxiety among young people. These festivals have included the St Kilda Festival, the Push Over festival, the Melbourne Fringe Festival, The Big Day Out and Sydney's Homebake Festival. From 2002 to 2007 beyondblue supported Croc Festivals, an annual series of three-day events celebrating youth culture held in rural and remote locations throughout Australia. beyondblue supported Croc Festivals to raise awareness of depression and anxiety in indigenous communities.

From 2008 beyondblue has provided support to a range of community festivals in partnership with GJC Vibe, Galari Media, North Coast Aboriginal Learning Partnership (NCALP), Interweave and Wakakirri. In 2010, beyondblue is supporting Indigenous Hip Hop Projects to perform at 12 community festivals including Vibe Alive, Wakakirri, Deadly Days and Streetsalive and promote the Youthbeyondblue messages.

Indigenous Hip Hop Projects (IHHP) / Durri Aboriginal Health Service Kempsey Pilot

IHHP works on the principal of using the 'arts for change', focusing on young people's strengths, developing their skills and attitudes and working closely with partners to support community development.

Through this partnership, IHHP artists visited rural and remote indigenous communities for one week to promote the Youthbeyondblue key messages of Look, Listen, Talk and Seek Help Together! Over 100 week-long programs were conducted during the 2008 to 2009 period in all States and Territories (excluding Tasmania), working with over 120,000 participants. The Projects also conducted three national leadership camps to develop young indigenous leaders in community.

In the second half of 2009, a research team headed by Professor Colleen Haywood from Edith Cowan University was contracted to conduct a three stage evaluation of the Indigenous Hip Hop Projects community tour. A mixed methodology was used involving focus groups and interviews of young people, as well as interviews with local stakeholders that had been involved in the program. The program was found to be an effective community awareness strategy. The evaluation found evidence to support the continued funding by beyondblue of IHHP community tours and these recommendations greatly informed the planning for the Indigenous Hip Hop Projects/beyondblue partnership in 2010.

In 2010, IHHP will visit approximately 50 communities and work with 40,000 young people. In addition, the program includes:

- increased community liaison activities
- extension of the national leadership camp
- creation of a schools resource kit to support the program and its participants pre- and post-visit
- development of ongoing merchandise
- development of project specific resources
- pilot the implementation of an Indigenous Hip Hop Projects community hub program.

In addition to the above community work, the Indigenous Hip Hop Projects members have presented at several conferences from 2007 to 2010 on behalf of *beyondblue*.

Ngaripirliga'ajirri – An early intervention program on the Tiwi Islands

Ngaripirliga'ajirri (pronounced Naripirlywa-tirri) is the Tiwi name given to an early intervention program for Tiwi children of primary school age, based on the Exploring Together program. The Exploring Together Program was originally selected for adaptation by the Tiwi Health Board and implemented as Ngarpirliga'ajirri from 2000-2004 in three Tiwi primary schools.

Exploring Together is a targeted 10 week multi-group program based on developmental principles. Children are referred by teachers and other practitioners and attend the program in groups of 6-8 children with one parent each, over a school term. It includes concurrent groups for children and parents, focusing on child social skills training and parenting management training. The program draws on cognitive behavioural theory.

The work with children focuses on social skills, while the work with parents focuses on the formulation of behaviour management strategies for them to implement at home. In addition to the parents' and children's groups, there is a combined group which focuses on parent-child interaction, encouraging working together and providing opportunities for adults and children to join in role plays, tasks and games relevant to key issues.

Exploring Together was redeveloped for the circumstances of Tiwi culture and its complex family structures. Findings from the evaluation (qualitative reports from teachers and parents) revealed:
1. Approximately 80% of children showed some decline in problem behaviours at school during and after attendance in the program
2. Of these, around 60% showed marked decline in problem behaviours
3. For around 40% of children these gains were reportedly sustained at six months
4. Parents of 60-80% of children reported improved communication with their child
5. Parents of 50% of children reported some improvement in child behaviour at home and reported that school attendance improves for children upon referral to the program, although this is not sustained for all children (note: recorded attendance at school could not be measured).

Save A Mate (SAM) Our Way – Remote Indigenous Youth Project

The SAM Our Way project aims to build on the strengths of remote Indigenous communities and supports them to address key social and emotional wellbeing issues within their communities. Major goals are to:
- build the capacity of target communities through training to respond to issues affecting young people including depression, anxiety, violence, alcohol and drug misuse through peer leadership and support
- continue to research and develop the efficacy of such an approach in addressing the emotional and social wellbeing of young people in remote communities
- continue to develop, implement and evaluate tools for engaging, negotiating and working with Indigenous communities on key issues relating to depression, anxiety and alcohol and drug misuse
- develop culturally appropriate resources for Indigenous communities regarding key health issues including depression, anxiety, violence, alcohol and drug misuse
- develop the range of support and engagement between ARC and *beyondblue* in remote Indigenous communities.

A broad range of programs, projects and activities have been implemented in schools, youth clubs, family and youth camps, leadership groups, young parent support groups and via a range of youth wellbeing programs. Aboriginal youth representatives have been engaged as mentors and project champions. Local project teams have mobilised youth networks and working groups to the program. SAM Our Way has also engaged a range of local volunteers including community Elders, young people and staff from local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community-based organisations. As a result, ARC reports high levels of participation by Indigenous youth.

Conclusion

beyondblue is committed to strategies that prevent or minimise the impact of depression, anxiety and related disorders in young people and has initiated and supported a substantial body of evidenced based research and practical interventions to address these issues.

We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Australian Parliament's Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety to advance the responses provided to young people at risk of depression and anxiety.

Attached are copies of our Youthbeyondblue fact sheets on cyber safety and bullying for the committee's information.

Jeff Kennett
Chairman
beyondblue: the national depression initiative

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