

Neighbourhood Renewal: Learning and working together

Employment, education and enterprise outcomes



A Victorian
Government
initiative



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Employment, education and enterprise outcomes

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From the Minister for Housing and Minister for Local Government

In 2001 the Bracks Government initiated Neighbourhood Renewal to narrow the gap between disadvantaged Victorian communities and the rest of the state. Launched in Wendouree West (Ballarat) and four locations in the Latrobe Valley the program has now expanded to 19 communities across Victoria.

Remarkable changes are underway in neighbourhoods that have missed out on Victoria's growing prosperity. Over 4,500 unemployed people have been connected with jobs. Economic activity is being ignited through 33 new social enterprises providing training, jobs, community services and new business opportunities.

Neighbourhoods once blighted with run-down housing and degraded public spaces are being revitalised. More than 5,000 public housing properties have been upgraded or replaced, parks have been transformed and 23 new community facilities are being developed.

In most of these neighbourhoods crime rates are down, some by over 40 per cent. And surveys show that residents feel more connected to their community and in control of their lives.

The success of Neighbourhood Renewal is based on bringing communities together with government, businesses, schools, police and service providers to tackle disadvantage in their local area. A central focus of Neighbourhood Renewal is lifting employment, learning and local economic activity.

This report demonstrates that Neighbourhood Renewal is working. It provides an overview of the range of successful employment, education and training initiatives underway in Neighbourhood Renewal projects across the state, showing that the best solutions come about when we work together.

The report provides a wealth of information about successful strategies including: the role of place-based partnerships, the impact of transitional labour market programs, the value of community infrastructure to support local services, the growing social enterprise sector and the importance of early intervention in school and education to reverse the effects of intergenerational poverty.

I encourage you to read this report and take inspiration from the stories of real Victorians who are taking advantage of new opportunities and transforming their neighbourhoods.

Our approach to Neighbourhood Renewal is simple - more jobs, better housing, safer streets and a stronger democracy. The results speak for themselves - vibrant communities where people want to live, work and play.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Richard Wynne'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Housing

What is Neighbourhood Renewal?

Neighbourhood Renewal is a successful approach to tackling disadvantage and creating stronger communities. It works across government and in partnership with the community sector, business and the local community. It delivers local solutions to help people achieve their potential.

Neighbourhood Renewal is narrowing the gap between the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Victoria and the rest of the state by:

- increasing people's pride and participation in the community
- lifting employment, training and education opportunities and expanding local economic activity
- enhancing housing and the physical environment
- improving personal safety and reducing crime
- promoting health and wellbeing
- increasing access to services and improving government responsiveness.

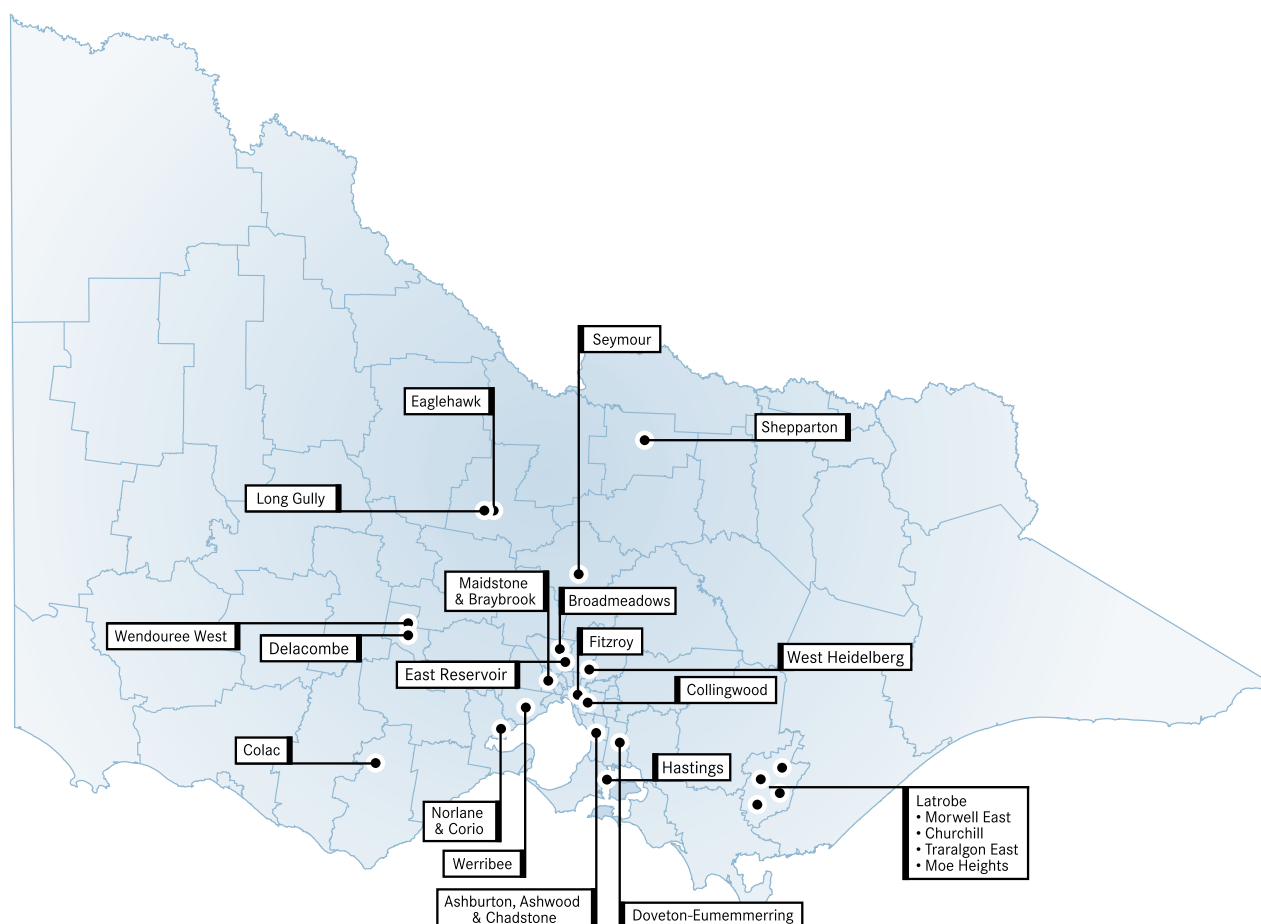
What has been achieved?

- Connected communities in 19 neighbourhoods
- 4,600 jobs
- 5,000 housing improvements
- 23 community hubs
- 33 social enterprises
- 16 per cent reduction in crime and up to 40 per cent in some areas
- 2,000 energy efficiency improvements
- 30 parks revitalised
- 11 IT hubs
- 9 community gardens

Where is it happening?

Neighbourhood Renewal locations are selected because of their relative disadvantage compared to other parts of Victoria and because there are concentrations of low-income residents living in older and relatively neglected public housing.

The strengths and assets of the local community and their enthusiasm for turning their situation around also influences which neighbourhoods are selected.



About this document

This document provides a progress report on the achievements of Neighbourhood Renewal against one of its key objectives: 'Lifting employment, training and education opportunities and expanding local economic activity.' It outlines some of the many initiatives that are ensuring opportunities are spread more equally across Victoria. Case studies throughout the report demonstrate the benefits of working in partnership to improve the social and economic wellbeing of disadvantaged communities.

Employment, training and education opportunities are key building blocks that strengthen community wellbeing and sustainability. Work in this area is critical to the broader success of Neighbourhood Renewal. Accordingly, each Neighbourhood Renewal project develops an employment and learning strategy as part of its community action plan.

It is not possible to present here every initiative across the 19 renewal sites in Victoria. If you are interested in finding out more about what is happening in your local area the relevant employment and learning coordinator or Neighbourhood Renewal manager will be able to help. Contact details are available on the Neighbourhood Renewal website at <http://www.neighbourhoodrenewal.vic.gov.au>.

The case for renewal of employment and learning opportunities

A strong economy is essential to improving standards of living and reducing levels of disadvantage. Investment by the Victorian Government in the fundamental elements of a modern and flexible economy including education, training, physical infrastructure and research and development—has ensured Victoria’s competitive advantage.

The Victorian economy is strong: business investment is at a record high and unemployment is at a low 4.7 per cent. Participation rates in the workforce are close to their highest level since 1999. Employment in Victoria has grown, with more than 343,600 new jobs created over the last decade.

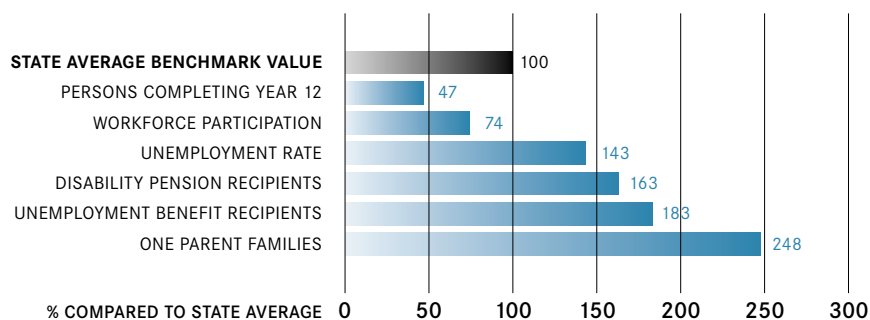
However, not all Victorians have benefited equally from this economic growth. Not all communities in Victoria have equal access to job opportunities, and educational achievement is not equally distributed across the state.

People in disadvantaged neighbourhoods are at risk of intergenerational poverty with disproportionately high percentages of early school leavers, young people not completing Year 12 and not involved in further training. Young people missing out on education and training experience poorer health, lower paid jobs and higher unemployment. For most people, getting access to a good, meaningful job is the first step to overcoming disadvantage.

Localities selected for Neighbourhood Renewal are characterised by the highest levels of ‘worklessness’ in the state. Worklessness refers to elevated levels of unemployment and large numbers of people not participating in the labour market. Excluded from economic participation, people lose confidence, experience economic hardship, and find it increasingly difficult to re-enter the workforce.

INDICATORS OF DISADVANTAGE

NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL AREAS COMPARED TO STATE AVERAGE



SOURCE: ABS 2001

The strategy for employment, learning and enterprise

To break the vicious cycle of place-based disadvantage, the Victorian Government is taking action. It is creating new opportunities through social investment and is reducing barriers by providing strong universal services and innovative place-based initiatives such as Neighbourhood Renewal.

Informed by international research and best practice, Neighbourhood Renewal projects are implementing employment, learning and enterprise strategies in 19 disadvantaged communities across Victoria. The strategies vary to reflect local challenges and assets, but each has five key action areas:

1. place-based partnerships developing local solutions to local problems
2. joined-up and intensive transitional labour market programs targeted to those most in need
3. community infrastructure to support flexible and local service delivery
4. neighbourhood-based social enterprises
5. early intervention in school and education to break the nexus of intergenerational poverty.

These strategies are working:

- more than 4,600 jobs have been provided to unemployed residents.
- twenty-three community hubs have been created or are in development providing employment, learning and other support services.
- thirty-three social enterprises have been created with a further five in development, providing over 130 jobs per annum.
- youth re-engagement and school participation rates are improving where communities work in partnership to get students back into learning.





partnerships

Action 1: Place-based partnerships

Actions to tackle worklessness in areas of concentrated disadvantage are much more likely to be successful when the community is engaged in their design, development and implementation.

Neighbourhood Renewal in Victoria is based on the successful aspects of the UK experience with Employment Zones. These initiatives are characterised by a focus on a specific geographic area providing intensive case management and personal support to assist long-term unemployed people re-enter the labour market.

Neighbourhood teams

To achieve an effective local response to worklessness a neighbourhood team—comprising a place manager, community development worker and an employment and learning coordinator—is established in all Neighbourhood Renewal projects. Rather than managing a specific government program or service, the team is responsible for achieving cross-cutting outcomes for the community. Team members coordinate investment and bring together services so they make sense ‘on the ground’ and respond to local priorities.

Having a dedicated neighbourhood team connected to key decision-makers in government and business makes all the difference in responding effectively to community needs and aspirations. Partnerships are turning around the lack of investment in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and enabling residents to become active participants in the rejuvenation of their community.

Community governance

Hand in glove with place management goes community governance. Strategic partnerships have been formed between regional offices of state government departments, local schools, police, local businesses, community groups, service providers and residents.

Neighbourhood Renewal partnerships empower residents to participate in planning and decisions about priorities for action. They can implement change with the support of government, and evaluate the success of local initiatives.

Each project also has an employment and learning working group that is responsible for developing and implementing a local employment and learning strategy.





Case study: Passport to Work in Broadmeadows

A partnership between Neighbourhood Renewal, Juno Consulting, Hume City Council and Pacific National has equipped participants in this program with valuable job-ready skills and the confidence to obtain employment.

Under the partnership, 18 employees from Pacific National each mentored a Broadmeadows resident throughout a 12-week job search program. Mentors provided a role model and coached participants by providing valuable advice and feedback on their job search efforts. Mentors reinforced participants' skills and knowledge and helped them to recognise their abilities. To date, 13 residents have gained employment.

Kerry, a valued Neighbourhood Renewal volunteer, had been out of the paid workforce for over 30 years before participating in the Passport to Work program. With the help of her mentor, Kerry completed the program and gained employment with Pacific National on a permanent part-time basis in administration. From one success to another, Kerry has commenced an administration traineeship with Homeground Services, an agency that works in the area of homelessness, housing, community development and social change.

Mentors from Pacific National learned a lot about the difficulties people trying to return to the workforce experience. They were able to identify participants' untapped potential and encourage and support them to use this to pursue employment opportunities.

Pacific National were great. Thirty years is a long time to be out of work—I didn't even have a résumé! The program really helped and I got so much out of it. It was a bit daunting to begin with but everyone was so supportive. My mentor, David Willett, was very encouraging and patient. Now I not only have a résumé but also have gained two part-time jobs.

Kerry Wilkins

We have learned how great a difference this program can make in assisting people to pro-actively seek employment. It was surprising to learn how little practical help is available. Participation as mentors has formed bonds, not only with mentorees, but also with other mentors. Helping us to look outside our own world and our own company has made us more compassionate and effective people.

David Willett,
General Manager,
Networks & Access
Pacific National

Neighbourhood Renewal
partnerships empower
residents to participate
in planning and decisions



Case study: Partnerships for opportunity in Maidstone Braybrook

In Maidstone Braybrook, an employment and learning working group supports the local Employment and Learning Coordinator, Frances Newell, to develop a range of innovative and creative employment and learning initiatives. The employment and learning working group is a joint initiative of Victoria University and Neighbourhood Renewal. It comprises residents, Victoria University staff and representatives from Maribyrnong Council, Melbourne City Mission, and other government and non-government agencies.

In 2006 Frances received a Victoria University Vice Chancellor's Citation for Outstanding Engagement. She was recognised for bringing together in new ways government, business and community resources to deliver employment and training.

Frances is determined to use community assets to lift employment and learning opportunities. The Western Region Community Tool Library and the Braybrook Maidstone Neighbourhood Association provided the catalyst to establish the Braybrook Community Enterprise and Training Shed. This enterprise provides locally important building and construction training, as well as leadership training to keep growing the business.

Enterprises across
Neighbourhood Renewal areas
use an intermediate labour
market model, with residents
employed under a 12-month
traineeship agreement



Global Landscapes, the landscape and gardening arm of this local enterprise, auspiced by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, has so far employed 10 residents and provides fencing, house maintenance and landscaping works for the Office of Housing. It also delivers home renovations to improve the energy use efficiency of Office of Housing properties as part of Sustainability Victoria's Energy Taskforce program.

Enterprises such as this across Neighbourhood Renewal areas use an intermediate labour market model, with residents employed under a 12-month traineeship agreement. This enterprise is employing residents as trainees and will continue to create additional job vacancies for Braybrook and Maidstone residents into the future.

A partnership with Victoria University, Department of Transport and Regional Services, Department for Victorian Communities, City of Maribyrnong, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, and Black and Decker Pty Ltd has re-developed the tool library. This will enable an expanded range of training to be delivered in the heart of the community, including vocational and 'do it yourself' courses.

To date, Frances has been able to target critical employment training resources, including Workforce Participation Partnerships and Victoria University training hours, to assist over 150 residents, who otherwise might have been ignored by the current service system. As a result of her efforts 33 people have found jobs, 36 people have received paid work experience (an important step towards a permanent job), and 90 people have enrolled in locally provided accredited training.

As a newly arrived migrant, Fran's programs, as well as the whole Neighbourhood Renewal project in Braybrook Maidstone, helped me to gain local work experience. I was also able to participate in a skills survey, part-time work and various training. I guess you can call me one of Fran's protégés. Fran and her group exert effort to discover what the needs of the residents are and think of programs that address them. The best part is, we see, feel and benefit from the results. Hats off!

Asther Creo, resident





support

Action 2: Joined-up labour market programs

Many long-term unemployed people require extensive support in the transition to work. Experience shows some individuals may require assistance for more than 18 months, starting with community engagement and moving through intensive support, pre-vocational training, work experience and finally post job-placement.

Education, training and job-placement agencies need to understand the complexity of disadvantage and work collaboratively with other organisations when dealing with people facing multiple issues. This approach has proven more effective in attracting and retaining people who have lost confidence and connection to the world of work.

For this reason Neighbourhood Renewal connects employment programs with other support services to ensure long-term unemployed residents get coordinated and integrated assistance into the labour market. In addition, Neighbourhood Renewal has introduced a 'Framework for Understanding Poverty' to help government services, schools and other agencies in renewal areas work with disadvantaged people.

Partnerships for employment

Key programs that have created jobs for the long-term unemployed in Neighbourhood Renewal areas include:

- **Community Jobs Program**

3,775 people provided with wide experience in construction, landscaping, information technology and childcare in 235 projects related to Neighbourhood Renewal.

- **Workforce Participation Partnerships**

Replaced the Community Jobs Program in 2006. More than 1000 Neighbourhood Renewal residents are being individually supported into at least 286 jobs. A further 970 jobs will be created through related projects.

- **Employment Support Initiative**

Engages local businesses and employers in providing jobs to unemployed residents. Five hundred residents are being trained for work over four years.





Case study: Our Future Our Place in Latrobe Valley

Centred upon Morwell East and Churchill public housing estates in the Latrobe Valley, Try Youth and Community Services has successfully delivered the Our Future Our Place project. This project is a great example of the three tiers of government: state, Commonwealth and local, working together to jointly fund an important initiative. Partners include: Department of Transport and Regional Services, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Department for Victorian Communities, (Victorian) Department of Human Services (Office of Housing) and Latrobe City.

Our Future Our Place has built two three-bedroom houses, and involved 75 people from the local area. Participants received training in building and construction trade skills and 57 per cent of them gained employment. A further 17 per cent enrolled in further education. This outcome is well above the national average currently achieved for any program for this target group, a result that was acknowledged with a national award for innovation.

An economically sustainable model is being developed to enable these houses to be sold on the open market. The balance of funds made from the sale of the houses (less land and material costs) will go towards the building of houses on vacant Office of Housing land in the future.

Neighbourhood Renewal connects employment programs with other support services to ensure long-term unemployed residents get coordinated and integrated assistance into the labour market



Case study: Connecting to jobs in Colac

Many residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas fail to obtain jobs that are on offer nearby due to:

- lack of skills and aptitudes, particularly self confidence and personal skills
- inadequate matching between employers and jobless people
- concerns about making the transition from welfare to work
- stigmatisation of post code.

Colac Neighbourhood Renewal has targeted funding from the state government's Workforce Participation Program and the Employment Support Initiative to link residents to supported training and employment opportunities in areas of local skills shortages.

An employment support officer provides intensive pre and post-placement support to participants to help them make the transition into ongoing employment. This support includes sourcing appropriate vocational training and brokering additional support packages for participants, such as the Personal Support Program and returning to work subsidies.

More than 80 Neighbourhood Renewal residents have been linked to employment and training opportunities in Colac. With support, 25 residents have been placed into jobs in building and construction, transport and distribution, administration, tourism and retail; 24 have participated in flexible work preparation and training; 26 participated in work trials and work experience and 12 residents were enrolled in accredited training.

Local project partners and stakeholders who supported this project in Colac include Colac ACE, Colac Otway Shire, Otway Business Inc., the Office of Housing, Job Network members, Centrelink, Colac Area Health and local employers.

It is great to be able to assist residents who require a more 'intensive' approach and to assist them on the right path towards employment. Through assessment, we recognise potential in people and provide the connection between them and employers.

Helen Fenton
Colac Neighbourhood
Renewal Case Manager

Public Tenant Employment Program

Recognising the need to improve the employment opportunities of its clients, the Office of Housing has introduced a Public Tenant Employment Program. The program creates employment opportunities for public housing tenants with contractors who have tendered to deliver housing maintenance and upgrade works.

The Public Tenant Employment Program was first trialled in 2003 by the GJK Facility Services company in a cleaning and gardening contract at the Fitzroy and Collingwood public housing estates. This successful pilot led to the employment of 18 tenants. As a result, GJK Facility Services received numerous awards in Australia and overseas for its innovative approaches involving

the community. These awards include the H. Bruce Russell Global Innovator's Award for Community Redevelopment (presented at Harvard University), the Facility Management Association of Australia Award 2005 and the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership Award (with the Brotherhood of St Laurence).

The Public Tenant Employment Program is implementing a tenant employment clause in all of the Office of Housing's building maintenance and works contracts. So far it has assisted more than 185 public housing tenants into work, with over a third of these tenants recruited from Neighbourhood Renewal areas.



Case study: Renovation for Renewal in Seymour

In Seymour the head contractor for Office of Housing, Resolve FM, has embraced the opportunity to use local people and sub-contracts to a local social enterprise, Renovation for Renewal. This social enterprise was established by Neighbourhood Renewal to deliver maintenance and carpentry works. Renovation for Renewal has also recently been successful in securing a maintenance contract with the local army base of Puckapunyal.

Among the employees is Chris Chee who was the 100th person to gain employment through the Public Tenant Employment Program. He had been studying the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning but had lost interest. Through employment with Renovation for Renewal, Chris has been able to start an apprenticeship in general construction and has found a new direction.

As head contractor it was a requirement that I sub-contract local people through the local Renovation for Renewal enterprise. This has benefited both my organisation and the long-term unemployed. There has been a double benefit for the Neighbourhood Renewal community in Seymour—they get housing improvements and the opportunity to be employed and learn new skills at the same time. It will have lasting benefits for this community.

Gavin, Resolve FM

I didn't find it [VCAL] interesting anymore so I thought I'd go out and get a job and make something of my life. My plans for the future—I'd like to finish this apprenticeship and hopefully go off and start my own business.

Chris Chee

The Public Tenant Employment Program creates employment opportunities for public housing tenants







infrastructure

Action 3: Building capacity and local infrastructure

To reverse under-investment in disadvantaged communities and to build local economic capacity, Neighbourhood Renewal projects are establishing social infrastructure to attract services that will improve employment and learning outcomes.

Community hubs

A focus of activity in many Neighbourhood Renewal projects has been the development of community hubs. Community hubs take many forms such as neighbourhood houses, shopfronts, information resource centres and enterprise incubators. With the introduction of these facilities, employment and other support organisations can have a local presence in the community, which means residents have better access to services.

Twenty-three community hubs have been created or are in development providing employment, learning and other support services.

Job shops

A number of Neighbourhood Renewal community hubs include job shops. These facilities provide a 'one-stop shop' from which services can be delivered in the one location. This offers residents easier access to the support they need and enables organisations to coordinate their services with other providers to achieve better outcomes for clients.

Skills registers

Each Neighbourhood Renewal project has established a skills register. This maps existing skills and experience within the community to jobs in the vicinity. To date more than 2,000 residents across the state have registered.





Case study: Bringing together community services in Werribee

In Werribee, Heathdale House, located on council land, has become the key site of Neighbourhood Renewal activities and is also the provision point for a number of services, including the delivery of computer and internet training.

A range of employment services are delivered on site at Heathdale House including those delivered by Centrelink and Job Network. There are education and training programs, including a weekly homework program; The Smith Family's Learning for Life and a no-interest loans program. Neighbourhood Renewal staff, including the employment and learning coordinator, are also based at this location. Heathdale House has a jobs board and provides employment and learning information for residents.

Being based at Heathdale House provides the employment and learning coordinator with the opportunity to be in personal contact with residents. The employment and learning coordinator's local approach is to work one-to-one with residents to better understand their issues and needs, and to assist them with appropriate pathways to employment and learning. In addition, close relationships with service providers have ensured ease of access. The result has been more than 200 referrals to support services, employment workshops, labour market programs, employment, and training and volunteer opportunities within the local community.

Case study: Bright Street Enterprise Hub in Eaglehawk

A vibrant community and learning centre has been created in Eaglehawk, Bendigo. Operated and controlled by the community, the enterprise hub will bring valued employment, learning and other community services under the one roof to provide better-integrated service delivery to the Eaglehawk community. Bendigo Access Employment purchased disused buildings to help realise this worthwhile opportunity with its community partners.

The hub's café and milk bar will be the centrepiece of a sustainable commercial operation, delivering great meals, hospitality training and internet services with associated childcare, education programs and other community development services. The café and milk bar will create employment for six people: a manager, an assistant manager and four part-time trainees. When formally launched in 2007, the hub will be a vibrant local asset and the community's gateway to Bendigo's human services, employment and training sectors.

The capacity to engage with Wyndham community around educational programs for families and students continues to be strengthened by working closely with Neighbourhood Renewal and the employment and learning coordinator.

Anton Leschen,
Regional Programs Manager,
The Smith Family

"We have missed a place to meet people and the convenience of a local shop. We are looking forward to having a local place for meetings and our youth group."

Denise Wilson,
Eaglehawk resident



Case study: One-stop job shops in Broadmeadows and Wendouree West

In the Broadmeadows Neighbourhood Renewal area the job shop is located within the Neighbourhood Renewal hub at the Olsen Place Shopping Strip. Weekly services offered at the job shop include a two-hour session every Wednesday morning where agencies provide information and advice for residents. A range of providers is involved, including Ames Employment, Campbell Page, Centrelink, Matchworks, the Migrant Resource Centre, Spectrum Employment, Victorian Arabic Social Services, VECCI New Apprenticeships, Wise Employment and Workforce Plus. An IT hub operated by Infoxchange is also located within the hub and this provides regular support, information and links for residents.

In Wendouree West, BEST Community Development opened a job shop servicing the community for 15 hours per week. Strong interest and support from the local community (over 100 registrations) led to this office operating full-time within months of opening.

The job shop delivers local job network and case management services in partnership with Ballarat Group Training Workforce Participation Partnership and Centrelink, together providing information services and tailored training to assist residents with résumé writing, application writing and interview techniques.

The 'one-stop job shop' is the place to go for information on jobs, job networks, training and all things jobs ...

Joanne Moore,
Broadmeadows resident

The computer access has helped me to keep in touch with my family and also in my community where I am involved in a social club that I run. I can now type letters and create flyers for events I organise for social outings.

Yuksel Calsimsek,
Broadmeadows resident

It makes such a difference for residents to have access to services in the local area. In a short period of time, registrations and transfers from other Job Network providers have increased in the West. Residents are dropping in to check the job board, access the computer to search for jobs and discuss positions with me. The community is developing a level of trust in BEST and that means they are willing to work with us. Our partnership with Ballarat Group Training provides much-needed case management services to support residents into employment.

Kylie Davis,
BEST Community Development



Case study: Skills register in Atherton Gardens links residents to jobs

Employment and learning coordinators have used the information obtained in the skills register to provide relevant information to residents, reconnect residents to schools, training and other service providers and to inform the design and delivery of pre-employment programs. The register has also been an invaluable tool to link job-ready residents to local jobs.

In Collingwood and Fitzroy, the Brotherhood of St Laurence has linked over 200 residents to employment.

Wendouree West people have always had to travel into Ballarat to see their Job Network provider. This has always been very hard, especially if you have to rely on the bus. Now, it's much easier with BEST Employment having an office in Violet Grove. Thanks to the staff from BEST Employment, with their friendly manner and willingness to help jobseekers, it makes looking for work a pleasure, not a chore. Thanks to BEST I am now working!

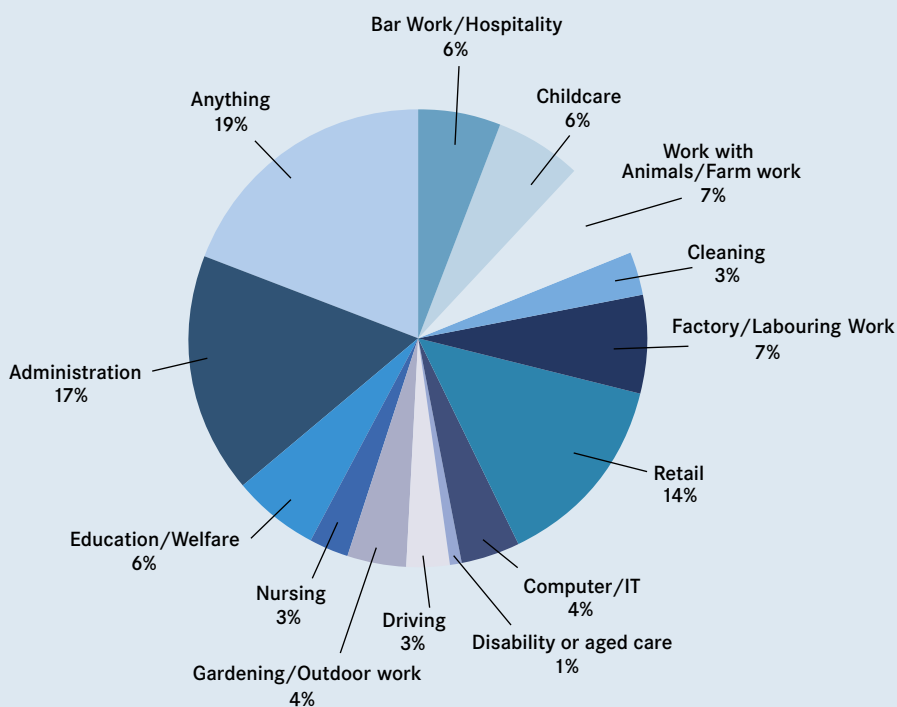
Michelle Jones – resident of Wendouree West.

The Skills Register has enabled the Brotherhood of St Laurence to refocus services to better meet the needs and aspirations of residents and address local skills and labour shortages through effective training and employment initiatives.

**Nick Hannett
Community and Industry
Partnerships Officer
Brotherhood of St Laurence**

Actually it was perfect, I'm working now.

Thomas Abiel, Fitzroy resident







enterprises

Action 4: Creating social enterprise

In response to the lack of supported work and training pathways for residents, 33 social enterprises have been established in Neighbourhood Renewal areas with a further five in development. These enterprises provide more than 130 jobs each year, and create significantly more training and volunteer opportunities. A full list of social enterprises is at Appendix 1.

Enterprises cover a range of industries, such as light manufacturing and catering through to housing and maintenance services. Eleven of them were created to undertake minor capital works on public housing properties. These community works enterprises will generate 60 jobs each year. In 2007 it is anticipated that they will deliver \$2.8 million of improvement works for local public houses. Many have branched out to take on additional work in the local area and other enterprises have been created in response to a business idea generated by the community.

Intermediate labour market model

The majority of enterprises are developed within an intermediate labour market model. Local residents are provided with 12 months supported work and training, and are then supported into other employment, thereby creating vacancies for other unemployed residents. These enterprises provide:

- paid work to build confidence and work skills
- vocational training (generally via a traineeship model)
- personal support
- employment pathway support and job search assistance
- annual ongoing vacancies for the community
- direct services to the community and stimulate local economic activity.

Community enterprise partnerships

The Community Enterprise Development Initiative is a partnership involving the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Department for Victorian Communities, the Department of Human Services and local lead agencies. The partnership has provided over \$1 million and mentoring support, resulting in eight enterprises that employ nearly 50 residents and deliver a range of products and services including gardening and landscaping, hospitality, home maintenance and manufacturing

services. The 2007 report, *Learning from work with twelve disadvantaged neighbourhoods in 2005-06* found the enterprises provide multiple benefits to neighbourhoods ranging from employment, accredited training and new volunteering opportunities, through to increased local economic activity and capacity of community organisations to deliver services.

Another significant partner supporting the development of social enterprises is Sustainability Victoria. A number of social enterprises deliver Sustainability Victoria's Energy Task Force program. Between 2003 and 2006, a total of 2569 homes located in Neighbourhood Renewal areas were fitted with energy saving devices including ceiling insulation, window and door seals, internal blinds and compact fluorescent lights. For all households combined this has saved an estimated 1931 tonnes of greenhouse gas each year, cut \$272,000 off annual energy bills and provided 95 job opportunities. In 2007, 1260 homes across five Neighbourhood Renewal areas will receive energy and water improvements. Plumbers will also install low-flow shower roses and fix leaking taps. In addition nearly 40 employment opportunities have been provided for local residents.

The connection between location, enterprise and service availability is positive for the community, enabling residents to develop transferable work skills and source employment opportunities.





Case study: Celebrations Catering at Doveton-Eumemmerring

Neighbourhood Renewal and Training and Employment Services Australia have developed a community kitchen at the Doveton Neighbourhood Centre. The kitchen is home to Celebrations Catering, a social enterprise that provides work experience and training for local people.

Celebrations Catering makes a number of products, including Christmas cakes. The proceeds from sales go to support the breakfast club in Doveton and Eumemmerring.

The breakfast club is a partnership with the Red Cross, Sanitarium, Eumemmerring Primary School, Doveton Secondary College and the local community house. Under the program, volunteers serve a nutritious breakfast to children who might otherwise go without.

Through the cooking and packaging of Christmas cakes and the breakfast club, Celebrations Catering employees and volunteers develop practical skills in baking, cooking and food handling, along with more formal skills and accreditation in safe food handling. The enterprise is involved in establishing a community market, which will provide a ready outlet for a variety of Celebrations Catering products.

The breakfast club demonstrates benefits beyond good nutrition. At the breakfast club, students have an opportunity to talk to other students of all ages, which has broken down barriers and has certainly contributed to less bullying and other behavioural problems.

Wayne McDonald
Principal, Eumemmerring
Primary School

Just Romans has given me a reason to get up in the mornings, it has given me a purpose in life and gotten me off Centrelink benefits. It's just a great place to work at.

Kitty Rhyder, resident

Case study: Starting Point—A place in the community

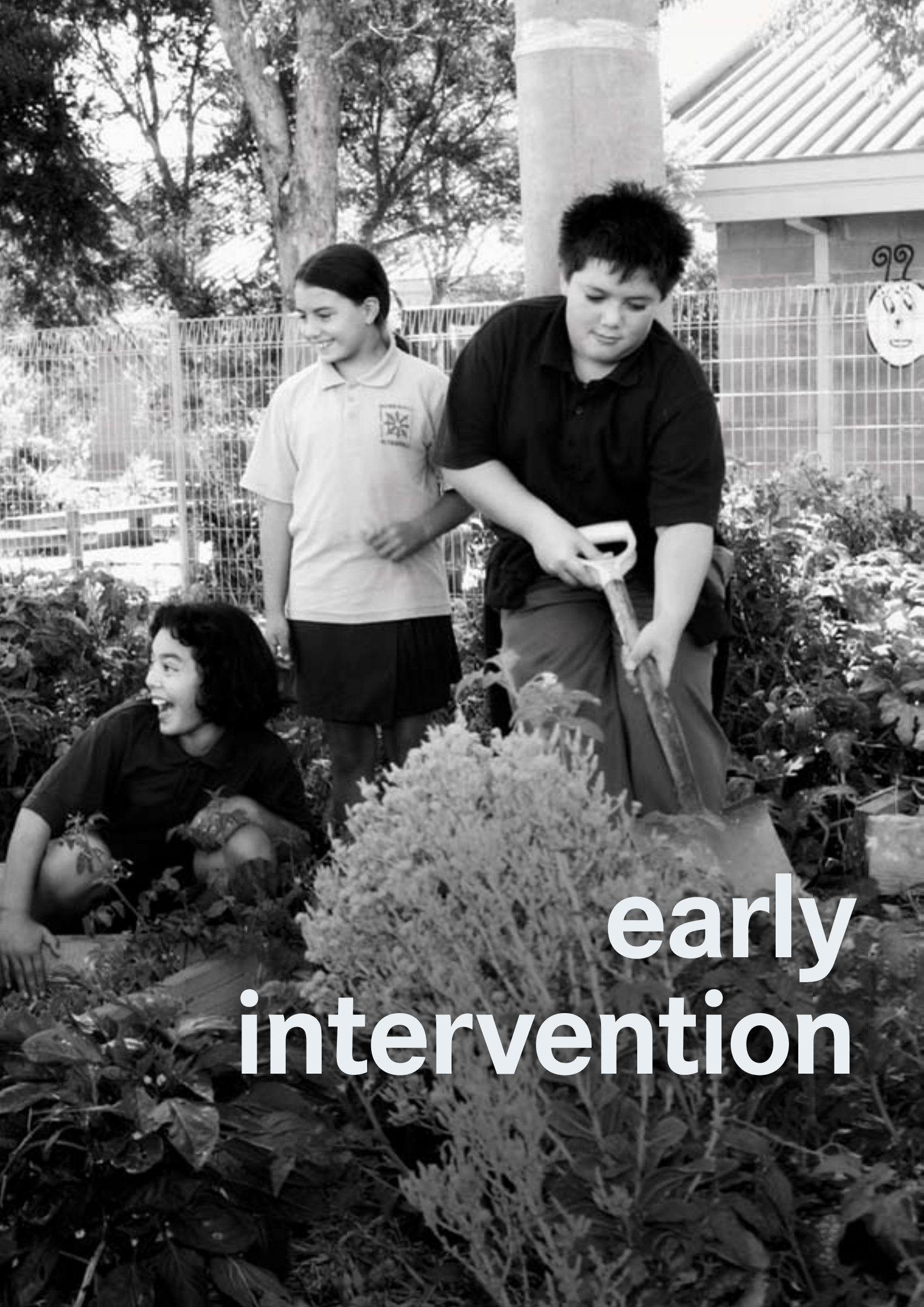
Launched in 2006, the Starting Point provides an enterprise hub for the Parkside community in Shepparton to participate in a wide range of employment, trade, social, hobby and craft activities.

Starting Point is home to one social enterprise: Just Romans, as well as being a space for residents to access Job Network and Centrelink services, employment and training information, advice and activities. It also provides community development and employment opportunities.

Just Romans enables eight residents to participate in the administration, production, installation and quality assurance of roman blinds and other energy efficiency fittings. In this way, employees can develop the necessary work skills to gain employment in the open employment market.

Starting Point partners include the City of Greater Shepparton, Wanganui Park Secondary College, Brotherhood of St Laurence and the Goulburn Ovens TAFE.





early
intervention

Action 5: Local learning initiatives

Neighbourhood Renewal builds partnerships between schools, education and training organisations, businesses and the community to reduce absenteeism, increase school retention and trial alternative learning strategies.

Locally tailored strategies are being implemented for improving education outcomes, including:

- school and community partnerships
- Community Education Catalyst
- school support programs
- disengaged youth initiatives
- information and communications technology projects.

School and community partnerships

Understandably, schools focus primarily on learning, but other social issues can have a significant impact on young people and their life chances. In response to this, partnerships between schools, the local community and other organisations are needed to ensure a common and coordinated approach to meet young people's needs.





Case study: Wendouree West Community Education Partnership

The Department of Education and Training has been a major partner in the Wendouree West Neighbourhood Renewal since its inception in 2001.

Working with the local community, schools and government, Neighbourhood Renewal's place-based approach has enabled the whole community to be genuinely involved in the development of a 'lifelong' learning vision for education in their community. As a result a significant \$12 million lifelong learning hub is to be established in the centre of the community. This will house an integrated educational precinct encompassing: a Prep-to-Year 8 school, kindergarten, occasional child care, information technology centre, adult education, neighbourhood house and other community and education facilities.

The precinct aims to break down traditional learning barriers and improve participation in education, school retention rates and job prospects for students. Significantly, the involvement and ownership of the community in the planning and development of an education vision for their neighbourhood is already having an impact. Local schools are reporting reduced absenteeism and an increase in students progressing from Year 10 to Years 11 and 12.

The education hub will provide the community with an invaluable asset to support the sustainable renewal of the Wendouree West community beyond Neighbourhood Renewal's eight-year intervention.

Resident Group Visions of Learning, Employment and Economic Development

As we feel stronger and more confident, all community members... can make use of the new and improved learning and training programs. There will be more opportunities for people to find part time or full time work that suits their needs. The local shops will be thriving, while people start to use new and existing skills to start their own businesses.

This will be a community we will want to be part of, be proud in, and where we have a say in determining our future.

Neighbourhood Renewal builds partnerships between schools, education and training organisations, businesses and the community



Case study: The EDGE – Ashburton, Ashwood and Chadstone

Some children in Ashburton, Ashwood and Chadstone cannot attend kinder, school camps or excursions; they cannot play sport or generally participate in activities other people take for granted—simply because their parents cannot afford it.

The EDGE Community Fund brings together business and the community to help local children participate in educational, sporting and recreational activities by contributing to the cost of undertaking these activities.

Partners include: ANZ, Matthew Flinders hotel, Bob Stensholt (State MP for Burwood), local businesses, local sporting and recreational clubs, Holmesglen TAFE, local government and Neighbourhood Renewal. To date, the partnership has raised over \$15,000 to send seven children to preschool and one into childcare; it has supported transport costs for eight children to travel to primary school by bus. One child was further assisted to attend a school excursion, youth leadership program and swimming lessons, and one to play cricket.

Without financial help from The EDGE my daughter would not be able to go to the Highgate Centre at all. She loves going and playing with the other children (she is an only child) and has made friends there. She gets to do a lot of activities like finger painting that she doesn't do at home and has learnt a lot by going.

Beverley Smith, resident

Locally targeted strategies are improving education outcomes



Case study: City Centre

The City Centre; an Education Foundation project with the support of members of the philanthropic and corporate communities in Melbourne, provides a unique, action research learning experience for students from government schools.

The City Centre was established to support improved school engagement in the Middle Years, and bring Year 9 students to the city to foster student-led learning, build community links, model active citizenship and enhance teaching practice.

Funding from the William Buckland Foundation is providing a two-year outreach fellow (Liz Suda) to work with and support schools, and to provide scholarships for participating schools from Neighbourhood Renewal areas. Full scholarships were provided for 25 Year 9 students from nine Neighbourhood Renewal schools to participate in the City Centre program. Schools include Ashwood Secondary College, Braybrook Secondary College, Hillcrest Secondary College, Broadmeadows Secondary College, Doveton Secondary College, Norlane Secondary College, Latrobe Secondary College, Collingwood College and Lynall Hall.

The outreach fellow has worked with six of these schools to provide mentoring support for teachers. Through the City Centre program schools are now better able to incorporate action-learning principles gained from community settings into their curriculum and teaching methods.

What the students say...

At school I either don't do any work and have heaps of fun, or I do my work and have no fun at all. At the City Centre I did all my work and had heaps of fun at the same time.

I am most proud of myself being able to approach people because I am normally shy. I am now more confident because I can do things on my own without an adult around. I feel much more independent.

Community Education Catalyst

The Community Education Catalyst is a partnership between the Education Foundation, the Office of Housing and the Department of Education, which attracts funding and other assistance to schools and their communities.

Over an 18-month period, the Community Education Catalyst attracted more than \$150,000 in philanthropic funding for schools in Neighbourhood Renewal areas.

This funding will improve young people's access to the services and educational opportunities they need.

In particular:

- 18 schools participated in ruMAD (are you making a difference?), a unique program of social change and innovative learning to help young people identify issues that are important to them and encourage them to find solutions
- 13 schools participated in Back to School Day, bringing government school alumni across Australia back to school as inspiring role models for today's students
- 9 Neighbourhood Renewal schools participated in The City Centre, a Melbourne urban learning centre for Years 9 and 10, opening the social, cultural and corporate doors of the city to public school students.

School support programs

Many Neighbourhood Renewal initiatives are engaging young people and improving school participation and achievement:

- the Walking School Bus initiative encourages young people to be active and is improving school attendance
- breakfast clubs provide students with nutritious breakfasts to improve their educational performance
- homework clubs are a friendly place where students receive support from volunteers to complete assignments in a positive learning environment.

Disengaged youth initiatives

Long term problems emerge for young people when they drop out of school early and then fail to make a satisfactory transition from school to work or further education and training. This is exacerbated when they don't connect with services designed to provide help.

The state government is working to reduce youth disengagement and to make sure adequate support systems are in place to help young people to complete Year 12 or its equivalent. Initiatives include: Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs), Youth Transition Support Initiative, Managed Individual Pathways, Youth Guarantee, Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning and Australian School-Based Apprenticeships (formerly School-Based New Apprenticeships).

Despite these initiatives, many young people continue to disappear from the education system, only to re-emerge in problem circumstances involving drug use, unemployment, teenage pregnancy, homelessness or crime. Promoting youth re-engagement, school participation and school-to-work initiatives and strategies is therefore important for Neighbourhood Renewal projects. For example in the Grampians Region, the Link-Up outreach support initiative based outside of mainstream schools is re-connecting over 150 students to learning.

New and diverse learning pathways are sometimes needed to help young people meet their full potential. One such program is the CREATE@WORK enterprise, based in Corio Norlane. Through a strong community partnership, Neighbourhood Renewal established this social enterprise with a local training organisation, CREATE Geelong Inc. It is participating in the state and Commonwealth Governments' Australian School-based Apprenticeships initiative to provide an alternative learning strategy for at-risk youth.

The initiative allows participants to continue their education while undertaking a paid apprenticeship. CREATE@WORK has provided over 90 apprenticeships, predominantly in the building and construction industry. Over half of the participants have gone on to full apprenticeships or completed their Victorian Certificate of Education or other studies.



Case study: Collingwood Homework Club

Homework clubs in Collingwood and Atherton Gardens (Fitzroy) have been particularly useful for young people from refugee backgrounds whose parents may struggle to give them the educational support they need due to language difficulties. The homework club has helped many young people adjust to the education system and overcome the impact of interrupted schooling resulting from their refugee experience.

Case study: Don Rods provides employment for Latrobe students

Young people from family backgrounds which do not have a history of paid employment are designing, building and selling custom made fishing rods as part of a community enterprise run out of Kurnai Secondary College to service the fishing community of the Latrobe Valley.

Don Rods employs ten young people in Years 9 and 10 to produce custom-made, high quality, graphite fishing rods. Students work two nights a week after school and are involved in the entire process from designing and building the rods, to managing finances and marketing and selling the final product.

The community enterprise provides practical education for students and brings relevance to their learning experience. It also improves their opportunities to enter employment, tertiary education or training. For many of its employees, the fishing rod business is their first job, first source of income, and for some, the first time a member of the family has had employment.

The homework club has given my grandson smarter ways of studying and assignment writing and a greater focus in life, with his thoughts turning to career aspirations. He is no longer doing homework till all hours; rather he finishes his homework and has time to play rugby with friends.

My granddaughter also attends the reading group of the homework club. She has always been extremely shy; however the homework club has contributed to a remarkable improvement in her reading ability and her self-confidence.

Mere Paora Epere

Don Rods, an initiative of Kurnai Secondary College, was established to keep young people in the school system while enabling them to earn a part-time income outside school hours. Students employed in the fishing rod business who have previously had a history of disengagement with the school system now take great pride in their work and have greater confidence in their abilities.

Geoff Block
Principal, Kurnai Secondary College

Information and communications technology initiatives

In the information age, being excluded from information and communications technology (ICT) severely limits people's education, employment and economic prospects.

Government research shows that computer use and internet uptake is occurring unequally across the Victorian community. Uptake is slower among people with low educational levels, people with low incomes, people with a disability, and among recent migrants.

ICT is an important 'enabler' to improve educational outcomes and lifelong learning opportunities and link residents to employment and learning initiatives.

In partnership with Multimedia Victoria Neighbourhood Renewal projects are establishing community websites and ICT networks as ways to share information and strengthen social connectedness. Websites provide free access to newspapers in various languages, information about job opportunities, library services, trading posts, and information about government services.

Since 2001 over \$1 million has been invested in Neighbourhood Renewal community hubs as prime sites for locating computer, internet and training facilities. This is in response to significant numbers of people in Neighbourhood Renewal areas who are unable to afford a computer, computer training or internet services.



Case study: Electronic Atherton Community Enterprise (e-ACE project)

e-ACE is a major ICT project at the Atherton Gardens High Rise Estate, Fitzroy—a Neighbourhood Renewal setting. The e-ACE project resulted from a partnership between the Office of Housing and not-for-profit social enterprise Infoxchange. Other project partners include the Brotherhood of St Laurence, City of Yarra, Jesuit Social Services, North Yarra Community Health, RMIT University, Victoria Police, Microsoft and Cisco Systems.

The e-ACE Project is an important entrepreneurial scheme for community renewal through ICT. It involves installing free, donated and network-ready personal computers in the apartments of the Atherton Gardens high-rise estate; wiring the buildings of the estate; establishing an IT training hub and providing an estate-wide intranet, email system and affordable Internet access.

To date, more than 1,500 residents have been trained in the use of computers and the internet and 25 residents have gained IT-related employment as a result of e-ACE training. More than 570 active intranet accounts are being used across 50 language groups on the estate. Hits to the intranet average more than 49,000 a month. More than 210 households have also chosen to be connected to the internet, and a high proportion of sites being accessed are government websites.

Computer skills are improving educational achievement of school-aged and adult learners. e-ACE has also fostered greater social connection and group activities among residents, and opportunities exist to involve residents in the management of the enterprise model.

With a computer in my home I have gained valuable skills that relate to the use of digital technology. I now know how computers work, and how to use a variety of software to develop software and apply for a job. These skills have given me the opportunity to feel confident when using the Internet and to seek out information online. I have also been using the Internet to look for work. This has resulted in my current employment.

Sophia, resident

More than 1,500 residents have been trained in the use of computers and the Internet and 25 residents have gained IT-related employment

Appendix 1

Neighbourhood Renewal enterprises

Established

NR AREA	ENTERPRISE	DESCRIPTION
Ashburton Ashwood Chadstone	TESA Community Works	Landscape and gardening enterprise will undertake fencing, house maintenance and landscaping works for the Office of Housing.
Broadmeadows	HomeGround Gardening	Landscape/maintenance enterprise delivering landscaping, fencing and maintenance services to Office of Housing, non-government organisations, private homes and subsidised services in the NR area.
Colac	Ace Works	Landscape/maintenance enterprise delivering landscaping and maintenance services to Office of Housing and the Lake Colac rejuvenation project (in conjunction with Colac/Otway Shire).
Collingwood Fitzroy	AMES BSL Community Cleaning Enterprise	A cleaning service operating on the high-rise estates under the auspices of the Brotherhood of St Laurence and Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES).
Collingwood Fitzroy	Community Contact Service	The Community Contact Service provides a concierge service for the Fitzroy and Collingwood Estates.
Collingwood Fitzroy	Cultural Catering	Collingwood and Fitzroy housing estate residents have developed their own cultural catering business that specialises in catering for community events and also services the corporate market.
Collingwood Fitzroy	electronic-Atherton Community Enterprise (e-ACE)	e-ACE provides internet service facilities and training for Atherton Gardens residents.
Collingwood Fitzroy	Food cooperative	The cooperative is a food market that is run as a not-for-profit social enterprise. Its main goal is to provide the Atherton Gardens community with inexpensive and fresh produce.
Collingwood Fitzroy	Language Factory	Residents are assisted to provide interpreting services to local agencies and Neighbourhood Renewal events.

NR AREA	ENTERPRISE	DESCRIPTION
Collingwood Fitzroy	Yarra Assist	Affordable computer service for small-to-medium enterprises.
Corio Norlane	CREATE@WORK	Construction and landscaping/maintenance enterprise delivering Office of Housing works, City of Greater Geelong Park redevelopment works, and other local projects. Services include construction of relocatable houses, and provision of aid including furniture and household items.
Corio Norlane	Curtain Connections	Community-run curtain services providing free basic curtains to public tenants with Health Care cards.
Corio Norlane	Northerly Aspects	Production of a 20-page community newsletter, circulated to 11,000 houses.
Corio Norlane	Rosewall Training café	A community café that provides hospitality training and employment opportunities for the local community through its catering arm.
Delacombe	Enterprising Communities Incorporated	A community-owned and operated landscaping and construction enterprise that will provide fencing, house maintenance, painting and landscaping services for the Office of Housing and other clients.
Doveton Eumemmerring	Celebrations Catering	A cake-making business that makes Christmas cakes for the Red Cross to distribute. The enterprise is underpinned by Work for the Dole and also recruits volunteers.
Doveton Eumemmerring	Cultural Catering	A catering business specialising in culturally diverse foods and community events, with corporate services. Partners include Eumemmerring Primary School and Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES).
Doveton Eumemmerring	Furniture Works	Landscape/maintenance enterprise delivering landscaping and maintenance services to the Office of Housing.

NR AREA	ENTERPRISE	DESCRIPTION
Eaglehawk Long Gully	Bright Street Enterprise Hub	Milk bar and café staffed by trainees. Hub includes a tool library, childcare, alternative education, a meeting room and a range of service providers on site.
East Reservoir West Heidelberg	U-Reep	Landscape and gardening enterprise that undertakes fencing, house maintenance and landscaping works for the Office of Housing and delivers energy retro-fits as part of Sustainability Victoria's Energy Taskforce program.
Hastings	BSL Community Works	The enterprise currently undertakes energy retro-fits as part of Sustainability Victoria's Energy Taskforce program.
Latrobe	Don Rods	Fishing rod manufacturer servicing angling clubs in the Latrobe Valley. Enhancing an existing rod-building program, the enterprise takes fibreglass blanks and turns them into customised rods. Employs 10 students working part-time out of school hours.
Latrobe	Green PC	The enterprise refurbishes donated used PCs and sells them on a not-for-profit basis to low-income households in Gippsland. The enterprise is a cooperative involving Latrobe City, Baw Baw Latrobe Local Learning and Employment Network, GreenPC (a social enterprise of Infoxchange Australia), Anglicare Gippsland, and other agencies.
Latrobe	Try Wood	Manufactures outdoor furniture.
Maidstone Braybrook	Braybrook Community Enterprise & Training Shed (BETS)	An accredited carpentry training workshop and a tool hire service for local residents. The Braybrook Craft Village is an arm of this enterprise.
Maidstone Braybrook	Global Landscapes	A landscape and gardening enterprise that undertakes fencing, house maintenance and landscaping works for the Office of Housing. It also delivers energy retro-fits as part of Sustainability Victoria's Energy Taskforce program.
Seymour	Renovation for Renewal	A maintenance provider (carpentry) initially providing services to Office of Housing's head contractor and Puckapunyal Army Base. Now expanding to become a provider to private clients in the Seymour district.

NR AREA	ENTERPRISE	DESCRIPTION
Shepparton	Just Romans	Just Romans enterprise manufactures roman blinds for Sustainability Victoria's Energy Task Force projects.
Wendouree West	Caterers with Flair	Food catering enterprise servicing businesses and local events.
Wendouree West	Men's Shed	Provides tools, toy-making and a small maintenance service.
Wendouree West	Simplicity is BEST Computer Club	An enterprise providing recycled computers and information technology training services.
Wendouree West	Vinnies Budget Groceries	An enterprise providing low cost groceries and supermarket operations employment training to residents.
Werribee	HANCS – Heathdale and Neighbourhood Community Shed	Provides a range of government and non-government gardening, landscaping and fencing works.

Under development:

NR AREA	ENTERPRISE:	DESCRIPTION
Colac	Business incubator	Small business development enterprise.
Colac	Envirologs	A manufacturing plant that recycles sawdust and timber chips into briquettes to be sold at petrol stations and through a disability service.
Eaglehawk Long Gully	WW Computer Shop	The enterprise will provide computer recycling services, and operate with a second-hand dealer's licence to sell computer hardware. A computer club (also located at the shop) will train residents to undertake minor computer repairs.
Collingwood Fitzroy	Events-management social enterprise.	A small events-management enterprise bringing together catering, entertainment and equipment hire.
Wendouree West	Wellbeing Wendouree Inc	Personal wellbeing and lifestyle enterprise offering gymnasium and swimming pool management services.

Get in touch with renewal in Victoria:
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