Planning the Future
The Evaluation of Phase One of the Pathways Project in Victoria

Helen Stokes and Debra Tyler
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Victoria

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Foreword

As part of its commitment to Victorian young people, in 2000, the Government set up the Pathways Project. In the first phase, the project operated in 12 areas of high need. These areas were: Metropolitan - Casey/Dandenong, Hume, Frankston/Peninsula, Moreland, and Yarra Ranges; Rural and Regional – Ballarat, Central Goldfields/Mt Alexander, Delatite/Wangaratta, East Gippsland, Greater Geelong, Latrobe, and Mildura.

There were two strategies mandated for Programs in the Pathways Project: the formation of a Pathways Network, and the negotiation of Pathways Plans with around 100 young people aged 15 to 19 who were in schools, TAFE, ACE, universities or other providers, or outside education. Pathways Plans were seen as a tool to encourage these young people to carefully consider and negotiate their future pathways through school or other locations and beyond. They were seen to be particularly valuable for students at risk of leaving school before the completion of Year 12 to assist them to engage more positively in education, training, employment or a combination of these.

A key to the successful development of Pathways Plans was to be the Pathways Negotiator/s who would assist the young person with counselling, provision of advice, links with agencies and access to programs and institutions. Pathways Negotiator/s could be a teacher, youth worker, specialist broker, community member or agency professional.

The evaluation of the first phase of the Pathways Project shows clearly that there was strong commitment by stakeholders in each of the areas to assist young people with their pathways planning. It also demonstrates how the Pathways Networks worked in different ways to support the young people.

The findings of the evaluation of the first phase have been valuable for Programs now developing in Phase Two of the Pathways Project. Our thanks go
to the researchers, Helen Stokes and Debra Tyler, Youth Research Centre, University of Melbourne, for their insights and advice and for the report they have written.

As Victoria moves towards enabling all young people to negotiate Pathways Plans, this publication provides a rich resource for everyone who engages with them in pathways planning.

HOWARD KELLY

General Manager

Post Compulsory Pathways and Projects Division
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We would like to thank all the Pathways Program Teams for their time and support in the collection of data.

Thank you too, to the Local Pathways Network members, Program personnel and young people who shared their experiences with us.

We would also like to thank Jenni King and Jill Anwyl for their direction and support in conducting this evaluation.

Lastly, thank you to our Youth Research Centre colleagues, in particular, Roger Holdsworth and Joanna Wyn, for their advice and support in producing this evaluation report.
Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Terms Used in the Pathways Project:

Pathways Project: refers to the Statewide Project funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Training, Victoria.

Local Network: as part of the Pathways Project, 12 areas were selected and each formed a Local Network, consisting of representatives from schools, TAFE, Adult Community Education (ACE), local government, agencies, community organisations and service providers.

Pathways Program: as part of the Statewide Pathways Project, each of the 12 Local Networks was expected to determine its own Pathways Program.

Pathways Negotiator/Facilitator: the person involved in either developing Pathways Plans and/or coordinating the Program.

Pathways Plans: to be developed with the young people by the Pathways Negotiators.

Acronyms:

ACC: Area Consultative Committee
ACE: Adult Community Education
ATSI: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
DEET: Department of Education, Employment and Training
ENTER: Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank
JPET: Jobs Placement and Employment Programme
JPP: Jobs Pathway Programme
LLEN: Local Learning and Employment Network
NESB: Non English Speaking Background
VCE: Victorian Certificate of Education
VET: Vocational Education and Training
VTAC: Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre
1. Executive Summary

This document is a report on the evaluation of the Pathways Project of the Victorian Department of Education, Employment and Training (DEET). The Pathways Project was funded to implement key recommendations of the Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways, relating to the development of a strategy to begin implementing “pathways planning” for all 15 – 19 year-olds across Victoria, (Kirby, 2000). The Kirby Report emphasises the need for the development of new approaches that involve more active inter sectoral links at the local level to support young people’s participation in education, training and employment.

The Pathways Project represents a response to the development of strategic, systematic and cross-sectoral approaches to supporting young people’s post compulsory education, training and work pathways. Each of twelve areas in Victoria was funded to develop a Local Network (based in general on existing inter-sectoral networks); to appoint a Pathways Negotiator; identify approximately 100 young people “who require the support of an adult to assist them in negotiating the next stages in education, training and employment” and to develop Pathways Plans for them.

The Local Networks were required to operate according to the following principles:

- A commitment to working collaboratively across education and training sectors with employers and the community;
- A concern to meet the needs of young people aged 15 to 19 years, particularly those at risk of not going on with education and training; and
- An understanding of the unmet needs of these young people and a commitment to negotiate Pathways Plans with each young person and conduct activities to meet these needs.

The evaluation was carried out by the Youth Research Centre between September 2000 and April 2001. It found that the majority of the twelve funded Programs met the aims and principles. While the Programs differed in their interpretation of the aims and principles
and in their implementation approaches, the researchers found that three identifiable approaches or “models” emerged.

The three models are described as the **direct negotiation model**, the **coordinator facilitation model** and the **network facilitation model**. The identification of these models allows an analysis of characteristics and features that enhance the principles of the Pathways Project and those which are barriers. Because the Local Networks were selected in part on the basis of already functioning networks, the evaluation has focused especially on the capacity to change practice, develop a shared vision of goals and best practice, and model innovative approaches.

While each of the models has advantages and disadvantages, the network facilitation model provides the most direct mechanism for developing more innovative, systematic, inter-sectoral approaches to supporting young people’s pathways through education, training and employment.

However, across all models of practice, it was found that the development of a “shared vision” for a network is a process that occurs between people working in the different sectors within a network over time. It can be hampered by changes in personnel and requires external support (in the form of professional development) to be developed. Professional development can be especially significant in assisting with the establishment of structures that facilitate the network's goals. Similarly, the establishment of good working relationships with young people is a process that is developed over time.

Young people were positive about the opportunity to talk “one to one” with interested adults, liked relating to adults who were not attached to their schools, and appreciated a flexible approach which took into account their changing needs (for example, for short and long-term goals, meetings at short notice, information about a wide range of career and personal issues, and skill development).

The evaluation concludes with a number of suggested strategies for the development of young people’s pathways through education, training and employment. The developments relate to the following areas:

**Structure**: Local, inter-sectoral networks have the capacity to provide a powerful, responsive and relevant structure to support the needs of young people.

**Culture**: The development of new, collaborative cultures across sectors which have traditionally been in competition, is welcomed by all participants. This requires a balanced approach to “process” as well as “outcomes” and a recognition that the development of working relationships that work in young people’s interests takes time.
Support: Cultural change and best practice are substantially enhanced through external support in the form of professional development. Without this external intervention, networks fall back on working knowledge developed through past practice.

Young people: Young people are valuable participants in the development of local networks and programs as well as the “recipients”. Pathways programs which are administered at the local level provide an opportunity to model a more participatory mode of operation, between the “sectors” of adults and youth.
2. Introduction

An evaluation of the initial operation of the Pathways Project was commissioned in August 2000, by the Department of Education, Employment and Training (DEET), Victoria. The Youth Research Centre was asked to look at:

- The establishment of the Networks and the Programs with particular reference to the principles and aims outlined below;
- The implementation of the Pathways Programs with particular reference to the role of the Pathway Negotiators/Facilitators and young people; and
- The outcomes for young people, educational institutions, and communities.

2.1 AIMS OF THE PATHWAYS PROJECT

The formal statement of the Pathways Project (DEET 2000) identifies the following Aims and Operational Principles:

- To work with young people aged 15 to 19 years in developing Pathways Plans. In particular the Pathways Project should target those young people who require the support of an adult to assist them in negotiating the next stages of their education, training and employment;
- To identify and act on barriers which block the young people’s achievement of their goals;
- To focus on the unmet needs of the young person. This requires each Program to identify what schools, other providers, parents, the community and the young people themselves can do;
- To develop or strengthen links with other strategies and initiatives which support young people; and
- To demonstrate how the resources of a community can be combined in a cooperative effort to empower young people themselves.
2.2 Principles for the Operation of Programs in the Pathways Project

The following principles underpin the operation of the twelve Programs in the Pathways Project:

- A commitment to working collaboratively across education and training sectors and with employers and the community;
- A concern to meet the needs of young people aged 15 - 19 years, particularly those at risk of not going on with education and training; and
- An understanding of the unmet needs of these young people and a commitment to negotiate with each young person and conduct activities to meet these needs.

Overwhelmingly the majority of Programs met the Aims and Principles for the Operation of the Programs.

This evaluation looks at the development of Local Networks and their Programs to achieve such a shared vision, to bring about changed ways of planning and service delivery, and the capacity to create effective frameworks for the development of pathways through education, training and work for young people in each local area.

The evaluation has documented and discussed three models for developing a Pathways Program. What happened and what works in relation to Networks, Programs and their personnel, and young people and their mentors, are then discussed. Strategies are included to assist in the development of future programs. Case studies are used to illustrate issues raised throughout the Pathways Project.

2.3 Background

The Report of the Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria highlighted the “inadequacies of current student career guidance and support services” in a period when “the transitional process” for young people “has become more complex, varied and uncertain”. The provision of guidance and support services was seen to be poorly resourced and coordinated, and a need existed for broader careers and transitional guidance and support (Kirby, 2000).

It recommended the development of pathways planning which would gradually extend to all 15 to 19 year olds across Victoria. (Recommendation 16: Kirby, 2000).

A forerunner to achieving this goal has been the implementation of the DEET Pathways Project.

Further to this Project has been the introduction of Managed Individual Pathways
15

(MIPs) across the government schools, TAFE, and Adult, Community Education (ACE) sectors in 2001. A description of the MIPs Initiative is provided in Appendix 5.

### 2.4 DESCRIPTION OF THE PATHWAYS PROJECT

In its first phase, the Pathways Project funded and supported twelve areas of high need, where there were either existing or potential cooperative arrangements already in place between schools, TAFE, ACE, industry representatives, employment agencies and other service providers. The majority of the twelve areas previously had Full Service Schools Program networks in place (James, St Leger, and Ward, 2001).

Each of the twelve areas was located in one Local Government Area (LGA) or within two adjacent LGAs. The areas were each expected to develop or consolidate a formal network to become their area's Local Pathways Network. These Local Networks were then individually to develop their Pathways Program, according to the needs of their particular communities.

The areas selected for Phase One were:

- **Metropolitan:**
  - Casey/Dandenong
  - Hume
  - Frankston/Mornington Peninsula
  - Moreland
  - Yarra Ranges

- **Rural and Regional:**
  - Ballarat
  - Central Goldfields/Mt Alexander
  - Delatite/Wangaratta
  - East Gippsland
  - Greater Geelong
  - Latrobe
  - Mildura

It was intended that the twelve Local Networks would, through the involvement and cooperation of all stakeholders, achieve the aims of the Pathways Project.

Each of the twelve Pathways Programs, after forming their Local Network, was required to:

- appoint a Pathways Negotiator(s);
- identify approximately 100 young people “who require the support of an adult to
assist them in negotiating the next stages of their education, training and employment”; and

– develop Pathway Plans by negotiating with the young people.

These Plans were to be completed for approximately 60 students in school in each area and 40 students out of school (from TAFE, ACE, JPP, JPET, and other agencies). The Plans were intended to provide a basis to assist young people engage more positively in education, training and employment, catering to individual needs.

The development of the Local Networks was informed by the recommendation of the Kirby Report which stated that a fundamental goal is that:

*In each area, a community of key players will cooperate on a local strategy to help young people negotiate pathways plans. Monitoring student pathways should support cross sectoral links between the education, training and industry sectors, including information flow, and recognise the importance of cross sectoral cooperation (Kirby, 2000, p. 131).*

The success of the Local Networks, according to the Kirby Report, would be enhanced by the participants sharing a vision of the outcomes. This might involve a recognition of the need “to change prevailing cultural and service models to accommodate new modes of planning and delivery” (Kirby, 2000, p. 134). Flexibility and accountability (that is, who is responsible for which young person and at what time) and the need to create a “framework of collective provider responsibility on a regional or area basis” was the expectation behind this initiative (p. 124). Local Networks were also required to be “diverse and flexible” to suit local needs (p. 121), while offering flexible program delivery to cater for a maximum range of young people (p. 120).

### 2.5 THE PATHWAYS PROJECT MODEL

```
Statewide Pathways Project

Pathways Programs

Local Networks

Pathway Negotiators/Facilitators

Pathways Plans
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3. Methodology

This evaluation of the Pathways Project was carried out by the Youth Research Centre between September 2000 and April 2001. It was conducted in two main phases:

PHASE 1

September 2000 – January 2001

- Meeting with DEET Officers from Major Projects (now Post Compulsory Pathways and Projects Division) about the direction of the evaluation;
- Familiarisation with the Pathways Project;
- Development of questionnaires about the establishment of Networks;
- Visits or contact with all Networks to discuss the process of establishment of their Network:
  - Visits to: Ballarat, Frankston/Mornington Peninsula, Hume, Latrobe, Mildura, Moreland, Mt Alexander/Goldfields and Delatite/Wangaratta;
  - Phone interviews with Network members from: East Gippsland, Dandenong/Casey, Greater Geelong, and Yarra Ranges;
- Production of Interim Report on the establishment phase; and
- Meeting with DEET Officers to discuss directions of the evaluation.

PHASE 2

January 2001 – April 2001

- Development of questionnaires for Pathways personnel and for young people;
- Visits to and contact with Pathways personnel:
  - Visits made to East Gippsland, Latrobe, Mildura, Greater Geelong, Frankston/Peninsula, Hume, Dandenong/Casey, Mt Alexander/Goldfields, Yarra Ranges and Moreland (where the Pathways Negotiator was not available);
  - These Pathways personnel included: Pathways Negotiators, Pathways Facilitators and mentors; and
Visits and interviews with young people in projects:
- Young people interviewed at a range of sites (schools, TAFE and agencies) in: East Gippsland, Mildura, Hume, Frankston, Mt Alexander/Goldfields, Yarra Ranges;
- Some phone contact also made with young people in these projects; and
- Young people were not available in Moreland, Geelong and Dandenong/Casey;

■ Meeting with DEET officers regarding directions of evaluation; and
■ Writing of Final Report.

MODIFICATIONS TO METHODOLOGY

Contact with the young people was dependent on the organisation of the Pathways Negotiator or Facilitator and on the young person being willing to attend an interview session. This meant that the sample was self-selected to a great extent. To overcome the bias in this sample, interviews were sometimes arranged with “at risk” young people through the Local Network. The attendance rate of these young people was low.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

32 young people (between the ages of 15 and 19 years) were interviewed as part of this evaluation (see Appendix 2 for interview questions).

They were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of school</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c) Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATSI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESB</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d) Education Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In school</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In TAFE</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of education</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

e) Accommodation Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In home</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of home</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f) Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

g) Status of Pathways Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finished</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Models

4.1 DISCUSSION

One of the principles for the Operation of Programs was that there be “a commitment to working collaboratively across education and training sectors”. The Kirby Report (2000) is clear in its emphasis: to ensure the success of pathways programs for young people there is a need to change the prevailing cultural and service models to accommodate new modes of planning and delivery (p. 134). Hargraves (1997) recognises that changing the organisational culture is a complex process, one which should not be underestimated in either the time it takes or the resources needed to support the process (p. 1).

To facilitate change in service delivery, where possible, already existing networks formed the basis for the development of the new Local Networks forming their Pathways Programs. The development of the new Local Networks raised the following questions:

- whether a commitment existed among the organisations in the Networks to work cooperatively rather than competitively;

- whether individuals and organisations involved in the Local Networks were rethinking their work practices to embrace the concept of working more cooperatively and flexibly; and

- whether support and developmental time was available to enable this discussion to occur.

The Local Networks themselves developed the models with which they would then deliver their individual programs. The Programs were designed to suit the needs of their local community. It is therefore interesting to compare the different models that the Local Networks developed. Eleven of the twelve Programs can be classified as using either a direct negotiation, a coordinator facilitation or a network facilitation model. Greater Geelong conducted a research project.

Most Local Networks placed the organisation of the program in the hands of a few Pathways Negotiators/Facilitators (direct negotiation or coordinator facilitation). For
some Local Networks this meant that they could step back from their active involvement in the Program, and the Pathway Negotiators/Facilitators organised and delivered the Program. Other Local Networks using these models still continued an active and supportive role throughout the Program. In the network facilitation model the Local Network had to remain actively involved as it was Local Network members themselves who were facilitating the delivery of the Pathways Program in the different organisations.

Some of the Local Networks ensured through the development of their Program and Network structure that there would be a commitment to working collaboratively across sectors and to the changing of the working culture. (This is further developed in the descriptions of three selected Programs in 4.4).

The description of the three models in the following tables first describes what happened in the different Programs. This then leads to assessing what happened. As a result of this, Programs in the future can be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of each of the models.

Within each of the models, the different Programs had a variety of ways of working. A number of the Programs do not fit neatly into just one model and so generalisations have been made to facilitate the development of the models.

Following the models and their advantages and disadvantages, are descriptions of three selected programs. One Program has been selected to represent each of the three different models. This allows greater detail and description of the Programs.
### 4.2 TABLES OF MODELS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 1: Direct Negotiation</th>
<th>Model 2: Coordinator Facilitation</th>
<th>Model 3: Network Facilitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sites (generalised)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankston/Mornington</td>
<td>Yarra Ranges, Dandenong/Casey, Latrobe, Mildura.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peninsula, Mt Alexander/</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wangaratta/Delatite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Goldfields, Hume,</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Greater Geelong completed a research project.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreland, Ballarat, East</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gippsland.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralised:</td>
<td>Semi-centralised:</td>
<td>Decentralised:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Network in the area</td>
<td>A Pathways Facilitator (PF) was</td>
<td>A limited degree of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employed one or more</td>
<td>employed by the Network.</td>
<td>coordination was provided by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathways Negotiators (PNs)</td>
<td>The PF was then responsible for</td>
<td>one organisation in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who both coordinated and</td>
<td>organising schools, TAFE, ACE,</td>
<td>Network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negotiated</td>
<td>agency, business and community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>personnel to negotiate the plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and negotiate with the young</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PNs worked directly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the young people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>developing the Pathways</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement of Network</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect:</td>
<td>Indirect:</td>
<td>Direct:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranges from PNs being</td>
<td>Ranges from PFs being</td>
<td>Network members directly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involved in the Network</td>
<td>involved in the Network</td>
<td>involved in or facilitating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meetings on a regular basis</td>
<td>meetings on a regular basis</td>
<td>pathways negotiation at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to the Network employing</td>
<td>to the Network employing the</td>
<td>the different organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the PN and there being no</td>
<td>PF with no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involvement with the</td>
<td>involvement with the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network from that time.</td>
<td>Network from that time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networks could/did provide</td>
<td>Networks could/did provide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contacts, links and advice</td>
<td>contacts, links and advice on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on Program development and</td>
<td>Program development and future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future directions.</td>
<td>directions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>Executive support: Most Networks formed an Executive or Steering Committee to support PNs and facilitate decision making.</td>
<td>Executive support: Most Networks formed an Executive or Steering Committee to support PFs and facilitate decision making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approaches to Planning</td>
<td>Centralised: From a limited range of educational, community and other organisations to a wider range involved in the pathways planning. Plans done by one or a few workers.</td>
<td>Semi centralised: A wide range of community, educational and other organisations involved in the pathways planning. Approach to Pathways Plans developed centrally but implemented by a number of organisations. Professional development and guidelines provided by the PFs and Network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of Personnel</td>
<td>The Pathways Negotiators were located within one of the organisations involved in the Network. These included: schools, TAFE, Local Government, agencies and JPP.</td>
<td>The Pathways Facilitators were located in one of the Network organisations including: DEET, ACC, Group Training Companies, and TAFE. The Pathways Negotiators were located in schools, TAFE, ACE, JPET, JPP, accommodation services, Group Training Companies, business (mentors) and community organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Model 1:</strong> Direct Negotiation</td>
<td><strong>Model 2:</strong> Coordinator Facilitation</td>
<td><strong>Model 3:</strong> Network Facilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Finances/Employment</strong></td>
<td>Central funding:</td>
<td>Decentralised:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funding to Pathways</td>
<td>Small amount for coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiators to negotiate plans.</td>
<td>Pathways Plans done by</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>different organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>without financial assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact with Young People</strong></td>
<td>Central contact:</td>
<td>Limited central contact:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PNs had contact with young people in</td>
<td>Pathways Coordinator had</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a range of organisations (schools,</td>
<td>contact with young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TAFE, ACE and agencies).</td>
<td>located in their own organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If PN was external to that organisation then reliant on staff to locate and facilitate contact with young people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If PN was internal (in a particular school) it increased access for those young people in the school, but limited access for out of school young people and other students in region.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Young People</strong></td>
<td>Between 20 and 80 for each PN.</td>
<td>Would range from between 5 and 10 young people each per organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Young People</td>
<td>Model 1: Direct Negotiation</td>
<td>Model 2: Coordinator Facilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young people were: self selecting, recommended or compulsory (whole class involved).</td>
<td>In general young people were selected and recommended to be part of the project.</td>
<td>In general young people were selected and recommended to be part of the project, but were given choices as to with whom they would work.</td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional development provided centrally (DEET) to PNs:</td>
<td>Professional development provided centrally (DEET) to PFs:</td>
<td>Professional development provided centrally (DEET) to Coordinator and some PNs:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>– Elements of Pathways Plans; – Discussion of issues; and – Methods of pathways negotiation.</td>
<td>– Elements of Pathways Plans; – Discussion of issues; and – Methods of pathways negotiation.</td>
<td>– Elements of Pathways Plans; – Discussion of issues; and – Methods of pathways negotiation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Responsibility | Steering Committee and PNs developed: – Proformas etc (1). | PFs provided professional development to PNs: – Active learning circles (2); – Seminars/training on pathways negotiation; – Mentor training (4); and – Proformas, support and advice. | Networks developed professional development for PNs: – Tool Kit (3); and – Discussion of issues. |

| Sustainability | Knowledge concentrated: PNs can continue with MIPs, LLEN and other DEET funding. | Knowledge spread: Some PFs to continue with LLEN and other DEET funding. | Knowledge spread: With further funding available from DEET eg MIPs and LLEN, PNs can continue to be paid. |
(1) Proformas – standard forms used by Programs for plans, letters etc.
(2) Active Learning Circle – Group of PNs brought together from different sectors to build links and discuss issues.
(3) Mentor training – training sessions conducted by PFs to introduce mentors to the process.
(4) Tool kit – resource kit for all PNs.
(5) MIPs – Managed Individual Pathways.
(6) LLN – Local Learning and Employment Network.

4.3 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE THREE MODELS

Direct Negotiation

The Local Network in the area employed one or more Pathways Negotiators who both coordinated and negotiated plans. The Pathways Negotiators worked directly with the young people developing the Pathways Plans.

Advantages

(i) The Pathways Negotiator:
- is easily identifiable by a range of young people in different sectors;
- is available at a set time (not constrained by teaching duties);
- has often had no previous dealing with the young people which allows young people to make a new start;
- has an established relationship with the young person which is able to be further consolidated;
- is able to negotiate between sectors and support young people when moving between sectors, for example, school to TAFE to ACE;
- has recent expertise and experience from outside the school sector, for example, in knowing employment options;
- is able to attend and relate to the Local Network; and
- is a person other than a teacher that the young person can talk to.

(ii) There is the opportunity for consistency in working with young people and in the development of the Pathways Plans with only a few Pathways Negotiators in the Program.

Disadvantages

(i) Expertise is based with one or a few people.
This can lead to:

- creation of de facto agency rather than Local Network involvement and facilitation; and
- difficulties if/when people leave the organisation (they take the expertise with them).

(ii) The Local Network could employ the person (Pathways Negotiator) and then leave program development to that person. Therefore there is a loss of Local Network support and management expertise.

(iii) The Pathways Negotiator can operate outside the Network which leads to the loss of working within the collaborative nature of the Local Network.

(iv) The Program can be located outside educational institutions. This can lead to no change in the working culture and expertise available within educational institutions. Pathways planning can remain outside the parameters of the core business of the educational institution.

**Coordinator Facilitation**

A Pathways Facilitator was employed by the Local Network. This person was then responsible for organising schools, TAFE, ACE, agency, business and community personnel to negotiate the Plans with the young people.

**Advantages**

(i) The expertise in developing Pathways Plans is spread across the organisations.

(ii) Pathways Facilitators provide support and a framework for the Program. Pathways Facilitators provide a reference point for the Pathways Negotiators.

(iii) It can lead to innovative ways of providing professional development and support and further the development of collaborative relationships. An example of this was the Active Learning Circles in the Yarra Ranges Pathways Program, where many of the Pathways Negotiators came together on a regular basis to share information and develop links.

(iv) If leadership in schools is involved in the Local Network and supportive of Pathways Facilitators and Pathways Negotiators then it can then lead to a change in the work culture of the school.

(v) Pathway Negotiators have easy access to young people in their organisations because they are on site and sometimes know the young people.

(vi) There is potential for the development of a wide range of partnerships, for example, partnerships with the community and business through mentoring.
Disadvantages

(i) The Program can operate outside the Local Network. This can lead to the loss of benefits from working within the collaborative nature of the Local Network.

(ii) Networks could employ Pathways Facilitators and then leave Program development to the Pathways Facilitator. Therefore there could be a loss of Local Network support and management expertise.

(iii) Pathway Negotiators are distanced from the Local Network as contact with the Local Network is made via the Pathways Facilitator.

(iv) The Program and Pathways Negotiators are dependent on quality professional development from the Pathways Facilitator and Local Network to ensure consistency across the program.

(v) It can be seen as “add on” to Pathways Negotiators’ other work load (for example, teaching) and not part of their core business.

(vi) Funding for Pathways Negotiators can be seen as a problem, but the availability of MIPs funding should be able to overcome this.

Network Facilitation

A limited degree of coordination was provided by one organisation in the Local Network. The participating organisations then used different models in each of the organisations to negotiate the plans, for example through the employment of a teacher or an external youth worker.

Advantages

(i) Expertise is spread across the Local Network.

(ii) The Program can provide a range of models so that each organisation can then choose what was most appropriate to the organisation, for example whether to involve teachers in the school or external Pathways Negotiators.

(iii) There is strong Local Network accountability, direction and guidance.

(iv) There is involvement and commitment of the Local Network in the development of pathways planning as it is the Local Network members negotiating the Plans with the young people.

(v) Professional development can be provided by the Local Network for Pathways Negotiators.
(vi) The Local Network can show commitment to changing the work culture, for example, using the Principal and Assistant Principal as Pathways Negotiators in a school, thus sharing the responsibility of pathways planning across the school.

(vii) Remuneration can be provided for Pathways Negotiators with an amount being attached to each young person.

Disadvantages

(i) Possible lack of consistency across the organisation in pathways planning.

(ii) It can still be seen as an “add on” to the core business of educational institutions.

(iii) There is a significant time commitment involved in attending Network meetings.

4.4 DESCRIPTIONS OF THREE PROGRAMS

Direct Negotiation

Hume – Metropolitan

The Hume Pathways Program was located at Kangan Batman TAFE in the North Western corridor of Melbourne. The Program was building on the “Investing In Our Youth: Multi Agency Team” that was already established. The lead agencies were North West Wedge and Jobs Pathway Programme (JPP). The Program employed a number of Pathway Negotiators to be in direct negotiation with the young people. These Pathways Negotiators were employed from the two organisations.

Introducing the Program

School based forums were conducted at a number of the schools involved. Coordinators, careers teachers and other interested staff were briefed about the Program. The City of Hume sponsored a community briefing for the broad network of participating organisations.

Accessing the young people

Referrals were made from four of the schools in the Local Network. These were: Penola Catholic College, Craigieburn Secondary College, Upfield Secondary College and Hillcrest Secondary College. Sunbury Secondary College asked for volunteers after presenting the Program to the school assembly. Kangan Batman TAFE also introduced the Program and asked for volunteers while the Koorie Unit at TAFE involved a number of the students attending.
The Pathways Negotiators

The Pathways Negotiators were employed from North West Wedge and JPP. The Pathways Negotiators had had prior experience in the area although some felt that more counselling skills would have been useful. The Pathways Negotiators worked directly with the schools, TAFE and ACE, and built relationships between the sectors. These were particularly developed between TAFE, ACE and the Koorie Unit.

The Pathways Negotiators worked with 60 young people in schools, 6 in TAFE, 5 in ACE, 6 in the TAFE Koorie Unit and 6 in other agencies.

The Pathways Negotiators made appointments with the young people and then met them at their particular institution.

Planning

In general the Pathways Negotiators found that the young people needed a number of appointments and discussions to be able to formulate their goals. For some young people it was a matter of dealing with a range of life and schooling issues prior to being able to formulate goals. For the Koorie young people, a different way of working had to be developed. They did not respond well to the initial paperwork and documentation requirements. Their planning was based on verbal interaction within the context of the Program that they were attending.

Relationship to the Network

The Pathways Negotiators were concentrating on working with the young people and so did not attend Local Network meetings. Information was passed to the Pathways Negotiators by Local Network members, providing a link with the Local Network, but the Pathways Negotiators felt that having time to attend meetings would have been helpful in seeing the broader picture.

While the Pathways Negotiators felt that there was some community knowledge about the Program, they also felt that more Local Network meetings would have enhanced awareness of the Program. More contact with the Program and the Local Network would have also facilitated the referral process and enhanced on the ground information from Pathways Negotiators as to what gaps exist in services in the Hume area.

Working with the young people

The Pathways Negotiators worked from the principle of empowerment for the young people. The young people needed to make their own decisions to be able to act on those decisions. At each meeting the Pathways Negotiator and young person would decide on a follow up action to be discussed at the next meeting. Some of the young people needed
a number of regular meetings while other young people felt that they had the “what” (that is, they knew what career area to focus upon) they just needed help with the “how to get there”.

**Changing the culture**

At the sectoral level there had been a building of partnerships across sectors that allowed young people to move between TAFE, ACE and schools more easily.

The Pathways Negotiators felt that working in schools, in particular, did create an opportunity for teachers to become aware of the need for young people to have access to this kind of assistance. It had the potential to broaden teachers’ thinking about the Pathways Program’s aims and what they could contribute.

These relationships could have been further enhanced by greater connection with the Network.

**Coordinator Facilitation**

**Latrobe – Regional**

The Latrobe Pathways Program was based at the DEET Regional Office in Moe in the Latrobe Valley.

**Introducing the Program**

The Network employed the Pathways Facilitator in November. It was made clear to the Pathways Facilitator that he needed to be a “self starter” and able to initiate action in the Program. He felt that he brought his own skills and expertise to the Program. He had worked with “at risk” young people and had knowledge of employment issues.

A launch was organised for the Program and orientation sessions and presentations were arranged for every school and service provider. There was also media coverage of the Program.

Around 70% of the organisations were already aware and willing to be part of the Program, having been part of the existing Local Network.

**Structure of the Program**

Pathways Negotiators, or mentors as the Program called them, were located in different organisations. These included teachers in schools, TAFE, ACE and special schools, and workers in the Jobs Pathway Programme (JPP), Job Placement, Employment and Training (JPET) and other agencies.

The Pathways Facilitator provided support/advice and pro formas to all the Pathways Negotiators/mentors.
The Pathways Facilitator also provided a letter to all parents to explain the Program. Parents were able to ring the Pathways Facilitator prior to signing up to discuss any concerns. One parent thought it was a great opportunity while another had concerns that her child had been labelled “at risk”. In general parents were very supportive of the process. The Pathways Facilitator felt that understanding and support at home was an important element of the pathways process.

Initially many schools identified boys for the Program. After discussion with the Pathways Facilitator the schools selected girls as well, and the Program ended with a 60/40 mix of boys and girls respectively.

**The planning process**

The Pathways Negotiators/mentors met the young people at the educational institution or agency in working hours. The Pathways Negotiators met with the young people around 4 to 5 times in the first 2 to 3 weeks. The young people began to gain confidence in the process and develop trust in the Pathways Negotiators when they saw action and some of their barriers to education being identified and broken down.

Short and long term action plans were developed with the young people. Time lines were set for both young people and Pathways Negotiators. The plans were action oriented and outcome based.

**Relationship with the Network**

The Pathways Facilitator was actively engaged with the Network throughout the Program. He provided information as well as activities that helped the Local Network to develop skills in sharing information and knowledge.

The Local Network met once a month with around 10 to 12 organisations present. A Steering Committee was set up to facilitate faster decision making and ongoing contact with the Pathways Facilitator.

The Local Network provided a forum for providers to learn about services that the different organisations offered and then to make links between organisations.

**Changing the culture**

The Local Network was flexible and willing to change direction to accommodate the needs of the young people and the Pathways Facilitator.

The Pathways Facilitator felt that the partnerships developed during the Program at the Local Network and organisational level had challenged the isolation of some of the organisations. This was particularly relevant for TAFE and schools who saw the value in working together.
Network Facilitation

Delatite/Wangaratta – Rural

The Delatite/Wangaratta Pathways Program was coordinated through The Centre (ACE) in Wangaratta. The Program involved Wangaratta, Benalla and Mansfield and surrounding areas.

Introducing the Program

A variety of activities such as discussion in staff meetings and notices in school newsletters took place in the different organisations.

As each of the organisations was involved at a Local Network level, information about the program was transmitted by the Local Network members to their organisations.

Professional development was arranged at a Local Network level in regard to pathways negotiation (using Archemeter, a career and goal setting tool used in the Advocacy Program) and a “tool kit” of information was collated from Local Network members to assist in starting the negotiation process.

Structure of the Program

The Local Network determined that a limited coordination role would be taken on by The Centre in Wangaratta. Members of the Local Network allocated a number of places - that is Plans to be developed – to many of the participating organisations. The organisations then decided themselves how they would develop the pathways process. Some examples included:

- One College had eleven negotiators, one for each of the eleven students. These Pathways Negotiators included the Principal and Assistant Principal and other teaching and non teaching staff members.
- One College decided to employ a youth worker to develop the Pathways Plans with the young people.
- One agency provided negotiation for Year 12 students who did not get the ENTER score that they anticipated. This program was designed to occur during January with help from school staff when needed.

Accessing the young people

As the Program had a range of approaches, a number of methods was used in regard to accessing, identifying and working with the young people. These included:

- A very detailed selection procedure which involved extensive consultation within the school, and surveys and interviews with prospective students and their parents. Young people were then given the opportunity to participate in the program.
Using the criteria provided by the Local Network, a short list was developed by the Year Level Coordinators, the Student Services Coordinator and Work Education Coordinator.

Students were referred by teachers at TAFE. The process began by talking to the young people. It followed with making plans and appointments which needed to be followed up.

Students in Year 9 who had completed the careers program but were still unsure about their direction, were surveyed re future directions and need for assistance. Questionnaires were collated and students who met the selection criteria were short listed by the Year Level Coordinator. These students and their parents attended a meeting and expressions of interest were sought. Ten students came forward. Staff were informed of the project and asked to volunteer. Year 12 teachers who had just lost classes were asked to participate in lieu of replacement classes. Ten were chosen from a short list provided to students. Students nominated who they felt they could work with best. Staff were given professional development about the Program (in the school setting) and supplied with a “tool kit” and time. Students could nominate to work with a teacher on their own or with another student. Students met with Negotiators once per week for 6 weeks to develop an action plan before December and then once again in February if necessary.

Individual meetings (which included Archemeter information, pathways planning and so on) were organised as well as a group industry visit and informal contact at school. Motivation and enthusiasm were enough to keep students engaged.

Short listed students and their parents were sent a letter outlining the Program and its perceived benefits and students were offered a place in the Program. They were given the list of staff (Principal/teachers/student support officers) who had volunteered to work in the Program, and asked to indicate anyone with whom they felt able to work. Some students indicated preferences, but most did not. Each student was matched with a Pathways Negotiator. Initial contact was made by the Pathways Negotiators in a number of ways. Depending on the students, engagement had been easy (and stimulating) to difficult - some students did not meet agreed appointment times, were absent, or were casual about the Program. The meetings were at the school. Regular meetings were arranged. At times they were once a week and at other times once every three weeks.

The youth worker met the young person for 45 minutes to one hour per week over 7 weeks at the school or at the Shire office, for those not attending school. It was important to get to know the young person in his/her current situation, to be able to develop his or her short and long term goals. The Pathways Negotiator gave him/her an overall
picture of what could be expected week by week and how the process would address
his or her particular needs.

- The Program provided information about options to the young people. The Pathways
  Negotiator helped to make contacts for students and took them to information sessions.
  In the case of the (prospective) students who started the process in December and
  January, there were three or four hours of discussions looking at short term goals. This
  included: deciding on a course and enrolling them and supporting them in their studies.
  The situations and needs of the young people were variable and the working process
  was adaptable to each situation.

**Relationship with the Local Network**

There was contact with the Local Network by all the participating organisations. The
extent of this participation varied, for example, attendance at the meetings. There were
difficulties for some in regard to distance and time to attend. While there may have been
a number of Pathways Negotiators in each of the organisations, only one or two would
attend the Local Network meetings.

Pathways Negotiators felt that the contact with the Network had assisted in the progress
of the Program. One Pathways Negotiator felt that an opportunity for all Pathways Negotiators
to share experiences and ideas would also be beneficial.

**Changing the culture**

One member of one of the participating organisations commented that: “This is the first
time that I have experienced communication, cooperation and shared experience re the
mapping of pathways across the Local Network.”

This same person further commented on the Pathways Program being another example
of: “the viability of shared commitment to programs that work for students outside of the
traditional framework and school borders”.

Outcomes for the Program included new ways of working within some of the schools
by involving non teaching staff and youth workers external to the school. Other schools
included the Principal and Assistant Principal in the pathways negotiation and this ensured
support from the leadership for the Program.
5. What Happened and What Works

PARTICIPANTS’ PERSPECTIVES

Various people gave their perspectives on what it was that made the Pathways Programs work. We talked with members of Local Networks - the representatives from the various organisations that came together at a local level (see Appendix 1); we talked with the personnel employed by the Networks - the Pathways Negotiators and Facilitators (see Appendix 3); we talked with the mentors identified within some networks; and we talked with the young people (see Appendix 2). Each had their views, and sometimes these views coincided and agreed; but there were also some differences.

5.1 NETWORKS – DISCUSSION

The twelve Programs were selected in part because there already existed a network of schools and agencies. Many had previously come together with the Full Service Schools Program, or through the provision of vocational education and training and work placement. Others had established networks because of their geographical isolation or simply because they realised that on their own they weren’t able to work as productively as they wanted. As mentioned previously, most of the Programs already had the capacity to form cooperative arrangements across sectors.

The commitment to the concept of pathway planning and the needs of young people determined the make up of the Local Networks to a large extent. Most Local Networks mentioned that at the initial meeting there were large numbers of organisations attending. In some Local Networks all organisations had stayed on board while in four Local Networks a number had dropped out after the initial meeting. Comments were made that some had dropped out because of the lack of money available and the time commitment involved.
Establishing a Shared Vision

Trust was seen as an issue in the building of the Local Networks. For the Networks to function effectively within a short time frame, seven Local Networks mentioned there has to be a high level of trust among the players. In addition to the already established Local Network, for many, was a feeling of trust between schools and agencies, that people knew each other, and what area they worked in, and there was a sense of moving forward together quite easily. It was said a number of times that the “good will” which existed between members was of great assistance. In other words, the Local Networks functioned at a formal as well as informal level. Some Local Networks mentioned that being able to work together cooperatively meant the re-establishment of “old relationships” developed prior to competitive tendering days.

However as the time frame of the Pathways Project was short, it was felt there was not enough time to build trusting relationships, in particular among new Local Network members. One Program commented that breaking down the competitive environment and creating a more collaborative approach was easier said than done, and that organisational barriers also got in the way of achieving what was expected by DEET. Past relationships where trust already existed, were seen as vital for the Local Networks to function effectively.

Additionally, four Local Networks reported difficulties in establishing a shared approach to their Programs because some agencies participating in the process felt their territory was threatened. This occurred between agencies as well as between schools and agencies.

Even though there was general agreement and “in principle” support for the developmental nature of the Project by eleven of the twelve Programs there were difficulties for some Local Networks in establishing a way to proceed. Even though this was anticipated by DEET and expected as a result of DEET’s guiding principles to: “a commitment to working collaboratively across education and training sectors” it still caused some concerns. Seven Local Networks noted they had experienced difficulties establishing a shared vision.

However, not all Local Networks found it difficult to establish a way of working cooperatively together. Three Local Networks commented that when determining their strategy they reported on the “healthy” discussions they had which helped them move on to establishing a “shared” way forward.

For some Local Networks there were philosophical debates. Some centred around the “education” approach as compared to the “youth services” approach which sometimes manifested in an emphasis on curriculum and program options as compared to the merits of “case management”. These issues were not resolved and ongoing discussion could facilitate the Programs’ developing different ways of approaching planning. The discussions
also opened up the early intervention approach as compared to the “quick fix” and the question or focus on sustainability within this.

However, time constraints were regularly cited as the reason for the concentration on “outcomes” rather than “process”. When Local Networks were asked about the establishment of a “shared vision” the general response was swift and firm - “but there was not time”. One Local Network member commented: “It is simply not cost effective to bring the Network together on a regular basis”, raising the question of this particular Local Network to work towards a more collaborative approach.

**Process Issues**

Local Networks also mentioned a number of “process” issues which affected them during this establishment stage:

- **Continuity**: Most of the Local Networks changed over time, in terms of membership. The Kirby Report’s (2000) reference to the “organic process of network formation” is perhaps relevant here. New organisations came on board as the Program progressed, however some Programs mentioned difficulties with this. In particular it was described as “frustrating” by four Local Networks when representatives from the different organisations changed from one meeting to the next. At one Local Network meeting decisions would be made and processes established, then at the next Local Network meeting, with the expectation of moving on from the last, often new representatives of the schools and agencies were present and “needed bringing up to speed”. This became time consuming.

- **Communication**: It was felt the schools’ and agencies’ representatives needed to take responsibility for keeping their particular representatives up to date, and that a different way of “working” was needed in this particular context. This would enable Local Network meetings to proceed more productively and efficiently.

- **Role Definition**: Some Local Networks addressed the need to work differently by developing formalised roles and responsibilities to assist in the circulation of information to all Local Network members. The formalising of roles and responsibilities in general also helped to share the workload throughout the Local Network and help new or changing Local Network members understand the process.

- **In Kind Support**: Eight Local Networks felt that there was too high an expectation and dependence upon “in kind” support, in particular provision of staff, office space, computers, administrative support and transport (especially in the rural centres).

- **Inclusiveness**: Despite the best efforts of many of the Local Networks it was noted by Local Network members that four Local Networks were not as “inclusive” as was expected or hoped for. Sometimes, some agencies or schools were left off the invitation list.
Often though, this was remedied when the “absence” was noted. However when new representatives did attend the Local Network meetings things were described as a bit “prickly” by one Local Network, as there were tensions as to why invitations had not been issued earlier. Some organisations were reluctant to become involved after not having been included at the beginning.

Within this, though, is the understanding that Local Networks are not static and will change and be built over time in response to local needs.

5.2 NETWORKS – WHAT WORKS

The Local Network members said that the important issues for success of the Program were:

(i) **That the Program should have a consistent and transparent structure:**

This structure should include:
- regular meetings involving (monthly) contact with Pathways Negotiators/Pathways Facilitators;
- clear roles and responsibilities for Local Network members;
- Local Network members reporting regularly to their respective organisations;
- members of the Local Network taking responsibility for introducing, profiling and updating the Pathways Program to their particular organisation;
- a smaller sub-committee set up to support the day-to-day issues for the Pathway Negotiator(s)/Facilitators;
- Local Network meetings as the forum for discussions, both practical and philosophical and that they need a culture and environment to support this;
- Local Networks being able to concentrate on “process and development” before “outcomes”, for a period of time at least;
- Programs being kept up to date about future funding for the statewide Pathways Project;
- issues of “territory” being worked through at a Local Network level, preferably; and
- flexibility to allow Local Networks the opportunity to determine their own way of working. This would be according to the needs of their young people and particular community. This may involve the establishment of new partnerships or working differently within the existing arrangements.

(ii) **That the Local Networks build relationships to ensure:**

- that a level of cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders and a commitment to the Local Network exists; and
- that time is given for the Local Network to establish a commitment and shared vision.
(iii) That professional development is organised for Local Networks including:
- clear guidelines from DEET about the Pathways Project;
- information and activities on changing the working culture, working collaboratively, and change management; and
- how to share information and map services across the Local Network area.

5.3 PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM PERSONNEL – DISCUSSION

The Pathways Project began in July/August, 2000. Personnel were appointed September/October/November and the Project finished Phase One at the end of March 2001. Most of the Programs have continued beyond Phase One and are building on the original Program in a variety of forms.

Time

There was general concern from nine Local Networks at the inadequacy of the six months time frame of the Project. The majority of the Local Networks commented that there was an enormous amount to be achieved in a very short space of time. The time frame limited the opportunities available for philosophical debates, for “processes” to be established and relationship building, as there was a need to concentrate more heavily on negotiating approximately 100 Pathway Plans.

There was no time to look at the big picture once we began, no time to reflect, to adjust, once started, we just had to keep on going.

However, two Local Networks mentioned that the pressure provided by the relatively short time line actually assisted them in “getting moving” and that it was advantageous.

Who to Employ as the Pathways Negotiator/Facilitator?

In five Programs there was the possibility of employing Pathways Negotiators previously known in the educational and welfare arena, in particular those who had worked with the Full Service Schools Program. If Pathways Negotiators were familiar with the territory (on a number of levels: skills, geographically, and experience with the community) they were clearly advantaged over those having to start afresh.

…we hit the ground running, not enough time to train someone new, build relationships and get the results.
Accessing the Young People

The timing of the Program in the school year was commonly described as being at “the wrong end of the year”. Seven Programs were concerned they were going to miss many of the Year 11 and 12 students who were leaving school as the Program just began, or soon after. As a result it was felt by the Programs that they had limited access to the very students they felt they were meant to be assisting.

The timing meant there had to be new ways of working developed to access the young people during this period. There was a need to rethink work practices as related to the Christmas “downtime”, traditionally experienced by schools. During this time there is often little or no contact between student and school. This is particularly so in the context of providing support, at a crucial transition point (end of Year 12) for their young people.

Several of the Pathways Negotiators gave young people a mobile phone contact number, sent Christmas cards, and encouraged young people to contact them. The contact was varied. If there had been a relationship developed over time with the young person then the young person was more likely to contact the Pathways Negotiator during this period. One Program was actually set up to negotiate Pathways Plans at this time (see Case Study 3). One worker commented that:

*Getting hold of the young person in the holidays was the easy part. Most young people sleep until 11am so I was able to connect before their day started!*  

One of the key factors in providing access for Pathways Negotiators to any school is support of the leadership. Although the Principal may have been on the Local Network and aware of the Program, it was vital for the Principal to then properly brief staff to provide links for the Pathways Negotiator or Facilitator to either access students directly or arrange for teachers to be Pathways Negotiators.

A number of the Programs mentioned difficulties in accessing the young people at TAFE. Programs mentioned a number of factors here:
- TAFE lacks a culture of guidance;
- there was no careers office or particular point of contact for Pathways Negotiators or Pathways Facilitators; and;
- young people were difficult to find/contact especially when they did not turn up for interviews.

Despite these difficulties young people were accessed at TAFE in all of the Programs, with varying numbers and degrees of success.

Young people were also accessed at ACE providers in 9 of the Programs. ACE was seen
as a more easily accessible sector, although not all Programs accessed ACE. The size of the institution was a factor in facilitating access.

Difficulty in contacting young people out of educational settings was experienced by the Programs in general. This involved finding the young people in the first place and then maintaining contact after that. The out of school contacts were regarded as time intensive for the Pathways Negotiators in terms of contacting and then working with the young people.

**Promoting the Program**

Programs developed different ways of promoting themselves to organisations and the community to raise awareness and assist in the access to young people. These included:

- publicly launching the Program
- orientation sessions for Local Network organisations
- visiting organisations/agencies/businesses
- conducting school assemblies to introduce the Program
- Pathways Negotiators and Pathways Facilitators visiting staff meetings
- letters to parents/newsletters
- articles in the local media.

**Ongoing Relationship with the Local Network**

The majority of Pathway Negotiators/Facilitators had contact with an Executive or Steering Committee of the Local Network. Very few of the Pathway Negotiators/Facilitators had ongoing contact with the full Local Network. Opportunities for Pathways Negotiators/Pathways Facilitators to provide information on gaps in services and on ground experience were often lost, as were opportunities for Local Networks to provide ongoing support, referral and management expertise.

### 5.4 PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM PERSONNEL – WHAT WORKS

1. **A structure that ensures:**
   - there is “one on one” contact with the young person;
   - there are the time and resources to support the Program;
   - Pathways Programs are ongoing, but that within this there may be critical times of support, for example after the first assessment and over the Christmas break for Year 12 students;
   - personnel in any of the organisations (schools, TAFE, ACE and other agencies) who are performing the role of Pathways Negotiator are not doing this task as an “add on”;
■ teachers, in particular, have access to and use email daily to expedite communication between Pathways Negotiators and young people;
■ “in kind” provisions by members of the Local Network be formalised, for example use of cars, computer equipment, desk space;
■ there is flexibility to allow the Pathway Negotiators to work out a program with the young person best suited to his or her needs and that of the local community, and that these approaches are culturally appropriate;
■ the emphasis with the young person be on “process” rather than “outcomes”;
■ there is time to remain supportive of the young person if and when he or she changes direction, and that there is not an expectation of a “linear pathway”;
■ a model of working with the young person is based on “ownership and empowering” principles, rather than being punitive and prescriptive;
■ relationships have time to develop;
■ families are encouraged to be involved;
■ confidentiality requirements are adhered to strictly;
■ there is an understanding that the young person’s needs can move, if appropriate, beyond study skills and careers information to issues around family, finance, drugs and alcohol and homelessness; and
■ an already established relationship between the young person and the Pathways Negotiator can be built on.

(ii) Professional development that is provided through:
■ an information session by DEET about the Pathways Project, with the provision of material to assist in the starting up process. This may include proformas, sample plans and confidentiality requirements;
■ a number of statewide professional development days that are organised early on in the Project, particularly to provide opportunities for Pathways Negotiators/Pathways Facilitators to share different approaches/ideas with other Pathways Negotiators/Pathways Facilitators; and
■ delivery in the area of Career “tools”, for example: Career Mate, the Archemeter, JIGG CAL, to assist in the provision of career options for the young people.

Skills to be developed include:
■ an understanding of the diversity of young people’s needs;
■ Pathways Negotiators feeling confident to work with the diversity of young people’s needs;
■ having knowledge of other services, so as to be able to refer young people to other youth services more efficiently, when appropriate;
having knowledge of other services, particularly in terms of programs and providers and therefore being able to offer more flexible pathways for the young person, for example from ACE to TAFE; and

being able to work cooperatively and collaboratively with all the service providers and agencies within, and if appropriate, across communities.

(iii) Selection of young people that is based on:

- young people, ideally self selecting, being involved after being given information about the Program;

- young people initially hesitant about being involved, being encouraged and being shown the benefits of involvement; and

- that when young people have been specifically chosen for the Program, they still have the right to choose not to participate. (Although this was possible in this particular phase of the Pathways Project, by 2003, all young people aged between 15 and 19 in government schools will be required to be involved in pathways planning through the MIPs initiative, see Appendix 5).

5.5 YOUNG PEOPLE – DISCUSSION

The young people interviewed were generally positive about being involved in the Pathways Program. They felt that they needed to build a relationship with the Pathways Negotiator. This helped them to feel comfortable to be able to set goals, talk about issues other than their pathway and to understand what the process was about. The young people felt that the relationship began to develop after about four meetings with their Pathways Negotiator.

A number of the young people spoke about having the “what” that they want to do, but needing help with the “how”. They felt it was important that they had a role in the process and that they understood the process. This allowed them to have some control and influence over the process. An important part of their feeling that they had a role was connected with the Pathways Negotiator relying on the young people to find out information, and through completing small action oriented goals throughout the process.

Young people were only involved at the “delivery” end of the Program. While the Pathways Negotiators/Facilitators were working from the principles of empowerment at the individual level, there was no involvement of the young people in partnerships at the Local Network level. The future development of collaborative cultures should include young people as partners in the Programs and Local Networks (see Youth Action Plan Taskforce (2001) - Recommendation 5, p.43).
5.6 YOUNG PEOPLE – WHAT WORKS

(i) The development of a structure that:

- enables young people to talk “one to one” with an interested adult;
- ensures Pathway Plans are action based and outcome oriented;
- ensures Pathways Plans have short and long term goals, with time restrictions structured in, so the young person can see that he or she is achieving “smaller” goals along the way (the need to see action);
- allows negotiation, if the Pathway Negotiators are teachers, as to which teacher the young person prefers to work with;
- allows negotiation on when and where to meet with the Pathways Negotiator (some students were anxious about missing some classes);
- is flexible so that young people can have a process based upon their needs as they change;
- shows a willingness exists on behalf of the Pathways Negotiators to explore new or different options
- allows time to develop a relationship with the Pathways Negotiator;
- allows the opportunity for quality (uninterrupted) time with an adult;
- has Pathways Negotiators who are not attached to the school. Young people mentioned that it was often easier to connect and feel comfortable if the Pathways Negotiator was outside the school; and
- develops relationships with teachers. If a teacher is a Pathways Negotiator, young people stated that this could change - and improve - some of their perceptions about the role of teachers.

(ii) Skills that young people can develop include:

- learning how to source “career” information, after being assisted initially by the Pathway Negotiators. This could include the use of career software tools to assist in exploring or confirming career directions and/or industry interest;
- developing a better understanding of the need to tailor their education, and in some cases renewing their commitment to continuing their education and training;
- how to clarify options, or broaden opportunities;
- using knowledge they have gained from the Pathways process to set themselves up with a more appropriate and useful Year 10 work experience placement, which can then lead to a more informed subject selection for VCE;
- greater confidence in terms of dealing with adults (often teachers) but also with Centrelink, TAFE information services and other service providers;
- greater confidence and knowledge around accessing other services, for example health, or counselling;
clearer goals and plans as a result of the Program; and 
having a process that they can themselves are confident with, to assist at a later date 
when/if their goals and plans change.

(iii) **Selection:**

- young people would like to be given the information and asked if they want to 
  participate. (Although this was possible in this particular phase of the Pathways Project, 
  by 2003, all young people aged 15 - 19 in government schools will be required to be 
  involved in pathways planning through the MIPs initiative. See Appendix 5.) ; and 
- young people found it beneficial to have a choice as to who would be their Pathways 
  Negotiator.

### 5.7 MENTORS – DISCUSSION

Only one of the Programs (Mildura) had all of their pathways negotiation done by mentors 
from businesses, educational institutions, agencies and the community. The mentors in 
Mildura had a strong sense of community responsibility. For them, mentoring was one 
way to act on this. They felt that they had life skills that they could share with a young 
person to try to make a difference in that young person’s life. In some cases they saw 
themselves as providing a “reality check” for the young people in regard to their expectations 
about work and the future.

Mentors experienced some difficulties with the Program. Some of the mentors felt that 
the gap between the young people and themselves was too large and that they were not 
able to connect with the young people. They felt that some of the young people had too 
many other issues to deal with and were not at a point of thinking about their pathways. 
The mentors did not feel that they had the skills to deal with these particular young people 
and therefore felt that they had not achieved a successful outcome from the mentoring 
process.

The mentors also felt that there were differing expectations from the young people. Some young people were happy to build a relationship with the mentor and talk about the 
future while other young people felt that the mentor should be providing them with a concrete 
outcome, for example, a job.

### 5.8 MENTORS – WHAT WORKS

(i) **The development of a structure:**

- that provides for “one on one” contact with a significant adult; 
- where mentors have regular contact and support from the Pathways Facilitator;
- in which mentors have an opportunity to meet with other mentors regularly;
- that screens all mentors and requires police checks;
- where procedures exist for either the young person or the mentor to withdraw or change arrangements if the “match” seems unworkable or inappropriate;
- that gives ongoing support for mentors (for example, newsletter or gatherings) once the Program begins;
- where the Program provides a safe, public place for participants to meet, for example in school or in an agency in working hours;
- that has enough time built into program development, as matching participants is labour intensive;
- that is flexible and acknowledges that a “one size fits all” approach does not work; and
- that provides enough time in the Program for relationships to develop between mentor and participant. Young people mentioned around four meetings for them to begin to feel comfortable.

(ii) Professional development:
- all mentors need to attend training for their role.

Skills to be developed include:
- understanding confidentiality requirements;
- understanding young people’s needs today;
- current knowledge of the education and training systems;
- how to establish agreed upon objectives with the participant;
- understanding the time commitment involved; and
- having realistic expectations for the participants and for themselves. This may involve different definitions of success for both the mentor and the participant.

(iii) Selection:
- matching between mentor and participant to be based upon vocational orientation, gender and ethnicity; and the participants have to be involved in the process, understand the role of the mentor, and are interested in being matched with a mentor.
6. Case Studies

The Case Studies are written from a range of voices and perspectives.

**CASE STUDY 1**

The first two case studies highlight, for young people and Pathway Negotiators, specific issues related to their rural settings.

Bart, a Year 10 student, wanted to know about the possibility of his entering an apprenticeship. His family contacted the reception desk at the Local TAFE Institute. TAFE referred the family to the Pathways Negotiator.

After contact was made, discussion with Bart revealed that he was having difficulty settling in to his new secondary school. He is a quiet lad with few friends. He was more at ease with adults than with young people. His family had recently moved from a dairy farm in the Western District and had bought a beef/sheep property in the East Gippsland high plains. Their property in the west had not been sold and they were under severe financial strain. The two boys still at home were being driven to another town one hour away by their father. They then had to get a lift to take them the extra distance (another half hour) to school. The family was paying for this also. The boys were not eligible to travel on the school bus because there was a closer secondary college, but the parents had chosen not to send them to this one. This travelling was placing additional stress on the family. It was also depriving Bart of engaging in the family farm as much as he would like to. Farming is his first love.

The family decided that their financial situation at present would not allow them to take him on as a trainee, at least not until the other property was sold. The Pathways Negotiator contacted the Local VET cluster coordinator. Information about the secondary school’s VET agriculture course was passed on to the parents and they were given a contact at the school with whom they could talk. Unfortunately Bart was not able to slot into this, as classes were filled. Many other options were presented: Certificate of Work
Education at TAFE, Certificate of General Education for Adults offered at three different locations, Distance Education, or transfer to the closer school.

Bart and his parents decided that the Distance Education option was going to be the best one. Bart has commenced studies with the Distance Education Centre, Victoria, and he and his family are happy with progress thus far.

CASE STUDY 2

Due to the vastness of the East Gippsland region, the Pathways Negotiator has often had to facilitate meetings with young people out of school by doing community visits. The young man, Mick, did not have a telephone and all communications had been made through his grandfather who lived in the same remote town.

Mick was frank and open about his past few months at school. He had not enjoyed school and found relationships with teachers difficult to forge. He wore an earring and his hair was bleached. However he enjoyed classes that involved his skills of design and drawing. His mother explained that Mick would soon be leaving her to live with his father in the western suburbs of Melbourne. Mick was unhappy, but his mother had had enough and said the change was non-negotiable. Mick had no idea what to do when he got to Melbourne; one thing he was sure of though - he did not want to go to school. He felt he could cope with a TAFE course, but really he had no clear career ambitions.

The Pathways Negotiator presented the idea of doing a career search activity to help Mick determine his interests and strengths. The Career Voyage was completed and horticulture and design pretty much topped the list.

Mick has shifted to Melbourne and started a carpentry course at Victoria University TAFE. This is a six months pre apprenticeship course. He travels on two different trains to get to the campus. At the end of it he will be able to commence the Horticulture course that he missed out on. The core competencies are the same so he will receive recognition for these if he enrolls in Horticulture. He is isolated at present and needs transition support. The Pathways Negotiator, at his mother's request, has contacted a youth worker in Melbourne, who will outreach to Mick directly and offer him assistance for the transition to Melbourne life. His mother has already put in for “train assistance” from Student Services at the Victoria University TAFE at the campus where he is studying.
CASE STUDY 3

*Illustrates the need to being available over the Christmas break for planning and advice.*

Nick was a referral through his parent. She was concerned about her son and his lack of knowledge regarding his choices for courses and Universities. He had an ENTER score of 44 and wanted to do either teaching or Environmental Studies. He had lodged his preferences with most of the ENTER scores for the courses clearly sitting above 60.

The Pathways Negotiator explained: “On the first meeting I did a motivational talk on getting what he wanted out of life and we did a wish list and a reality list. We met again and compared the two lists and what shape his path would take to achieve his ideal future.

He decided to change his preferences with a more realistic view on what he might be offered. We did this with VTAC. We also then looked at other states in Australia that offered courses that he was prepared to do, and put in a late submission to South Australia. We were able to use the Internet in my office as he did not have this service at home.

We devised a plan A and plan B - A being offered a place at University, either in Victoria or South Australia. B was to approach his part time employer at the local supermarket for a Traineeship and continue a bridging course part time.

First round offers for Victoria came and went and we focused on being calm and motivating Nick with all the positives that can and do happen in our lives. Ten days after the Victorian offers, he was offered a place in South Australia - Diploma of Environmental Management - which he accepted. The next step was to look at accommodation and starting dates.

Nick has started his course, is in a student village, and is enjoying meeting new people. I have received a letter from him detailing his course and his experiences since being in South Australia for nearly one month. He has also spoken to the University about continuing on to a Degree on the completion of his two year Diploma.

Nick believes that had he not been a part of the Pathways Program he would be in his home town now, very depressed as he would not have received an offer, and would not be experiencing the new life and achieving the goals he is now”.
CASE STUDY 4

Illustrates a range of activities that are part of developing a Pathways Plan.

Daniel was unsure of his future direction and commitment to courses at secondary school. After meeting with the Pathways Negotiator he accessed OZJAC (an online Careers Program) and “Career Easy” (a computer directed career search) and came up with a short list of desirable options. A visit to Centrelink and Employment National inspired him to investigate trade and sporting courses at TAFE. A visit to the local TAFE Institute with his Pathways Negotiator helped him to firm up a commitment to this kind of training. The student then searched for a suitable work experience location for Year 10 and together with the Pathways Negotiator visited a local electrical business and organised the placement. The work experience placement was confirmed to commence in March and the student has determined to attend the TAFE Open Day later in the year. He is still at school and looking forward to his work experience. Year Level Coordinators have suggested that if the placement is successful an extension, on a day per week basis, may be an option if commitment to schoolwork and passing Year 10 is maintained. TAFE would then be an option.

CASE STUDY 5

Illustrates the need for the young person to be empowered to be able to make the decision that she needs to make.

Tessa came to ACE mid year, transferring from a secondary school in another town where she had started a Year 12 program. Only English and Psychology was available at ACE, but this program fitted well with her need to work nearly full time (voluntarily) in her father’s retail business because he was ill.

Tessa eventually settled well into her studies and was supported through hassles with Centrelink payments. Early on she expressed a strong desire to go to University to study Psychology.

We had quite a lot of discussions about possible options and pathways. After the November exams were completed we set out a plan of visits and interviews with various providers - TAFE (Community Welfare), TAFE (Youth Work/Liberal Arts) and also City TAFE (Diploma of Further Education).

The City TAFE was Tessa’s preference since she had decided that she really must “get away” and that other members of her family would need to take responsibility for the shop. City TAFE would also lead directly to her goal of University.
The coordinator was not able to meet us in Melbourne so we arranged a phone interview (on a hands free phone in the office).

Tessa was quite overwhelmed when she was told that she had a place. She turned eighteen a few days later. She has arranged accommodation in Melbourne with friends and is enjoying her studies (which involve some more VCE).

**CASE STUDY 6**

*Illustrates the need for young people to actively want to be part of the Pathways Program.*

Damien was a Year 10 student at the local secondary school. He was struggling with his school work and was referred to the Pathways Program by his teacher. He wasn’t sure what it would actually involve, but was told by his parents and teacher to go along. Damien’s mother was interested in the process. She wanted assurance about the role of the mentors and the arrangements made with her son.

Damien’s mother spoke with the mentor and agreed that a meeting could happen. Damien attended the first meeting with the mentor and discussed what “things” interested him. A second meeting was set up but Damien forgot about the arrangement and turned up 40 minutes late. The mentor severely reprimanded him for this “inconsiderate and irresponsible” behaviour. Damien fled.

Damien’s family was contacted by the mentor and informed of the situation. Damien’s stepfather apologised on behalf of Damien and said that there would not be a re-occurrence, and that he would ensure Damien would be at the next meeting on time. He did this and Damien met with the mentor a second time. However he failed to attend the third and any subsequent meetings.

The mentor may be willing to be involved again. He felt that the young people involved did not really understand what mentoring was about and were not committed to making it work. The mentor wanted the experience to be a “success” but rates this effort as 2/10 only.
CASE STUDY 7

Illustrates the “reality check” that mentors with industry experience can provide.

Justine was a Year 10 student at the local secondary school who was planning on leaving school before she completed Year 10. She felt there were plenty of job opportunities out there for her, and she wasn’t really enjoying school. She hoped to get a job in a restaurant, cooking.

Her teacher suggested she may like to think about being part of the Pathways Program and having a mentor. She didn’t know what this meant and was a bit nervous about it, but liked the idea of talking with someone about what she wanted to do.

She was matched with a caterer who worked in the local area. They met once and agreed that there was much to talk about for following meetings. Justine liked the fact that her mentor didn’t treat her like a kid and that she was interested in what she said and felt.

Justine met with her mentor weekly for 4 weeks. According to Justine it was after this point that she really felt comfortable and confident to talk with her, especially about more personal things.

At their next meeting Justine talked with the mentor about course requirements for TAFE. The mentor suggested she find these out before the next meeting. Justine had some help from the mentor to do this, but felt she was really finding out her own information, not simply being handed everything by the mentor.

Throughout the sessions Justine realised that if she wanted to be a chef she would have to at least complete Year 10, if not Year 11. Justine said it really helped talking to her mentor, that she understood things a bit more, in other words she had a “reality check” with someone directly working in the industry. According to Justine: “It was good talking with someone who has been there and knows”.

Even though the Program has finished Justine and her mentor still have contact, just a chat on the phone. She has announced she will be staying on at school.
7. Conclusion

The majority of the twelve Programs clearly met the original broad Aims and Operational Principles of the Pathways Project (see Introduction). The young people, in general, were assisted by an adult in determining their Pathway Plans. Obstacles were removed either for the young people or as a result of the young person’s new knowledge and skill development. The emphasis was on empowerment through skill development and the broadening of options. Links were made with other agencies, relationships between sectors were enhanced and referrals were made when necessary. A community response was demonstrated in supporting these young people. For the on-the-ground part of the Pathways Project there were considerable achievements.

It is however, when looking to the “bigger picture” that the broader goals have not been achieved as effectively. To requote Kirby, “Of primary importance in ensuring the success of such cross sectoral models is the creation of a shared vision among the network partners and the ability to change prevailing cultural and service models to accommodate new modes of planning and delivery” (2000, p. 134). Achieving this “cultural” change to “develop new modes of planning and delivery” (Kirby, 2000, p. 134) is certainly no small task and certainly not one to be achieved in a short period of time. The lack of time and the need to achieve “outcomes” rather than concentrate on “process” was regularly cited as a difficulty by many of the Programs. However some Programs, with their particular model of working with their Local Networks, have been more effective at making inroads to achieving this goal than others. This is reflected by 9 of the Programs continuing with their Local Networks after the Pathways Project concluded.

While the principles of empowerment and the active involvement of young people were developed and delivered at the Program level, there was no acknowledgment of the role of young people at the Local Network level. The development of partnerships with young people and the Local Network could have been facilitated by young people being part of the Local Network.

As has been noted, a number of the Local Networks, after developing a structure for
the Program, left the implementation of the Program to the Pathway Negotiators/Facilitators. Pathways Negotiators/Facilitators had varying contact with their Local Networks once they were employed. Contact was often restricted to meetings with a steering group from the Local Network. If this was the case there was little chance of work cultures being challenged or of coming together to work differently. This then makes the first Principle for the Operation of the Pathways Program (see Introduction), “A commitment to working collaboratively across education and training sectors and with employers and the community”, extremely difficult to achieve by the Local Networks as a whole. It must be noted that although this was generally the case, a minority of Programs using direct negotiation and coordinator facilitation were successful in this regard.

Working collaboratively was achieved by the network facilitation model, which ensured that members of the Local Network were actively involved in the process of developing the Pathways Plans with the young people. In this example there is a strong indication that the understandings, learnings and skills developed by the Local Network members will in general assist in the longevity (sustainability) of the Principles of the Project.

The Pathways Project is one step in the development of a collaborative culture which will take time and resources for development to continue. With the continued support of DEET through the development of the Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) there is the potential to build on the learnings from Phase One of the Pathways Project.

These learning have been incorporated into the processes adopted for Phase Two of the Pathways Project. In this phase, the emphasis in the first stage over the first few weeks is the formation of the Local Network. After that each Network will commence the actual pathways planning process with the 15 to 19 year olds who are to be involved.
8. Suggested Strategies

The suggested strategies for implementing pathways planning are based on findings from the evaluation of the Pathways Project and relate to four areas of development for Local Networks, Programs and personnel, and mentors.

The four areas are:

- **structure**
- **developing a collaborative culture**
- **professional development**
- **selection of young people**.

1. Structure

Local Networks should ensure that the structure develops processes:

- for regular meetings involving (monthly if possible) contact with Pathway Negotiators/Facilitators;
- for the development of clear roles and responsibilities for Local Network members;
- for the setting up of a smaller sub-committee supporting the day-to-day issues for the Pathways Negotiator(s)/Facilitator(s);
- for discussions, both practical and philosophical;
- that enable Local Network members to report regularly to their respective organisations; and
- that enable members of the Local Network to take responsibility for introducing, profiling and updating the Pathways Program to their particular organisations.

Programs and personnel should ensure that the structure allows:

- one on one contact with the young person;
- time and resources to support the Program;
- support to be provided at critical times for the young people, for example: after assessment times during the year, and after Year 12 results at the end of the year;
that personnel in any of the organisations (schools, TAFE, ACE and other agencies) who are performing the role of Pathways Negotiator are not doing this task as an “add on”;

flexibility to suit the needs of the local community, including Programs that are culturally appropriate;

for Pathways Plans to be action based and outcome oriented;

for Pathways Plans that have short and long term goals;

for the emphasis with the young person to be on “process” rather than “outcomes”;

for the time that is needed to remain supportive of the young person;

for negotiation, if the Pathway Negotiators are teachers, as to which teacher the young person prefers to work with; and

for negotiation on when and where the young person will meet with the Pathways Negotiator.

**Mentoring programs should have a structure:**

- that provides for one on one contact with a significant adult;
- that provides regular and ongoing contact and support from the Pathways Facilitator for the mentor;
- that screens mentors and obtains police checks;
- that allows for either the young person or the mentor to withdraw or change arrangements;
- that provides a safe, public place for participants to meet;
- that allows time to match participants according to need and interest;
- that allows flexibility and acknowledges that a one size fits all approach does not work; and
- that allows enough time in the Program for relationships to develop between mentor and participant. Young people mentioned around four meetings are needed to begin to feel comfortable with the mentor and the process.

### 2. Developing a Collaborative Culture

**To develop a collaborative culture, Local Networks need to ensure:**

- that a level of cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders and a commitment to the Local Network exists;
- that time is given to establish a commitment and shared vision;
- that they concentrate on “process and development” before “outcomes”, for a period of time at least;
- that young people are included as partners in the process;
that issues of “territory” are worked through at a Local Network level, preferably; and
that there is the flexibility to respond to the local needs of the community.

**To develop a collaborative culture, Programs and personnel need to ensure:**
- that the model of working with the young person be based on “ownership and
  empowering” principles;
- that the Program allows for and encourages the involvement of families;
- that confidentiality requirements are adhered to strictly;
- that Pathway Negotiators/Facilitators have knowledge and information about appropriate
  services for referral; and
- that Pathway Negotiators/Facilitators have involvement and contact with the Local
  Network on a regular basis.

### 3. Professional Development

**Professional development for Local Networks needs to be provided on:**
- changing the working culture, working collaboratively and change management; and
- how to share information and map services across the Local Network area.

**Professional development for Programs and personnel needs to be provided on:**
- material to assist in the starting up process - this may include proformas, sample plans
  and confidentiality requirements;
- Career “tools”;
- basic counselling skills; and
- knowledge of other services, particularly in terms of programs and providers, to be
  able to refer the young person to when appropriate.

Professional development should be provided by DEET for Local Networks and Programs
through:
- a number of Statewide professional development days organised early in the Project.

Professional development should be provided by Local Networks and Programs for
Pathways personnel through:
- regular meetings; and
- ongoing support and materials.

**Professional development needs to be provided for mentors on:**
- understanding confidentiality requirements;
- understanding of young people’s needs today;
- current knowledge of the education and training systems;
- how to establish agreed upon objectives with the participant;
understanding the time commitment involved; and
having realistic expectations for the participants and themselves.

Professional development should be provided by Programs for mentors through:
- training sessions; and
- ongoing support and materials.

4. Selection of Young People

The selection of young people by Local Networks should ensure:
- that as many educational institutions and agencies as possible be involved in the delivering of pathways planning to ensure that members of the Local Network have a stake in the process.

The selection of young people by Programs and personnel should ensure:
- that the Program be promoted and fully explained to the young people so that they are clear about the aims and advantages of the Program;
- that young people initially hesitant about being involved, are encouraged and are shown the benefits of involvement; and
- that young people have some choice in the allocation of their Pathways Negotiator.

The selection of young people for mentors should ensure:
- that matching between mentor and participant be based upon vocational orientation, gender and ethnicity.
9. Appendices

Appendices 1 - 3 are the questions used for interviews and focus groups with members of Local Networks, young people and Pathways Negotiators.

APPENDIX 1:
QUESTIONS FOR LOCAL NETWORKS

1. Briefly describe the setting up process.
   - What steps did you take in this process?
   - How did the Local Network members become involved?
   - Did someone/agency initiate the process?
   - How is the workload distributed?

2. What barriers/difficulties did you encounter in the setting up process?

3. What facilitated/helped the setting up process?

4. Are there any ongoing difficulties being experienced by the Local Networks?
   - What processes are in place to work through these difficulties?

5. Can you describe/define your local networks model for the pathways project?

6. Any other issues?
APPENDIX 2:
QUESTIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

General details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>ATSI</th>
<th>NESB</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In/Out school</td>
<td>or combination</td>
<td>TAFE/School WP/School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where if out school?</td>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>ACE</td>
<td>Work placement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year left school?

In home/Out home

Rural | Regional | Metropolitan

Plan | In process | Finished

A Selection

Why were you selected?

How were you selected? self selected

referred

B Ownership of the process - Consultation versus Imposition

What has been the process for drawing up the plans?

eg interviews, how many?

what have you been asked?

Other than answering questions what has been your role in the process?

Do you find the possibilities for your plan?

Who Does the Investigation for the plans?

Does the Pathways Negotiator do this?

Do you feel that you have had a part and control of the process?

C Content

What is important for you to have in your plan? (Have you been asked this or told what a plan is?)

Find whether plan is holistic (eg accommodation etc) or focused only on pathways.
D Outcomes

What do you want to get out of the process?

What have you got out of the process?

Are you satisfied with the process and the plan?

Have you had a role in creating the plan? (Empowerment)

E Understanding of the process

Will you be able to use the planning process to change your plan in the future?

Can you plan by yourself after this process?

What is your understanding of the process?

(Do they just know to go to TAFE at a certain time for an appointment or do they understand the bigger picture of where the TAFE course fits into their pathway?)

What will you do with your Pathways Plan?
APPENDIX 3
QUESTIONS FOR PATHWAYS NEGOTIATORS

The Establishment Phase

1. Did you have all the required information/skills before you began in your position?
   – What helped this process?
   – What else would have been helpful?

Pathways Negotiator Relationship with Local Network

2. Do you have regular contact with the Local Network?
3. Do you feel supported by the Local Network?
4. Can you influence/change your own role if necessary?
5. Would you describe the way you are working with the Local Network as innovative, if so why?
6. If there were issues about territory (for example JPP), how were these resolved?
7. Is the Program sustainable, what outcomes have been achieved?

Pathways Negotiator Relationship with the Young Person

8. How have you found the young people? ie referrals, your own efforts?
9. How do you begin the process with the young person, how have you kept them engaged? That is what model have you used?
10. How often do you plan on seeing them? Where? How long?
11. How did you engage the young person over the holiday period?
12. Do you expect the young person to play a role or are the decisions made for the young person?

Facilitators and Barriers

13. As the Pathway Negotiator what supports the process of establishing the pathway plans/relationship with young person?
14. As the Pathway Negotiator what gets in the way of doing the pathway plans ie confidentiality, issues etc? Why?
APPENDIX 4
OVERVIEW OF PATHWAYS PROGRAMS

1. Ballarat – Auspiced by University of Ballarat: based at TAFE

Structure
Pathways Negotiators: developed Pathways Plans

Financial
Funding to the Pathways Negotiators.

2. Castlemaine/Maryborough – Auspiced by and school based

Structure
Pathways Negotiator for Maryborough negotiated approx 50 Plans.
Pathways Negotiators for Castlemaine negotiated approx 50 Plans (3 people).

Financial
Funding to the Pathways Negotiators.

3. Dandenong/Casey – Auspiced by and based at the Area Consultative Committee (ACC)

Structure
Pathways Manager: developed standard procedures and acted as liaison person to all the Pathways Negotiators.
Pathways support persons: in schools/TAFE/ACE. Utilised careers people in schools and TAFE.

Financial
Funding to Pathways Manager for the development of standard procedures and liaison between Programs. Provision of funding for activities necessary to assist young people with their pathways.

4. East Gippsland – Auspiced by and based at TAFE

Structure
Pathways Negotiator negotiated approximately 100 Plans over East Gippsland.

Financial
All finances to Pathways Negotiator.
5. Frankston/Peninsula – Auspiced by and based at 2 schools

Structure

Pathways Negotiators: each one based at one of the 2 schools involved.

Each Pathways Negotiator negotiated approximately 50 Plans.

Worked with the Year 10 classes at the schools.

Financial

All funding to the Pathway Negotiators.

6. Greater Geelong – Auspiced by Local Government

Structure

Developed a research project about the local area.

Employed researcher to interview young people and produce a report.

Financial

Funding for research and writing of report.

7. Hume – Auspiced by and based at TAFE

Structure

Pathways Negotiators employed developing Pathways Plans.

Financial

Funding to Pathways Negotiators.

8. Latrobe Valley – Auspiced by and based at Local Government

Structure

Pathways Facilitator facilitated collaboration, conducted training and developed needs analysis for identification of young people.

Pathways Negotiators in schools, TAFE, ACE and agencies negotiated Plans.

Training provided by the Pathways Facilitator to all Pathways Negotiators.

Financial

Funding to the Pathways Facilitator.
9. **Mildura – Auspiced by and based at Group Training Company**

**Structure**
Pathways Coordinator provided training for mentors and organised contacts.

Mentors developed the Pathways Plans.

Started with Career Mate (computer program) to be able to link young people to appropriate mentor.

**Financial**
Funding to coordinator.

10. **Moreland – Auspiced by and based at Local Government**

**Structure**
Coordinator undertook project development.

Pathways Negotiator negotiated Plans.

**Financial**
All funding to Coordinator and Pathways Negotiators.

11. **Wangaratta/Delatite – Auspiced by and based at ACE**

**Structure**
Coordination role and development of tool kit for Pathways Negotiators done by the auspicing body.

Local Network members including: schools/providers/TAFE/ACE/agencies completed Pathways Plans. Decisions were made at an individual level within broad Program guidelines.

**Financial**
Brokerage model.

Small amount to auspicing body for coordination.

$300 approx. attached to each young person for Pathways Negotiators in schools, TAFE, ACE, JPET and other organisations.

12. **Yarra Ranges – Auspiced by and based at TAFE**

**Structure**
Pathways Project Coordinator.

Pathways Negotiators drawn from schools, TAFE and agencies.

**Financial**
Funding to Pathways Coordinator.
The Managed Individual Pathways Initiative (MIPs)

The MIPs Initiative aims to support all 15 to 19 year olds in secondary schools, TAFE and ACE in Victoria to receive assistance to enable them to establish Pathway Plans.

This initiative is in direct response to the Kirby Report (2000), in particular Recommendation 16 of the Final Report. At briefing sessions held across Victoria for stakeholders, it was stated that the provision of pathways guidance/case management by the providers of programs for school age youth would primarily be through Managed Individual Pathways.

The Initiative aims to include:

- one adult having primary responsibility for working with a young person to assist him or her in negotiating a pathway to continued education, training and employment and to follow him/her through his/her pathway;
- choosing a “tool” to assist in this process, for example a mentoring program;
- although the program is designed for all students, Year 10 and above, the initial emphasis is on those at risk of not continuing with education or training or ongoing employment; and
- the provision of appropriate programs to effectively meet the needs of young people identified through their Pathways Plans. This could include some resources going to:
  - VET in schools programs;
  - improved tracking of young people; and
  - the employment of skilled people/agencies to come in to the school to implement programs as identified.

Program Outcomes:

The following are the key expected outcomes for the Managed Individual Pathways Initiative:

- increased participation and successful completion of post compulsory education and training programs;
- improved employment outcomes and other education outcomes for young people;
- greater cross sectoral integration of programs and provision of support for young people;
- improved tracking of young people as they leave school; and
- improved participation and outcomes for groups of young people who currently have poor education and employment outcomes.

10. References

DEET (2000) *The Pathways Project*

DEET (2001) *Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs)*

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Hargreaves, A (1997) “Going Deeper and Wider in the Quest for Success” in *Rethinking Educational Change with Heart and Mind*, ASCD Yearbook, USA.


