

# YouthNow BizE Centre Evaluation 2014



## Executive Summary

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## **Acknowledgements**

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## Executive Summary

*'...I have learnt new computer skills, gained experience in administration tasks and communication skills. also I have gained new friends'* (BizE Centre trainee, exit survey 2014).

### Project Purpose

The YouthNow **BizE Centre** provides early school leavers and disengaged youth with a workplace model integrating career development, employability skills training and real work. The model allows rolling intake of youth into a work environment where employability skills are given context, peer supporters and work mentors give guidance, flexible learning approaches satisfy the needs of individuals and where pre-accredited courses are seamlessly commenced and completed as on the job training. At the BizE Centre, youth are supported to develop their identity and social capitals through working within boundaries of normal employment conditions, whilst being guided through career options, investigating industry opportunities and moving on to certificate courses and/or employment.

### Rationale

Brimbank is a western suburbs region of Melbourne characterised by a high multi cultural youth population many of whom experience multiple barriers to successful life outcomes. Compared to the rest of the state Brimbank experiences significant levels of school disengagement, high youth unemployment (15%) and socio economic disadvantage. As a member of the Brimbank Youth Sector Leaders Group (BYSLG), which seeks to galvanise a cross-sectoral approach to decrease youth disadvantage in the area, particularly in educational attainment and employment outcomes, YouthNow seeks to develop a sustainable training initiative that complements the strategic intent of the BYSLG and leads to education and employment outcomes for young people.

### Summary of Key Findings

The YouthNow BizE Centre program is designed on good practice principles, incorporating key strategies identified in the literature:

- It has been created through a strong and well-planned business model based on effective partnerships and is locally designed and targeted to reflect the requirements of the community.
- The use of the resources of YouthNow and its educational and industry partnerships enables the program to engage its target client group of young people who face barriers to employment.
- Embedding it within the broader YouthNow business ensures that it retains accountability and contributes to the organisation's growth and sustainability.

- Most importantly, the BizE Centre contributes to achieving successful transitions and pathways for the trainees, fulfilling its mission 'To empower young people to have self worth and encourage the will to learn, plan, and improve through the acquisition of relevant tools, knowledge, and skills'.<sup>1</sup>.
- It is an example of a successful community partnership - that is, one that is long term, evolves over time and enables YouthNow to build the necessary collaboration and resources capability.

## Outcomes

*Outcome expected:* Participation increased from 9 (2012) to 15 trainees at any one time.

*Result:* 10 trainees participated. The delay in facility upgrade limited the number of trainees in the early part of the year, but numbers were increased once the BizE Centre was available.

*Outcome expected:* Increased completion: 90% of trainees complete the training.

*Result:* 100% completion.

*Outcome expected:* Increased employability skills.

*Result:* initial employability skills assessment completed.

*Outcome expected:* Education, training or employment destination for each trainee.

*Result:* Four trainees have enrolled in Accredited courses next year. Two of these also have part-time employment. Another trainee is undertaking a personal development program with a private RTO. Three trainees have returned to the BizE Centre for next level of training. The ninth trainee is planning to return to study but has not made a decision about his course yet.

*Outcome expected:* Model of youth reengagement documented and evaluated as successful.

*Result:* Evidenced by this report, with specific features of the model described.

*Outcome expected:* Model of BizE Centre as social enterprise explored.

*Result:* A successful application has been made by YouthNow to be part of the Social Traders, The Crunch in 2014. The Crunch is Social Traders' highly successful initiative for early stage social enterprises aiming to receive investment and start trading within 12 months.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.youthnow.org.au](http://www.youthnow.org.au)