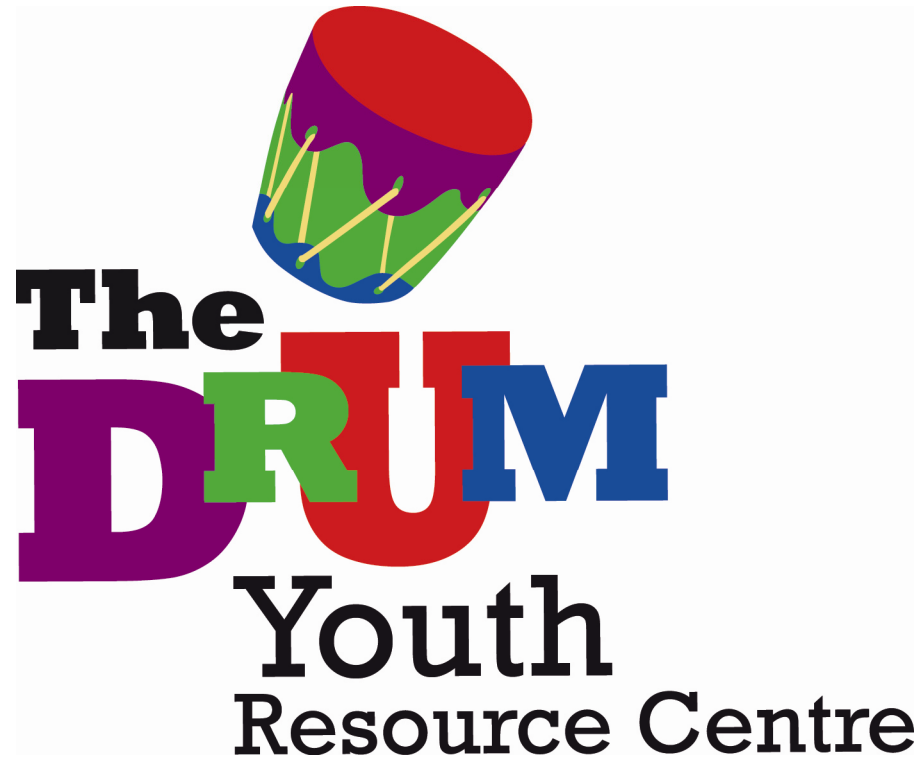


UnitingCare Burnside South West Region Youth Services



Topics Covered

- **The Drum Youth Resource Centre, who are we and what do we do**
- **Domestic Violence, Young people and Homelessness**
- **Strategies to address Domestic Violence**
- **Question Time**

What is The Drum?

- The Drum is a Specialist Homelessness Service funded to work with young people 12-24 who are Homeless, experiencing AOD issues and /or at risk.
- The Drum is a case management and brokerage program covering the Macarthur area and has been supporting young people in Macarthur for the past 21 years.
- The Drum team – 1 Coordinator, 1 Team Leader and 4 Caseworkers.

The Drum Youth Resource Centre

- Provides a safe place for young people in the Macarthur area to get assistance and support.

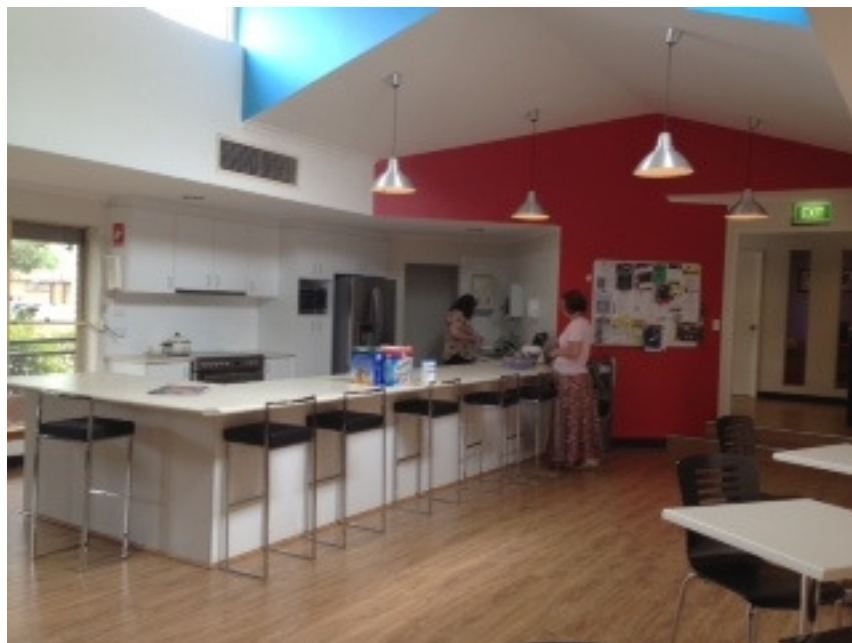


What does The Drum do?

Keywords

Crisis support, Accommodation,
Brokerage & Casework





Crisis Support

- We provide a safe space with supportive workers on hand
- Computer lab with internet access
- Meals and Food
- Shower and toilet facilities
- Assessment & Referral (A&R) appointments is where the following assistance may be provided:-
 - Storage (short-term)
 - Information and Referrals for accommodation
 - Advocacy with HNSW and other services
 - Transport
 - Laundry, clothing, medication and mail collection

Accommodation

- Support with whatever accommodation options the young person feels is best for them, taking in account age & circumstance. All options are explored from crisis to independent living.
- Assistance with gaining and maintaining accommodation.
- Assistance with applications to supported accommodation, Community/Public housing or private rental properties.
- Transport to property viewings and support with interviews (HNSW and supported accommodation)
- Case management of two short term bedsit properties in Leumeah
- Brokerage assistance can be requested for eg: bonds, removalist fees, furniture, crisis motel accommodation.

Brokerage

- Brokerage - funds that can be spent on behalf of a young person.
- Brokerage is available for any young person unable to meet their own financial needs and who would benefit from temporary financial assistance
- Before providing brokerage a caseworker will work with a young person to address their current financial situation, by assessing income and expenses, and exploring alternative financial support.
- Brokerage is available for food, travel, medical needs, employment, education and accommodation. We have very broad guidelines on what we can purchase.

Casework

The Drum provides both short term and long term casework. Case work can consist of the following things -

- Exploring housing options
- Support for young people who have alcohol and other drug issues
- Assistance with parenting, relationships
- Legal issues
- Financial issues
- General and mental health issues
- Support with looking for employment
- Support with looking at educational options
- Anything that will help them get to where they want to be!

Through -

- Strengths based, solution focused case planning
- Advocacy and referrals
- Working in partnership with other agencies
- Outreach work

Local homelessness statistics

- On any given night in Australia 105,000 people are homeless and nearly half of these are under the age of 25
- In 2010/2011, 20.3% of the people in SHS were under 19yrs of age
- There are 200-400 young people homeless in the Macarthur area every night
- Youth homelessness is often a hidden issue
- Some young people are sleeping rough in unsafe places such as cemeteries, parks, ovals, bus stops, under bridges etc...
- But many young people are “couch surfing” without any form of stable accommodation – this is the hidden homelessness



Young people who access The Drum

- Primarily young people who access The Drum come from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Many have been in OOHC
- Many have been couch surfing for months or years
- Most have experienced family breakdown
- Some have legal matters pending
- Some have mental health issues
- Most have previously or are currently experiencing domestic or family violence of some form.

Domestic Violence and young people

- Young people are experiencing many types of violence within their relationships. Most commonly we see domestic violence including physical, emotional and financial abuse.
- The most common relationships where this is seen are between two young people or between a young person and their parent/s, carers.
- A lot of homeless young people have grown up with domestic violence being a 'normal' part of family life. Due to this, young people have little chance to learn what a non-violent domestic relationship is.
- Young people don't recognise some types of domestic violence. Young people often see domestic violence as only physical abuse and do not recognise the other factors.

DV and its impact on Youth Homelessness

Domestic violence has a direct effect on youth homelessness in several ways -

- Violence within a home often causes young people to flee out of fear of staying at home or within that relationship.
- Young people within a domestic violence relationship sometimes find themselves homeless due to their partners actions. E.g; being kicked out of supported accommodation due to partners behaviour/actions.
- Young people also often choose to stay in a domestic violence relationship if the other option is homelessness.

- Parents/Carers may need to take out ADVO's on their children which restricts them from being at the family home. This in turn may make the young person homeless.
- We often see financial abuse between parents and the young people. This most commonly occurs when parents refuse to talk to Centrelink about what issues were happening to cause the young person to leave home. They will tell Centrelink that the young person can return home, but in reality they cannot. This results in the young people continuing to be homeless and also with no income.
- We found that statistics on domestic violence and its relationship to youth homelessness are difficult to come by. Young people often do not disclose about their experiences of domestic violence in the first instance when stats are collected. Young people also may not recognise this as being the main cause of them becoming homeless.

In our experience...

- Young people very rarely become homeless and remain single.
- Young people are often drawn quickly into relationships when homeless. If only to have another person to “protect” them if they have to sleep on the streets, for “survival”, or to give them more options of friends places to stay at.
- This is often the beginning of an unhealthy relationship.
- Young people are vulnerable to manipulation and violence within relationships, getting linked up with long term homeless populations and the multiple risky behaviours that follow.
- Young people are often both perpetrators and victims within the relationship.

Strategies used by workers

Workers at The Drum use various strategies to recognise, name and deal with Domestic Violence. Some strategies are -

- Seeing young people separately in appointments
- Offering lots of opportunities for engagement with workers to build relationships, soft entry points, one on one time in appointments
- Workers address any signs of violence/abuse with young people directly and immediately
- Workers role model behaviour, communication, transparency, honesty and consistent messages with young people
- Clear routines and rosters and 'rules', a stable team and stable environment in the centre

- Educative posters and pamphlets.
- Workers always take opportunities to talk to young people about any issues that may arise, worker are not afraid to “name” things.
- In the case of parental abuse – using notifications and discussions of child protection to deliver the message of safety, and healthy relationships.
- Working from a strengths based perspective and celebrating any success.
- Our most important role is education and awareness raising. Also being the ‘soft fall’ when a young person is ready to leave violence.

Any Questions????

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Thank you 😊