BEACON FOUNDATION

SUBMISSION TO THE CHILD AND YOUTH WELLBEING STRATEGY DISCUSSION PAPER

Beacon
Foundation

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INTRODUCTION

At Beacon Foundation (Beacon) we believe all young people have the right to a bright future regardless of their background. Unfortunately, not every young person enters this world with the same opportunities. We don't think that's fair.

We focus on communities that experience disadvantage – those with unacceptably low school engagement, coupled with generations of unemployment and underemployment. In Tasmania, we know that our young people face greater challenges than elsewhere in Australia (see 'Key problems faced by Tasmanian young people'). At Beacon we are fearlessly committed to creating a fairer Tasmania.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Beacon recommends the Tasmanian Government continues to invest in initiatives that are designed to support all young Tasmanians to achieve their ideal future.

- Fund an evolved model of the successful Collective ed. Project using a place-based approach to the provision of intermediary services, that would act as the bridge between industry and schools across six Tasmanian communities over the next five years.
- Fund a whole of state, year long initiative that captures a comprehensive and representative number of youth voices from Tasmania's less advantaged youth, to be used in decision making throughout Tasmania.

The Collective ed. program focuses on community capacity building, with local people owning local issues and providing the best possible support to young people. The project has captured the voice of young people and given them agency to progress issues that affect them. These issues, some of which are at the school, but many outside the school gate, all directly relate to the young person's capacity to engage in learning and move towards meaningful pathways. In simple terms it's a whole village raising a child, but the child has an integral voice in the village.

An evolved model of Collective ed. would employ a flexible and tailored place-based approach to intermediary services, tailored to each individual person and community (including industry and business). Programs and initiatives would be developed as a response that suits the young person, where they're at on their journey and how to help them get where they want to go, rather than trying to force square pegs into round holes. By building community capacity, we are enabling something that is quickly adaptable to suit the circumstances of each young person, including those that have untapped potential due to circumstances they cannot control.

Beacon occupies a privileged position between industry and schools and is constantly reminded of the inefficiencies in the current education, training and employment system. The system makes it difficult for schools to allocate the necessary resources, and businesses interested in working with, and potentially even employing, young people are confronted with complex and prohibitive processes to navigate. Intermediary services are key to bridging the gap and this has been recognised in the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council final report.

Tasmanian students are simply not receiving adequate exposure to the world of work.

The work that we would lead would be focused on connecting students, schools, industry, business and community to create opportunities for young people.

A detailed overview of these initiatives, including budget, can be provided upon request and will be presented to the State Budget process.

Collective ed. to date

In 2017, based on our long-established reputation, we were given the opportunity by Paul Ramsay Foundation and the Tasmanian Government to build a place-based project called Collective ed. By securing this significant investment of funding into Tasmania to support our young people, we have been able to explore how we can better drive impact for those young people who are most disadvantaged.

Collective ed. has a clear objective to work with schools and communities across Tasmania, focused on the goal of 90% Year 12 attainment and the development of meaningful pathways for young people who need it most.

Collective ed. place-based work is embedded in six senior secondary schools across Tasmania. Our Collective ed. teams work alongside and around mainstream education. We have developed a model, based on our learnings to date, of how to mobilise place-based work out of a school setting. This model includes key factors including student voice, co-design and collaboration and evaluation as key ingredients to this work.

Collective ed. is heavily focused on capturing the voice of young people and giving them agency to progress issues that affect them. These issues, some of which are at school, but many outside the school gate, all directly relate to the young person's capacity to attend and engage in school. Similar programs that empower young people should be an ongoing focus of the Tasmanian Government.

WORK READINESS

Work readiness education is at our core and deeply embedded in our history. Beacon works with young people from less advantaged backgrounds with a focus on building their knowledge, skills and confidence to better equip them to develop and fulfil meaningful career pathways. We give young people a voice and engage them in the work that effects them.

Beacon works with most Tasmanian schools with an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) rating of under 1000. In 2019, prior to a COVID-19 disrupted 2020, Beacon delivered 70 work readiness programs in 30 Tasmanian schools to over 1350 students.

We are a practical, evidence-based organisation that brings industry, business and community into the classroom.

We are driven by impact (see 'What we know').

Beacon has both broad reach programs and services, as well as sustained specific community activity through Collective ed.

Throughout this submission paper we will be addressing a selection of questions raised in the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy Discussion Paper.

Key problems faced by Tasmanian young people.

- **Tasmania has a youth unemployment rate of 14.2% in January 2021. This is just below the national average of 15.4%.**
- **Industries that traditionally employ young people (retail, accommodation and food services) have been devastated by COVID-19.**
- **Only 59% of Tasmanian students complete Grade 12 (2018 figures) which is the second lowest in the country behind the Northern Territory. Split by socioeconomic status, Tasmania completion rates are (Low 53% – second lowest in the country, Medium 62% – lowest in the country, High 71% – second lowest in the country).**
- **Apparent retention rates of secondary students (year 7 to 12 full-time, 2020) are 74.9%, compared to 83.6%. Nationally, the second lowest behind the Northern Territory[1].**
- **4 in 10 current Grade 9 students will not complete Grade 12.**
- **Only 35% of school students between Grade 4-12 have a high level of 'life satisfaction'. Concerningly, 28% have low 'life satisfaction'[2].**
- **Over half of Tasmanian school students have a medium or low sense of happiness[2].**
- **Happiness, life satisfaction, school engagement and a sense of belonging are all negatively impacted by the transition from primary school to high school[2].**

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au)
2 Tasmanian Government Wellbeing Survey 2020 (education.tas.gov.au)

What we know:

- Four or more industry engagements during school makes students 86% more likely to engage in further education, training or employment after school (Mann 2012).
- Of students that attend Beacon's work readiness programs:
  - 86% better understand how engaging in school can help them achieve their future goals.
  - 4 in 5 become more hopeful about their future.
  - 1 in 5 students find them 'life changing'.
- Summary of key findings from Collective ed. place based work.
  - Student voice must be at the heart of decision making, we must capture, listen and utlise student voice in decision making and planning.
  - The complex system that sits around young people both inside and outside the school gate all have a profound impact on their ability to engage in learning and move towards meaningful pathways.
  - Co-designed programs engage and motivate different voices to develop solutions and ownership from young people.
  - Engaging the broader 'community' including business and industry in issues and initiatives for young people is more impactful and sustainable.
  - Data and evaluation – understand the community you are working in and what is working and what is not.

BEACON'S POSITION – VISION

QUESTION 4 – In the knowledge of the existing domains of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework what should be our unifying vision for the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy?

Our vision is for data-led, place-based and co-designed support to help ALL young Tasmanians achieve their ideal future

Through implementation of Collective ed. over almost five years, we have observed the strength of authentically working with young people to develop a shared understanding of what is important to them. Working authentically means being there, on site at the school or in community, every day. It means listening to their story, what motivates them, and their hopes and dreams for their future. It means understanding the local context and developing meaningful relationships. It means listening to the collective voice of young people and empowering them to make change.

CASE STUDY – DOORS TO MENTORS

Doors to Mentors is a program set up to support young people aged 15-24 in the Central Coast area to explore their career aspirations. Doors to Mentors is a community driven mentoring program to support young people in the community and has its roots in community and student voice.

The Collective ed. Central Coast Team spent much of 2019 collecting and analysing student and community voice. The community agreed that supporting young people to have increased access to mentors was a key priority, and a challenge was born to find 100 mentors in 100 days.

Supported by a community governance framework including a dedicated action group, Doors to Mentors is an initiative from community, run by and with community. Over 105 local community members registered interest in becoming a mentor, from which almost 40 are registered and fully trained. Whilst the mentors are not attached specifically to business in their mentoring capacity, they span a breadth of industry, job expertise and experience. As at 11 March 2021 there are 12 paired mentors and mentees, and increasing interest from across local community schools means that this number is going to grow rapidly.

The strength of Doors to Mentors is that it is in direct response to listening to young people and community. It is a solution identified and developed by community, including a $15,000 investment from local donors. The elements of capturing voice, co-design and working in place are fundamental to the success of this program. There is an independent website that has been created, which includes an online portal to support connections: **https://doorstomentors.org.au/**

Alec is one of the students involved in Doors to Mentors and Mel Blake, Site Lead of the Central Coast Collective ed. Team, says it has been wonderful to see him 'come out of his shell' and become more engaged. As part of the mentor program, Alec has gained new practical skills like learning how to fly a drone to take images. He says he is grateful for the opportunities Collective ed. has presented to him at Ulverstone Secondary College. Learn more about Alec and Doors to Mentors in this video: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DS_jYCnqbU**

ARACY DOMAIN – HEALTHY

What do young Tasmanians want and need to help them live healthy lives?

At Beacon, we know that young Tasmanians care about their health, and particularly their mental health and wellbeing. How do we know this? By listening!

A key focus of Collective ed. is capturing and listening to student voice. We take the time to listen to students to identify the real issues and potential solutions from their perspective. This has been done via a variety of mechanisms, including targeted student voice capture processes as well as through broader community consultations. As at June 2020, we had collected over 1,400 voices from community (including young people). In the period July – December 2020, we engaged with 6,299 people of which 3,934 were students and we continue to engage our young people through a variety of targeted and meaningful processes.

An example of this work was at the height of the first major COVID-19 lockdown. Beacon took initiative to develop an online webcast series, Be@Connected, as a way to engage young people with relatable role models to address issues of wellbeing – an issue that we knew was of importance to young people from our COVID-19 community readiness survey with young people. Speakers including Australian Test Cricket Captain Tim Paine and World Champion Swimmer Ariarne Titmus addressed a range of wellbeing issues and had over 5,000 views.

Another example was in 2020, when we worked with students at Bayview Secondary College to find out what would help or hinder their ability to achieve their ideal future. What we found was that 47 per cent of the student body identified wellbeing (mental health, depression, anxiety, anger, confidence) as a key barrier.

The students were involved in analysing the data and reporting back to the student body. A range of student-led initiatives will be linked to a school Wellbeing Strategy, which is currently under development. A practical example of such an initiative is the 'Therapy Box'.

CASE STUDY – LISTENING TO BAYVIEW

The Collective ed. Bayview Team undertook a comprehensive student voice collection program. The team listened to young people and found out more about how they think they can achieve their ideal future. The student voice survey was co-designed with the young people and completed by over 50% of students. Students were also involved in analysing the data into themes and presenting it back to the school.

A key finding of this work was that 47 per cent of students identified that wellbeing, mental health, depression and anxiety were major issues for them.

In response to the survey and to support their friends in the school, a working group came up with the Therapy Box for students who do not feel comfortable speaking to anyone or asking for help. Through the Therapy Box, students can put their name in the box and the school based social workers are then able to reach out to students.

Nayton said he felt really sad when he read that many students were scared to open up about their feelings to people around them simply because they were worried they would get judged or have it spread to others in the school. Learn more about Nayton and the students' work at Bayview in this video: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHySwvWDL0Y**

Another example that shows the importance of listening to young people with regards to their health and well-being is as follows:

- Sorell School and Deloraine High School primary to secondary school transitions projects.
  - Collective ed. Sorell and Meander Valley worked with their respective schools to understand more about what Year 6 students were concerned about in transitioning to high school. We know that this transition causes a drop in student engagement and general satisfaction.
  - Year 6 students were invited to fill in postcards sharing their thoughts and feelings. Using a mix of written personal responses and videos, the Year 6 students were given a warm welcome to high school life.

Beacon urges the Government to invest in similar, comprehensive, co-designed data collection with young people to achieve a more accurate understanding of the issues young people are experiencing.

Many community issues are deeply engrained and therefore, Beacon also believes more focus should be placed on building the capacity of identified communities to use the youth voice data to create change. Fostering an inclusive and developmental environment throughout communities will have lasting positive impacts for young people.

Beacon's position – Healthy

QUESTION 22 – Which Tasmanian Government initiatives do you think work best and why?

While not referenced under the Healthy domain, support for the Collective ed. program has enabled the collection of student voice data. This data has provided a clearer understanding of the status of student health, particularly mental health.

The Department of Education (DoE) Wellbeing survey is a great initiative with significant potential applicability. Its utility should be explored further (refer Question 44).

QUESTION 23 – If additional initiatives are required to ensure Tasmanian children and young people are healthy what would they be and why?

Beacon supports investment in our young people by engaging authentically through routine data collection to understand what is important to them, including issues relating to their health. It is critical that time is taken to deeply understand the issues, due to their complexity and impact on the lives of young people.

We also recommend:

- interventions targeting the transition between primary and secondary schools and the existing impact on engagement, life satisfaction and happiness
- life experience opportunities for students living in disadvantaged communities
  - We are trialling 'Learning Experiences Incentives' at Jordan River Learning Federation Senior School, to provide students with wellbeing and work connections outside the school gate. We have a hunch that students crave experiences and opportunities that not only enable them to face the challenges of the future but to thrive and flourish as individuals and as a collective community
- programs that enable young people to be mobile across careers and industries through developing modern, transferrable skills. While educating young people about the specifics of some industries is imperative, the reality is that young people will work in many different environments over their working life, therefore requiring foundational skills that support these transitions.

QUESTION 24 – Are you able to identify any barriers to Tasmanian children and young people accessing initiatives aimed at ensuring they are healthy?

There is an historic lack of integration between schools and the broader community, consistent with current education funding models. In every community there are untapped resources and supports for young people. Beacon's Collective ed. program has included a focus on increasing student awareness of health services available for students in their communities.

QUESTION 25 – How do you suggest these barriers are addressed?

Beacon recommends continued investment in delivering an evolved Collective ed. Program. The evolution of Collective ed. would provide a proven place-based approach with the inclusion of intermediary services. This approach combines our Collective ed. learnings and programs and services expertise. This has led to demonstrated success in offering place-based solutions, with young people at the centre, as well as youth-voice activities that paint a clearer picture of issues. Giving young people agency to initiate change is also imperative.

ARACY DOMAIN – LEARNING

With over 30 years supporting young Tasmanians, we have identified there is a lack of connection between schools and industry. Young Tasmanians are not having enough practical exposure to the world of work, due to insufficient support for schools and confusing and complex process for industry to navigate. This is a major failing, given that four or more industry engagements during school makes students 86 per cent more likely to engage in further education, training or employment after school.

At Beacon, we have learned that school and industry partnerships are the building blocks of career education and inspiration. We have also learned that schools are not funded to build these relationships and industry does not know how to navigate the education system.

Industry exposure and interaction is critical for relevant learning. And with our young people likely to have 17 jobs across five careers, it is also essential that students have an understanding of how transferrable skills can benefit them throughout their working life. At Beacon, we believe that the key will be working with industry to understand common skills that are required across different fields and supporting schools to target the development of these transferable skills.

This includes the provision of work experience, work placement and other work-based learning opportunities, which is a major deficiency in the current education system. This is largely due to a lack of resourcing and schools being unable to prioritise related programs. The DoE's Grade 9-12 project demonstrates that a current lack of work-based learning and adaptive approaches needs to be addressed. This is also noted in the PESRAC Final Report.

Beacon has significant experience in developing and implementing programs and services and facilitating community action (through Collective ed.) in the Learning domain, a few examples include:

- Ignite Program Central Coast is aimed at Year 9 to 10 Ulverstone Secondary College students using a project-based alternative curriculum centred on supporting and challenging each student. The Ignite program was an activity undertaken as part of the Collective ed. Central Coast in 2019. In 2020 it transitioned to be supported by Ulverstone Secondary College with evaluation support still provided by Collective ed.

  Ignite operates separately to mainstream classes and aligns with the Year 11/12 TASC Courses, Learning through Internship (Level 2) and Student Directed Inquiry (Level 3). The focus is on building students' independent learning, research, problem solving and communication skills.

  Key findings from this approach to education include:

  - A discernible overall increase in student attendance in comparison to school averages
  - Students self-reported many positive learning and classroom behaviours, such as most often following the rules, completing work on time and paying attention in class, as well as the majority stating that they had a good year of learning and that Ignite was a better way of learning than a traditional classroom setting
  - Students, parents and teachers all reported the development of 21st century skills related to working with others, computer literacy, building confidence and cultivating greater interest in learning

- High numbers of students and, especially, parents reported their or their child's intention to complete Year 12
- Students and parents reported that they would recommend the Ignite program to others.

The Ignite program continued through 2020 and is now a fully embedded educational offering at Ulverstone Secondary College.

- Collective ed. Sorell's Action Crew 7172 is an arts-based social change program that supports students to connect with their school and local community on a journey to determine what causes inspire them to take action. This is a student led project that predominately focuses on the use of short films as the tool to communicate ideas and create connections across the school and broader community. Action Crew 7172 is a hands-on learning process, that builds student agency and 21st century skills, while also building the school's connection with local community. Action Crew 7172 has also been recognised by the school leadership team as a mechanism for incorporating student and community voice in school decision making. Action Crew 7172 has students participating from across a number of year groups, and anecdotally has had some early success in improving student engagement.
- Growth Industry Preparation Programs (GrIPP). Our Collective ed. programs are taking the Packages of Learning to the industry. The Department of Education introduced Packages of Learning as an integrated approach to teaching the Australian Curriculum learning areas of Science, Maths, English, History or Geography, Work Studies and Technologies with an industry focus. Our GrIPPs connect learners with areas of growth in their local community through programs that develop an understanding of the knowledge, skills and attributes you need and the opportunities the industry sector offers. Our GrIPPs assist students to navigate the transition to further training and employment and facilitate employer connections within their own community.
- Support programs for Australian School Based Apprenticeships (ASbAs). Some of our Collective ed. schools are working with students, parents, and employers to support the successful recruitment, entry and completion of school-based apprenticeships. Our support programs utilise connections within the schools and local communities in which the students are learning to elevate the shared value of vocational education and training within the school environment.
- School and industry connection events, such as:
  - Industry Pathways events. A recent example during Term 4 2020, Collective ed. featured a partnership with Jordan River Learning Federation Senior School and MONA to run an Industries Pathways event. Held at MONA, the event provided information about the ASbA program, with young people, school staff, industry representatives and Government in attendance. Illustrating the success of this approach, nine ASbAs were committed from this event for Jordan River Learning Federation Senior School in 2021.
  - Intensive careers exposure events. A Futures Development Program, held at Bayview Secondary College over four days, exposed young people to a range of career options, with a number of industry representatives in attendance.

QUESTION 26 – Which Tasmanian Government initiatives do you think work best and why?

- An evolved Collective ed. model recognises that different communities require different approaches to support young people. It will be important that there is continued support for communities at the completion of the Collective ed. funding period in December 2021. Collective ed. is an umbrella project that includes a number of bespoke, community-driven approaches, that support or align to the following:
  - Student Wellbeing Survey. Data is so important to understanding young people and providing an opportunity to work with them to create change
  - Years 9 to 12 Project. While the impact of this project remains to be seen, Beacon programs and services and projects such as Collective ed. have strong alignment with the direction the Tasmanian Government is taking. We continue to look forward to being involved in ongoing discussions with the Department of Education as this policy framework progresses
  - School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships
  - Vocational Placement Pilot Project. There is a recognised gap between education and industry in Tasmania and structured intermediary support is critical to vocational placements.
- While not listed in the discussion paper, existing support for work readiness programs, including those with a specific focus on workforce development for high priority industries, delivers positive outcomes for many young people.

QUESTION 27 – If additional initiatives are required to ensure Tasmanian children and young people are learning what would they be and why?

- A structured, multi-impact model that graduates students through work readiness education from upper primary school to the end of Grade 12 (or equivalent).
- A reinvigorated ASbA's program that incorporates an holistic support package for schools, students and parents.
- An extension of the Vocational Placement Pilot Program with incorporation of work readiness and industry mentoring to soften school resource shortages throughout the state.
- A place-based initiative that supports communities to establish holistic approaches to developing young people.
- All the above projects would be part of an evolved Collective ed. that takes a place-based approach to providing intermediary services.
- Alternative education models for students wanting to re-engage.

QUESTION 28 – Are you able to identify any barriers to Tasmanian children and young people accessing initiatives aimed at ensuring they are learning?

- Low aspiration for a future involving work for some students.
- Low student awareness of the world of work.
- An education environment that is too complex and difficult to navigate for industry.
- A lack of time and resources for school staff to initiate and maintain meaningful relationships with industry and community stakeholders.
- A lack of programs that support our young people to navigate the transition to further training and employment and facilitate employer connections within their own community.
- Complexity for industry and business in understanding how and what to offer to young people.
- Poor or no attendance becomes the barrier to re-engaging.

QUESTION 29 – How do you suggest these barriers are addressed?

- Invest in programs that better connect schools with industry/community, such as an evolved Collective ed., which includes:
  - Investing in more multi-impact work readiness programs for students throughout their high school years
  - Streamlining work-based learning programs to make them more accessible to industry
  - Engaging broader community networks in the real-world education of students
  - Building a significantly stronger focus on work-based learning for Tasmanian students, including a focus on work experience, work placements and school-based training
  - More alternative education programs that have the young person at the centre of the conversation.

ARACY DOMAIN – PARTICIPATION

Since 2016, Beacon has focused heavily on student-informed decision making through Collective ed.. Involving students in decisions that impact their lives and giving them agency to co-design solutions invariably leads to increased engagement. School retention and attainment is central to Collective ed., the goal of which is to increase Year 12 attainment and support young people to transition to meaningful post school pathways.

Our work has highlighted the value and importance of student voice. Our sites are considering how this can have greater influence on the curriculum and school activity offerings and be part of the broader school improvement agenda.

Collective ed. has also focused on the development of place-based approaches to achieving positive student outcomes with a number of demonstrated examples of success. Examples relevant to the Participation domain are as follows:

- Action Crew 7172 in Sorell School, launched by the Collective ed. Sorell Team, is a mechanism for students at the school to connect with, participate in and create opportunities that are engaging, interesting, and genuinely representative of their interests and passions.

  Using a co-designed approach, students create short videos and public art projects that promote themes that matter to them. Themes include the environment, LGBTIQ+ issues, public space and the visibility of young people, and racism. During this process, young people develop 21st century skills such as teamwork and communication and technical skills like film making, campaign building and public speaking. All stories are shared with the local community, including through film nights held at the school, which builds a positive sense of the school and what young people are capable of.

  One example is Lacey, a student in Year 9 who started a project to reduce plastics in her local area with two of her friends as part of Action Crew 7172. Some of the most enjoyable parts of Action Crew according to Lacey is working with friends, being creative and creating change. Learn more about Lacey and Action Crew 7172 here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfQgOvZKBo0**

  Action Crew 7172 demonstrates the value of co-designed, place-based work as driving increased participation, both for young people and their community. Across 2021, Action Crew 7172 continues to build momentum and increase participation across the school and local community through working closely with the Sorell Council on their Bicentennial celebration plans and a public art exhibition.

- The Changemaker Series launched by Collective ed. Meander Valley in 2020 and facilitated by 2019 Tasmanian Young Australian of the Year, Will Smith. The Changemaker Series was designed in response to the voice of 120 Year 8 and 10 students in 2019 who identified building confidence and resilience as a key need in supporting them to achieve their hopes and dreams. The Changemaker Series worked across a geographic cluster of primary and secondary schools in the Meander Valley region and challenged students to create positive impact and be the best possible version of themselves. The initiative has grown legs of its own, with schools across the district continuing initiatives independently since the end of the formal series. Over 400 young people participated in the Changemaker Series as active citizens of their school and community. These students have reported an increase in self-belief, leadership skills and confidence.
- In George Town, Collective ed. has joined forces with the community's Future Impact Group, a joint initiative of community, industry, local Council, Beacon and State Government to establish whole-of-community initiatives to drive positive change. In addition to educational outcomes, the Future Impact Group is focussed on social disadvantage and community pride. Students from Port Dalrymple School, part of the Collective ed. Network, have been involved in the creation of 50 Gems, a project designed to build pride in community. The young people talked of their pride in community, and how the project had given them confidence. 50 Gems was recently launched at a community event, and will be part of an ongoing campaign across George Town.
- In recent years, Beacon has partnered with Federal Group to deliver the Dessert Challenge for schools throughout the state. In teams, students from participating schools design, budget for and create desserts to be ultimately assessed by a panel of judges. This program has been hugely popular with the winning dessert becoming a fixture on Federal Group menus.

Beacon's position – Participation

QUESTION 30 – Which Tasmanian Government initiatives do you think work best and why?

- Support through Collective ed. for school engagement with local community leadership groups, including the George Town Future Impact Group and Ulverstone's Central Connect. These groups can be a powerful, place-based asset for community, and we have found that school engagement has opened up a range of opportunities for schools, including partnerships, industry investment and student participation.
- Energising Tasmania. Developing the workforce needed to support the creation of renewable energy in Tasmania is critical for young Tasmanians as well as the Tasmanian economy.
- Previous funding from Skills Tasmania to deliver a broad spectrum of career education activities in schools. This funding enabled the delivery of work readiness programs, as well as other intermediary support for activities designed and implemented by schools.

QUESTION 31 – If additional initiatives are required to ensure Tasmanian children and young people are participating what would they be and why?

- Identification of communities that are most appropriate for the implementation of place-based approaches. Our experience suggests that communities somewhat removed from major population centres, with an industry presence and fewer existing services are the most appropriate for this approach.
- Utilise comprehensive data collection discussed under 'Healthy' domain to identify opportunities to engage young people in decision making – thereby increasing their engagement and participation in school and/or their communities.

QUESTION 32 – Are you able to identify any barriers to Tasmanian children and young people accessing initiatives aimed at ensuring they are participating?

- A lack of effective youth voice platforms.
- A lack of involvement in decisions that impact young people, particularly for our disadvantaged youth.
- A lack of awareness of what opportunities are available for young people to participate in.

QUESTION 33 – How do you suggest these barriers are addressed?

- Conduct regular, comprehensive youth voice programs that identify what young people think are the problems and solutions.
- Focus on building capacity within communities to support young people and create meaningful pathways with a focus on our disadvantaged youth.
- Provide more opportunities for young people to participate in career and future pathway exploration.

ACTION AND EVALUATION

Beacon is an action-oriented organisation. For over 30 years in both programs and services and Collective ed. we have developed, delivered and facilitated real action for young people across Tasmania. We are strong believers in action catalysing community momentum for young people, whether that be the hundreds of industry and business mentors that we bring into the classroom annually, or by engaging and facilitating community in formal and informal governance issues around young people. We are an organisation that gets in and takes action. We believe that approaches like Beacon's are critical to building a movement in the Tasmanian community around outcomes for our young people. Examples of this are our Business Partnership Groups and the annual delivery plans that all of our Collective ed. sites have in place.

There also needs to be strong and sustained effort measuring the impact of actions and initiatives. Evaluation measures, particularly developmental evaluation, should be embedded at the outset of an initiative and flow through to every element of implementation. Once success measures are established and activity is evaluated against these measures, the real impacts will be apparent.

A strength of the funding model for Collective ed. has been the inclusion of discrete funding for evaluation and learning, including:

- internal evaluation teams embedded with site teams and guided by overarching evaluation plans
- developmental evaluation to support development and adaptation of activities, projects and processes
- interim evaluation and ongoing site level monitoring
- student impact evaluation with case studies
- final evaluation to consider overall initiative impact and learnings
- learning program informed by development evaluation
- learning paper series and evaluation appraisal.

Evaluation can have negative connotations when associated with results that were unexpected or poor. To support our teams and communities, Beacon has established a set of principles to guide our evaluation and learning program within a positive culture. These principles include:

- Amplify voices of the community, who we serve
- Clear, concise, accessible and visual reporting so it is timely, transparent and useful
- Agility to shift as needed in a constantly changing environment
- Safe to fail forward, learning from successes and failures as we go
- Deliberate engagement and capacity building across Collective ed. and community
- Evidence-based decision making that draws upon both data and experience
- Reflective practice is integrated to all aspects of learning and evaluation.

As part of our evaluation program, Collective ed. will deliver a series of learning papers that will explore key internal and external factors influencing the ability of Collective ed. to contribute to the goal of increasing Year 12 attainment and meaningful pathways for young people across six communities in Tasmania, and lessons learned so far. These papers will be evaluative and where appropriate reference existing evidence and best practice from other initiatives. The purpose of the learning papers will be to inform thinking, planning and decision making from now and into the future regarding 'what next' for place-based initiatives like Collective ed.

Bringing about meaningful change will require sustained effort – it is a long game. With a view to improved outcomes for our young people, we recommend a mix of short- and long-term actions that build momentum and support sustained change in how we as the broader Tasmanian community think about, engage and work with our young Tasmanians. We believe taking a place-based approach, integrating meaningful capture of youth voice and co-design, are key to success.

Beacon's position – putting child and youth wellbeing at the heart of policy

QUESTION 38 – What are your suggestions for short-term (1-2 year) structures to implement a whole of government long-term Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy?

- Undertake comprehensive data collection regarding what young people want and need as part of the continuation of an evolved Collective ed. model. The collection of youth voice is critical to understanding issues and developing solutions. Beacon has listened to the voices of over 1400 people through the Collective ed. project.
- Invest in interventions that build connections between industry/community and the classroom through Collective ed.
- Invest in multi-impact, longitudinal program and service delivery to avoid single-touch initiatives that are constrained in their impact.
- Identify communities most suitable for place-based, inclusive approaches for young people.
- Establish comprehensive evaluation programs.
- Recognise that a place-based approach to intermediary services is the most effective way to deliver these outcomes.

QUESTION 39 – What are your suggestions for longer term (3 years +) structures to implement a whole of government long-term Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy?

- Continue to invest and strengthen the above.
- Identify more communities appropriate for place-based solutions.

QUESTION 41 – How do we know we are making a difference?

- Having clear objectives and measures in place for the work that is being undertaken is key. The purpose of the work that is being undertaken must be clear.
- Investment in a robust, comprehensive evaluation model is critical at a strategy level, as well as at the level of individually funded projects.

QUESTION 44 – Are there significant data gaps? What options do we have to address them?

- We have found there is a lot of data that exists in a variety of formats but is not accessible to analyse in a way that can inform meaningful decision making. The key gap is being able to link data so we can:
  - follow a young person's journey through school into higher education and work
  - understand wellbeing as it relates to student engagement across such measures as school attendance.
- Investment in longitudinal data that evaluates the effectiveness of career education for young people until the age of 25. How ready a young person is for work is perhaps not immediately obvious until they have had exposure over a dedicated period.

CONCLUSION

QUESTION 48 – Are there other starting points, models or approaches to achieve outcomes and measure progress for the wellbeing of children and young people that you would like to tell us about?

We know that research prepared by the Victoria University called the Mitchell Report, found that "students who leave before finishing year 12 or the equivalent cost taxpayers about $24,000 annually, nearly $1 million over a working lifetime for each individual". That is $1 million over a lifetime.

Disparities in educational attainment lead to major differences in many areas of life. When our young people miss out, they face increased likelihood of experiencing unemployment or underemployment, crime, public welfare dependence and poor health.

Issues faced by our young people have economic implications beyond our schools and education system, the long-term impacts are significant both for young people and our community. Our response needs to be long term and from the whole of the Tasmanian Government.

Through an evolved Collective ed. model we want to work with government to ensure our young people have the skills and experience for the future world of work, become part of the communities they live in and have opportunities for work.

APPENDIX 1 – AN OVERVIEW OF BEACON FOUNDATION'S EXISTING WORK

Current work	Description	Age group	Where	ARACY domain(s)
Collective ed.	Place based, wrap-around supports for young people	12-18	Ulverstone Deloraine George Town Jordan River Sorell Rokeby	Healthy Participation Learning Identity and culture
Work readiness programs	Expertly designed and evaluated industry exposure and pathway programs	12-18	State-wide	Participation Learning
Vocational Placement Pilot Program	Facilitation of work based learning and placements in the north and north-west	16-18	North and north-west	Participation Learning
SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY program	Development of a wellbeing program	10-12	Under development	Healthy Participation Learning Loved and safe
Advocacy	Working with Government to empower young people to achieve their ideal futures	All Tasmanian young people	State-wide	All
Community governance	Supporting and enabling schools to be meaningfully involved in community governance bodies	All Tasmanian young people	Ulverstone Deloraine George Town Jordan River Sorell Rokeby	All
Engaging Corporate Australia	Securing funding from major corporations to support young Tasmanians to achieve their ideal futures	All Tasmanian young people	Nation-wide	All

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