

Sustainable Sexuality & Relationships Education

Building young people's knowledge to make informed and empowered decisions



The Diversity Project ¹

Funded by Victoria's Department of Health since 2011, *The Diversity Project* has two components:

Youth Worker: direct support to young people aged 12 to 25 years who identify as same sex attracted, sex and gender diverse (SSASGD).

- Young people whose access to appropriate health, education and housing is impacted by homophobia, relationship breakdowns or discrimination.
- Intensive support and case management for young people whose physical and mental health have been adversely affected by discrimination.

Community Development Worker: training, resources and inclusive sexuality and gender education to develop safe, respectful environments for young people to talk openly about their sexuality, gender and related health, education or economic needs.

- community organisations and groups
- agencies and service providers
- schools

The Diversity Project also supports young people wanting to create their own safe spaces in school and community settings. Youth led and driven, the **Diversity Group**² meets fortnightly for SSASGD young people and their friends to explore sexuality issues, get information, discuss concerns and talk with others about similar life experiences.

Sexual Health Information, Education and Services

What is delivered:

The Diversity Project provides young people in Shepparton and surrounding areas with access to accurate, inclusive sexuality and gender information and education. Sustained support, social and leadership opportunities develop young people's knowledge and build respectful relationships and skills for sharing information, mentoring and peer support.

- Individual counselling, support and referrals to appropriate services
- Youth led social groups and events such youth camps
- School based sexuality education and resources
- Information and resources via websites and social media pages
- Youth input into program and event planning and review

Key to success:

The development and resourcing of safe, inclusive environments with increased peer support and youth leadership are considered fundamental to inclusive and sustainable sexuality education.

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Enablers for youth engagement and sustainability

- ❖ Youth centred services and programs where young SSASGD youth are priority groups for the organisation and *Diversity Project*.
- ❖ Youth accessibility: welcoming, multi skilled staff and *free, confidential, openly inclusive* services and resources.
- ❖ Inclusive, safe settings with respectful relationships demonstrated by staff and young people.
- ❖ Sustained support with opportunities for *all* young people to develop and apply knowledge and skills.
- ❖ Service integration and flexibility: individual case management, social and peer support on site, in schools, community and recreational spaces.
- ❖ Partnerships, planning and collaboration at all levels with *staff, young people, champions in organisations, community groups, families and schools*.
- ❖ Youth input and leadership: youth led groups and programs with funding and resources.

More information:

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¹ **Kildonan UnitingCare Shepparton:** <http://www.kildonan.org.au/programs-and-services/child-youth-and-family-support/diversity-project/>
² **Kildonan UnitingCare Shepparton::** http://diversityproject.org.au/?page_id=2