

Senate Inquiry into Suicide in Australia additional notes as requested

1. MindMatters Youth Empowerment (YEP)

MindMatters Student Empowerment and Youth Empowerment Process (YEP) have been evolving since 2004. Staff and students are trained and supported to demonstrate leadership of mental health promotion in their schools. The authenticity of this approach involves young people co-presenting with adults to adults as well as other young people. A team of youth presenters, mentors and supporting adults have been recruited since 2008 to support this work locally.

YEP is an extensive and significant mental health initiative, developed by young people in secondary schools across Australia. It has been developed in an authentic way with young people as leaders of mental health promotion, supported by adults. Young people from 48 schools around Australia have created the process, strategies that underpin the work and materials used to accompany the process. The design, concepts and content of a YEP student facilitator manual, which took 5 years to complete, have been developed collectively by young people across Australia. David Butler, Nicola Roxon's Parliamentary Secretary officially launched this manual at the MindMatters National event in Sydney August 2009 acknowledging the work of schools / young people involved.

A series of Youth Congresses and a Student Empowerment summit have been held since 2008. Student Empowerment has been endorsed by principals from across Australia. Principals like Sheree Vertigan (Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA) President and *headspace* board member) are becoming more and more interested and engaged in the concept of their young people in schools being part of the leadership of mental health promotion and prevention in school settings. The MindMatters processes used with young people have been mapped to the National Youth Participation Strategy in Mental Health (NYPS).

The MindMatters website contains information on student empowerment and YEP including YEP school stories, highlighting student led mental health promotion work. http://www.mindmatters.edu.au/whole_school_approach/student_empowerment/youth_empowerment_process/yep_school_stories.html

2. MindMatters Community Partnerships

MindMatters supports a concerted, negotiated long-term relationship between school and community, such as that represented in the MindMatters Community Partnerships Process, meaning that parties plan and undertake strategies together. The MindMatters Community Partnerships Process describes a process that can be undertaken by the whole community toward increasing mental health and wellbeing outcomes for many of its members. Principals Australia and MindMatters in partnership with the Qld. State Department of Education, Training and the Arts, Moreton Region provide support and resources to ensure the continuation of the Moreton Indigenous Youth Leaders Initiative. The aim of the

Initiative is to provide an opportunity for Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander youth to gain leadership skills and experiences that will equip them to take on leadership roles within their own school-communities. The MindMatters Youth Empowerment Process (YEP) is embedded within the Moreton Indigenous Youth Leadership Program.

MindMatters has worked with the Yaamanhaa Aboriginal Men's Group in Tamworth, NSW since 2006 to develop MindMatters Feeling Deadly not Shame workshops for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander young people. These workshops have continued to be presented within the community by members of the Yaamanhaa Aboriginal men's group.

MindMatters has had ongoing involvement in Armidale, NSW for several years. Working with the school link coordinator and community agencies, local Indigenous facilitators have been trained to present MindMatters workshops across the region. 'Feeling deadly not shame' workshops for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are a feature.

Significant MindMatters work led by local Aboriginal staff across the APY Lands in SA has resulted in Anangu Tertiary Education Program (ANTEP) Coordinators playing a key role in supporting Anangu in the leadership of locally relevant MindMatters material in their own school communities. Next focus of making MM materials culturally relevant will be on bullying, teasing and young people leading activities around mental health. NT Aboriginal communities who have shown an interest in this work were invited to a forum in Alice Springs in April 2010. As a result the Traditional Owners at Uluru are investing a significant amount of money over 3 years in MindMatters being led by Community using a similar process to the one that has been used successfully on the APY Lands in SA over the last 6 years.

In SA, Raukkan Aboriginal School staff, key community members and young adults are adopting a MindMatters whole school and community approach in establishing their new school for disengaged youth. Feeling Deadly not Shame workshops will be led by local Aboriginal young people for others in the area.