

ACEtrax: a tool for community re-connection through education



Reintegration Puzzle Conference

Adelaide

June 26th, 2008

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ACEtrax: some background...

- The Offender Education and Training in ACE Initiative arose from Corrections Victoria Long Term Management Strategy which recognised the link between employment and reduced re-offending, and the role of appropriate education and training in assisting offenders to secure meaningful, sustainable employment.
- Corrections Victoria and the Adult Community and Further Education Board worked together to develop innovative education and training models that could lead to the development of appropriate vocational skills and competencies, broaden offenders' prospects for meaningful and significant employment, and ultimately, help break the cycle of re-offending.
- It was recognised that interventions need to be based on the interests, abilities, and aspirations of the offenders.
- Relationships with the TAFE sector were well established through existing prison education arrangements; however the ACE sector remained an untapped resource for meeting the education and training needs of prisoners and offenders.



ACEtrax: so what is ACE?

- The Victorian ACE sector is made up of around 450 vibrant, independent community based not for profit organisations scattered throughout rural, regional and metropolitan Victoria.
- Variousy titled Neighbourhood Houses, Community Learning Centres, Living and Learning Centres, Education Centres
- Range from small organisations with one worker and volunteers to multi million dollar businesses
- Each operates separately and independently to the other, offering services and programs which relate directly to its own community
- Funded through a variety of sources – recurrent funding, project based grants from government, philanthropic trusts, fee for service
- Over 380 receive funding through the Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board to delivery accredited and non-accredited learning
- Community Colleges Victoria – 70% SCH's, and combined income of over \$150 million per year



ACEtrax: The Pilot...

Four lead ACE organisations were nominated, with eight Community Corrections Services (CCS) locations participating in the pilot areas

The pilot was designed to target offenders who are:

- Currently serving a community-based order
- Assessed as moderate to high risk of re-offending
- Assessed as having high education and training needs
- Orders include Community Based Orders (CBO) with Community Work, Intensive Corrections Orders (ICO), Combined Custody and Treatment Orders (CCTO) and parole.
- Focus was also on the capacity of program delivery to incorporate community hours



ACEtrax: Community of Practice

Brief: Work together to provide meaningful education and training opportunities that will lead to employment for this group of people.

- What knowledge are we developing through our experience in participating in this project,?
- what knowledge is common to all of us?
- What knowledge is informing our program delivery?



ACEtrax: Capturing the Knowledge

- Production of two DVDs
 - Bring the project to life by capturing the qualitative outcomes of the pilot
 - Forum for stakeholders, including participants, to tell their story
- Development of resource kit
 - To equip workers with the knowledge and tools to successfully work with offenders, using the experiences of the pilot
- Professional Development program
 - To encourage other ACE organisations and CCS locations to develop regional partnerships and communities of practice, and build local, effective and regionally specific program delivery for offenders ,



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