

Youth Workshop

TITLE: Save-a-Mate and Mental Health First aid

SUBMITTED BY: Jesse Wright, Mount Saint Patricks College (MSPC)

ISSUE:

Within MSPC there is a high rate of mental health disorders, quite often coinciding with alcohol and other drug abuse.

HOW DID YOU IDENTIFY IT AS AN ISSUE:

In a meeting I had with Sylvia Roylance this was identified as a major issue within our school community and building from that we have started to work towards implementing programs to help counteract these issues namely Save-a-Mate (SAM) and Mental Health First Aid (MHFA).

RESEARCH

Mental Health First Aid

MHFA courses teach mental health first aid strategies to members of the public. Mental health first aid is the help provided to a person who is developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of a mental health problem, or in a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves.

Course content is derived from a number of consensus studies incorporating the expertise of hundreds of researchers, clinicians, mental health consumer advocates and carer advocates across the English speaking western world.

MHFA courses can provide members of the community with:

- Skills in how to recognise the signs and symptoms of mental health problems
- Knowledge of the possible causes or risk factors for these mental health problems
- Awareness of the evidenced based medical, psychological and alternative treatments available
- Skills in how to give appropriate initial help and support someone experiencing a mental health problem
- Skills in how to take appropriate action if a crisis situation arises involving suicidal behaviour, panic attack, stress reaction to trauma, overdose or threatening psychotic behaviour.

We have found with MHFA that despite the great number of facilitators available it is a lot harder to find people who will run the course for young people (Teen MHFA). Another issue is the high course cost with estimates coming in at up to \$6000 for a 2 day course for 25 participants. However, we are looking into the course possibly being subsidised by a local

Rotary Club, as this partnership occurs in other areas. Sylvia has informed me that if we are able to secure one of these courses Youth Council funds are available to cover the workshop fee; costing is the main reason MSPC is unable to run the program.

Save-a-Mate

Since 1997, the Red Cross Save-a- Mate (SAM) program has been working to reduce the harms associated with alcohol and other drug (AOD) use in Australia through its suite of harm minimisation training courses.

A 3 ½ hour workshop gives participants a solid understanding of how drugs are classified, what effects they have on the body and factors that can prevent or lead to an overdose.

There are many topics covered including:

- Drugs and their classifications
- Factors that influence the effects of drugs and their patterns of use
- Ways to reduce harms that occur from using drugs
- What can increase the likelihood of an overdose occurring
- Signs and symptoms of an overdose and how to respond
- How to respond to heat related illness, panic attacks, psychosis, seizures and unconsciousness
- Dealing with emergency services

ACTIONS

To date, the SAM workshop will be delivered Wednesday 7 June at MSPC. I have worked with other students and staff to promote the SAM workshop to Year 10 and 11 students. A significant amount of interest has been generated with more than 24 students signing up to do the course. As each workshop has a maximum of 16 participants, another session will be delivered in the near future.

For MHFA training we are still gathering information before we proceed with a decision.

FEEDBACK / ASSISTANCE

Suggestions for any facilitators we don't know about?

Are there any other courses available for young people about improving mental health and addressing alcohol and other drugs abuse in schools?

POTENTIAL GUESTS

The Buttery

Intra Youth Service

Siobhan Strain, Youth Drug & Alcohol Outreach Counsellor

WORKSHOP REQUIREMENTS

Tick	Requirement
	Access to a computer to display a power point – <i>Please bring presentation on USB and / or email through. Presentations need to be in Microsoft Power Point format.</i>
X	Printing for handouts – <i>SAM Course information (Sylvia to provide)</i>
	Other – Please specify