



Towards social inclusion  
**beyond the school gates** for  
young people with disability:  
developing a future model for  
growth and transferability



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This report was prepared by Fiona Waugh, Director of 'Waugh on Words', in August 2016.

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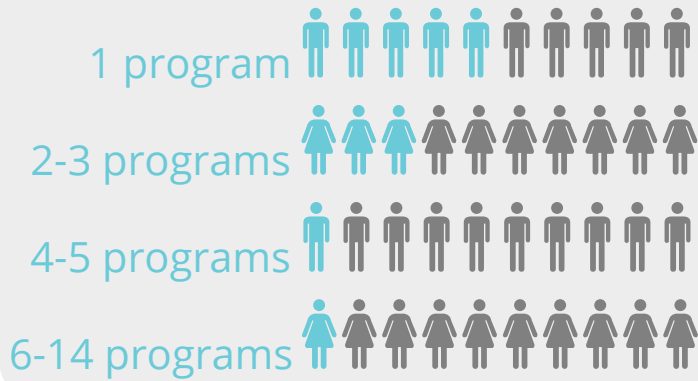
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## PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

*50% of students participated  
in 2 or more programs*



*BSG aligns with  
research showing  
that the three  
proponents of a  
'good quality of life'  
for a person  
with disability are*



*Since 2012 BSG has  
offered programs to  
students with intellectual  
or learning disabilities*



## BEYOND PURPOSE

*BSG allows students to acquire  
skills that will improve their  
outcomes through participation  
in a range of programs*

**B** Employability skills

**E** Work experience

**N** Career experience

**E** Friendships programs

**F** Health and fitness

**I** Interests and hobbies

**T** Travel and tourism

# AND THE SCHOOL GATES POSE AND ENGAGEMENT

ire  
r lifelong  
pation

s programs

nce programs

oloration programs

ship development  
ams

alth and wellbeing programs

Sport and recreation programs

Social skills programs

Vocational skills programs



*BSG develops programs  
in partnership with  
local organisations*

## PARTNER PARTICIPATION

*BSG partners were so engaged  
that many offered more than  
one program*



*The number of students with intellectual  
or learning disabilities in Australian  
schools are significant (and growing)*

one small area of Melbourne ... Imagine the positive  
on the lives of more young people with disability if  
other parts of Melbourne, Victoria or even Australia!

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The purpose of this report is to review Beyond the School Gates (BSG) and assess the viability of this successful initiative progressing from its current structure as an auspiced program into a legal entity expanded into other Victorian regions. To adequately assess this and make recommendations for the future of BSG this report has conducted an evaluation across five key domains.

Firstly, an overview of BSG is provided, coupled with a review of the formal and informal evaluation of the model and its outcomes. Secondly, an investigation into alternative legal structures which would enable BSG to become an entity in its own right is reviewed and examined. Thirdly, the agility of BSG in terms of adopting new modes of delivery and scope, in response to research and stakeholder consultations, is examined. Fourthly, a strong case for the transferability and scalability of BSG is presented through a review of literature and data evidencing that young people with intellectual disabilities can benefit from the model and that an appetite for its introduction in other Victorian regions exists. Finally, there is scope for BSG to engage with National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) providers and/or become a provider in its own right to continue to deliver supports to young people that will benefit their mobility, communication, self-care and self-management, social interactions, learning, and capacity for social and economic participation.

The report concludes with a summary and recommendations for the sustainability of BSG. In order to scale-up BSG, establish it as a legal charity entity with the capacity to access funding, deliver programs in three Victorian regions and begin to build revenue streams for BSG sustainability an investment of **\$288,000** over two years is sought. This amount is broken into **\$135,000 for Year 1** and **\$148,000 for Year 2**.



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## Section 1 - Beyond the School Gates Overview and Background

Section 1 of this report provides an overview and background about Beyond the School Gates (BSG). BSG is shown to be an innovative regional partnership-based model that aims to increase access to employment, training and community participation opportunities for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. In doing so, BSG is bridging the gap in employment and community engagement opportunities for young people to meet their full potential beyond the school gates.

BSG received funding under the Smarter Schools National Partnerships Project, as one of five Victorian Extended School Hub Field trials, through the then Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) in 2012. Funding via this source has now concluded and the initiative is currently operating through grants and residual funding. Presently BSG operates in the Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston and Port Philip regions and is project managed by the Bayside Glen Eira Kingston Local Learning and Employment Network (BGK LLEN). BSG is overseen by an Advisory Group comprised of senior representatives from local disability-focused education, employment and community agencies.

The overarching mission of BSG is to provide this vulnerable cohort of young people with access to community-led programs that will improve the likelihood of a successful transition out of school and increase their lifelong social, physical and economic participation prospects. To achieve this goal, BSG offers place-based employment and community participation programs by acting as a strategic facilitator that builds partnerships with, and between, education providers, the business sector and community agencies.

Since its establishment in 2012, BSG has offered 62 facilitated programs traversing the employment, training, health and wellbeing, recreation, and family support areas to more than 350 young people. Given that some students participated in more than one program, more than 900 program participations have taken place between 2012 and mid-2016. In more recent years, a greater emphasis has been placed on the provision of programs with specific employment and community inclusion outcomes; an approach that has also facilitated greater involvement of community and business volunteers and mentors.

BSG is increasingly taking an intermediary and advocacy role within the local community, approached by organisations seeking to build mutually beneficial programs and activities for young people. BSG is also assisting all members of the community to raise their expectations regarding what young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability can and should aim to achieve post-school; whether that is at attitudinal, pathways, employment or engagement levels.

BSG was formally and independently evaluated by Dr Michelle Anderson (ACER / Interface2Consulting) in 2014, with the resulting report evidencing that the place-based partnership model was a critical factor in delivering successful outcomes for the youth, family and partner organisation participants. This evaluation also identified that the BSG model was one that had significant local, Victorian and national scalability and transferability capacity.

Whilst the BSG tagline 'A different way to learn' was specifically developed with the young people it would support in mind, it has actually proven to be a phrase that encapsulates the learnings that cross-sectoral BSG partners have garnered through working collaboratively towards a common good.

## Section 2 – Proposing a New and Transferable Beyond the School Gates Model

Section 2 of this report examines the Beyond the School Gates (BSG) initiative and explores the feasibility of it becoming a transferable and scalable model.

Beyond the School Gates (BSG) has been identified as a unique and innovative regional partnership-based model that has increased access to employment, training and community participation opportunities amongst young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. Indeed, BSG has shown to bridge the gap in employment and community engagement opportunities for young people to meet their full potential beyond the school gates within its current Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston and Port Phillip catchment area.

Through considerable research it has been identified that BSG is *highly likely* to be legally recognised as an Incorporated Association, an Australian Tax Concession Charity (TCC), a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) and a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) organisation. The value of being a legal charity entity would enable BSG to 'trade' in its own right, enter into contracts, ensure that the personal liabilities of Committee of Management and staff are protected (provided additional insurances are also held) and

have tax concessions applied. In addition, as a legal entity BSG may be in a position to seek funding or deliver activities related to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Victorian Government 'Education State' agenda or other government sources. Having DGR status would also enable BSG to make applications for a much larger number of government, philanthropic and corporate funding grants (given that many grants are offered only to charities with TCC/DGR status) thus providing the organisation with greater level of financial and sustainability security.

It will take some time to establish and formalise BSG under this organisational structure. It is thus proposed that the 'new' BSG will transform over a two phase stage. It is also hoped that BSG can be supported through some in-kind support, predominately in the area of office space and financial administration assistance, during the transformation period.

Stage 1 will see the BGK LLEN act as the auspiced 'Lead Agent' managing BSG during its transition to a charitable not-for-profit entity. During this time, BSG will be overseen by a voluntary Advisory Committee and BSG Manager who will work towards receiving endorsement as an Incorporated Association, a TCC, a PBI and a DGR organisation. BSG will also fund, appoint and support at least two organisations during this time frame as 'Local BSG Providers' in separate Victorian regions to deliver BSG related activities for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in their locales. Each Local BSG Provider will establish a 'Local BSG Network' comprised of place-based voluntary representatives from relevant key organisations in their region who can support and positively influence BSG engagement and deliver programs in the region. It is anticipated that Stage 1 arrangements will be in place from January 2017 – December 2017.

Stage 2 will see BSG formally incorporated as an Australian TCC entity with PBI and a DGR endorsement. As a legal entity, BSG will be governed by a voluntary Board of Management comprised of representatives sourced from relevant organisations and possessing specific skill-sets. BSG will be managed by a 'BSG Chief Executive Officer', who will be responsible for the operational and administrative management of BSG including: staffing; ongoing management of 'Local BSG Providers' and the launch into new regions; reporting and evaluation; marketing and communications; advocacy; and funding applications. It is anticipated and assumed that BSG will take form as a not-for-profit charity in December 2017.

During Stage 1 BSG will thoroughly investigate the scope and opportunities for it to become a sustainable organisation. This will entail research into funding via government (in particular its ability to provide NDIS related servicing), philanthropic and corporate streams. However, at this stage, it is anticipated that investment is required for three years to enable BSG to become a self-sustaining, independent entity supporting organisations in new regions across Victoria to become 'Local BSG Providers'.

BSG recognises that local communities play a central role in the success of skills-based outcomes that best serve the needs of young people, and places a major focus on involving a range of stakeholders in the process of the design and delivery of BSG programs and activities. Thus the engagement of Local BSG Providers, who work and are located within a designated geographic area, is critical.

The future success of BSG is based on the building of a model whereby BSG identifies regions in which its approach to providing opportunities for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability will make a difference. The identification of these regions will be based on considerable research into the demography of specific regions and analysis of the need and appetite for consolidated BSG style servicing within that region. Once a Local BSG Provider has been contracted it is their responsibility to employ a BSG Coordinator, establish a Local BSG Network and build partnerships that will lead to the development of innovative, place-based programs and activities for the young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in their region. Underpinning their activity will be attention paid to community and consumer engagement approaches. As per the contract, a Local BSG Provider will report back to BSG through a mix of formal and informal mechanisms.

If established as legal entity that initiates and supports Local BSG Providers across Victoria, the BSG organisation is well positioned to advocate for the rights of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability to gain access to opportunities that will improve their lifelong psycho-social and economic participation outcomes. It is also well positioned to identify, encourage and share best-practice approaches with community stakeholders at local, state and national levels.

As discussed, BSG is well positioned to establish itself as a legal entity and take on the role of managing the expansion of the model into identified regions via service delivery contracts with appropriate organisations located in geographic regions. In addition, there is a commitment from the BGK LLEN that it will provide in-kind support (office space and administration management assistance) between 2017 – 2019 should BSG move to establish itself as a legal entity and begin to contract 'Local BSG Providers'.

## Section 3 – New Areas of Delivery and Scope

This section examines the new areas of delivery and scope built in to the Beyond the School Gates (BSG) model based on recommendations from the pilot evaluation, formal consultations with stakeholders and evidence from the BSG partners, schools, parent cohorts and young people. It resulted in three key areas for development, and in 2015 and 2016 the BSG model has been expanded to accommodate these recommendations and create an enhanced program model:

broader age range – upper primary transitions through to post-school young people;

greater emphasis on work experience, exposure and earlier career development opportunities that aligns with NDIS directions; and

building school clusters to create greater school ownership and leadership.

The initial decision to focus the BSG pilot activities on secondary school age young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability was informed by information from both the state and local levels. However, evaluations and consultations with stakeholders pointed to a need to expand the age range to extend beyond the school age range, and thus participant ages for relevant BSG programs have now been extended to 25 years of age. Because of this a number of new programs have been introduced including:

*Social Club.* This program is designed to give young people aged 16 to 25 years with intellectual disability and/or learning disability the opportunity to acquire social competence skills in a group setting with peers.

*The Social Impact Program.* This program is designed to provide people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability the skills to form and maintain friendships and relationships, and is incorporated in to the Certificate 1 in Transition Education.

*Hands Up! Student Volunteer Program.* This program is designed to increase access to volunteering opportunities for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability and to raise awareness in the community of the benefits of accessing this pool of volunteers. This program is being funded under the Victorian Department of Human Services 'Engage! Initiative' program until the end of 2017.

5

The BSG 'four pillars' (Health, Vocational, Recreation and Family Support) established in response to pre-pilot scoping and research proved useful in the initial scheduling and provision of programs and activities. However, as the initiative evolved, it became apparent that the four pillars were, in many ways, an artificial construct that, much like the decorative columns of a colonial mansion, did not add to the strength or integrity of BSG.

The first issue identified was the difficulty of fitting programs in to either one pillar area or the other given that many programs covered more than area, and it was identified that a more holistic approach to programming allowed for programs to be sourced according to an identified need rather than suitability for a particular category. Research and feedback identified that programs with more tailored work-based learning and community inclusion focus were not only required but would provide participants with skills that would benefit their lifelong employability and social inclusivity skills. This required the gradual reframing of programming decisions in line with the big picture parameters, involving both a tightened focus on existing programs and the active acquisition of new programs during 2015 and 2016. Some new programs introduced included:

*Introduction to Work Program.* This program is designed to provide extended, hands-on learning opportunities for students in a real, supportive work place.

*Exploring TAFE Program.* The aim of this program is to provide participants with a supported introduction to an adult learning environment, as well as expanding their awareness of a range of career options.

*Career Fit Program.* This program is designed to provide participants with the opportunity to learn in the workplace, with classes and work placements all offered at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre complex.

*Café Skills Program.* This program aims to provide hands-on hospitality skills in an environment modified to suit learners of all needs and abilities.

*Work Place Social Skills Program.* BSG is currently working with experienced disability and social coaching program facilitator, Donna Gabriel, to develop a program designed to introduce the concept of appropriate work place behaviour through the medium of interactive activities.

*SYN Radio Programs.* BSG is partnering with SYN Radio to offer two programs late in 2016 designed

to introduce participants to the radio industry. Students learn the basics of radio production and presentation, both on air and behind the scenes. The two programs are designed for two different audiences – one specifically for students on the Autism spectrum and the second being students with an intellectual disability.

In 2015, the BSG hosted a number of “conversation” consultations, speaking with staff from special schools and disability organisations. The key topic of discussion was partnerships, with two specific questions addressed. First, how can schools strengthen partnerships with their local communities and second, how can schools partner with other education providers? In conducting these consultations, BSG staff were also provided an opportunity to discuss the BSG program and receive feedback about the model, its benefits and ongoing need for sustainability. When asked to consider what support schools need to form effective partnerships, conversation participants immediately and strongly identified the need for a partnership facilitator – someone whose role it is to initiate, facilitate, drive and maintain partnerships. The role of BSG as an external partnership facilitator was recognised as an effective and successful alternative to an in-school facilitator.

The group examined the issues that can arise as schools and external organisations attempt, with the best of good will on both sides, to form partnerships. It was generally agreed that it can be difficult for external organisations to communicate with schools, with disability organisation members pointing out they don’t know who to ask for to discuss partnership work and ideally there would be someone within the school whose role it is to communicate with external organisations. School staff participants noted that it can be difficult for schools to know who to approach externally for partnership opportunities.

When considering how schools can strengthen partnerships with their local communities, the discussion once again focused on the need to have someone whose role it is to take responsibility for maintaining partnerships. It was noted that schools need to recognise the partnerships that already exist and that all parties need to nurture and maintain partnerships if they are to thrive. Similarly, partnering with other education providers was seen as very valuable by school staff, though lack of time to reach out to others schools was noted as a barrier and that contact between schools generally happened on an ad-hoc rather than planned manner. The role of BSG as a facilitator and driver of school networks was highlighted as an example of how to overcome the issue of patchy relationships cobbled together by individual school staff on an as-needs basis.

In response to feedback regarding the need for a network driver and facilitator, and in order to address the identified significant gaps in transition and pathways opportunities for students with disabilities, BSG created and convened a *Schools Connect – Disability Pathways Group* in late 2015 to promote the sharing of expertise and resources between mainstream and special schools in the region. The Schools Connect network is designed to be the engine room that drives and informs program and initiatives planning. It provides members with the opportunity to discuss local issues around gaps in opportunities for students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability and to explore possible collaborations. The membership of the school cluster is comprised of school staff from special, SDS and mainstream schools, including: Principals; Wellbeing Coordinators; Careers Coordinators; Integrations Coordinators; Integration Aides; and any interested staff who work with students with disability. In establishing the *Schools Connect – Disability Pathways Group* BSG was able to leverage off the positive relationships developed during its previous four years of operations with mainstream schools (government, Catholic and independent), special and SDS schools to create an initial school cluster list of 29 schools within the Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston and Port Philip regions.

## Section 4 – A Strong Case for BSG Transfer and Scale-Up

This section provides youth disability and social capital literature and data, information which not only led to the initial development of Beyond the School Gates (BSG) but also highlights the importance of its continuance. The strong relationship between BSG and the Victorian Department of Education’s (DET) recently launched ‘Strategic Intent’ and ‘The Education State’ policy agenda is discussed, highlighting that BSG been contributing to the delivery of elements of these policies for years prior to (and since) their 2015 release. It also identifies Victorian regions where the implementation of the BSG model could affect positive outcomes for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in those locales. Further, it provides additional information and data which validates why BSG should continue to be delivered in the region where it was first established.

Australian young people with disability are a substantial, and seemingly increasing, cohort. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) identified that 7.8 per cent of all 15 – 24 year olds in Australia had a disability in 2011; increasing from 6.6 per cent in 2009. In 2012 the ABS estimated that 245,300 within this age range live with disability in Australia, a cohort slightly over the entire population size of Hobart. It was further

identified that only 38 per cent of these young people had completed Year 12 or its equivalent and that 62 per cent were not fully engaged in work or study, and that only half of all students with severe disability progress past Year 10 at school, compared with 80 per cent in the general population. This data alone infers that, for the vast majority, a successful completion of school followed by a positive transition from school and into employment or further training is not achieved or not a likely outcome. Australia also compares poorly on the international stage when it comes to labour force participation, poverty and social exclusion rates experienced by Australians with disability; with only 50 per cent of Australians with a disability likely to be employed, compared to 60 per cent for the OECD, and 70 per cent for the top eight OECD countries; and, 45 per cent of Australians with a disability live in/near poverty, more than double the OECD average. Research indicates that number of people with disabilities in Australia are expected to continue to grow over the coming decades, and that the critical transition points for a person with a disability are: beginning school; leaving school and entering employment; beginning work; and, retiring and ageing. As such it is recommended that a particular focus on the transition from school to work is critical, and that social inclusion and transitions can be enhanced through the education of young people with a disability and fostering partnerships between education, community services and employment agencies to support the young person's school to work transition. This approach is not only of benefit to the individual but also to their caregivers and the wider community.

With respect to BSG's cohort of young people, definitions and rates of disability are drawn from the key federal government sources collected and interpreted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). The ABS describes disability by levels of severity, rather than specific types of disability, which is categorised according to limitations that a person has in one or more of the everyday core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication or that they had a schooling or employment restriction. Four levels of limitation are defined by the ABS – Profound, Severe, Moderate or Mild. Each young person who participates in BSG programs is deemed to have a disability, and identified as so because of their attendance at a special school or recognised as a student with disability attending a mainstream school. While all participating BSG students have an intellectual disability and/or learning disability, some also have co-morbidities such as a physical disability and/or a chronic health condition. All young people who participate in BSG programs and activities have disabilities that, according to the ABS definition, would be considered moderate to mild ones. It was suggested that students attending both mainstream or special schools report difficulties in the school environment, particularly with regards learning, communicating and fitting in socially. The ABS have estimated that around 60 per cent of children with a disability at school have an intellectual disability.

Unfortunately, a student with disability is less likely than their non-disabled peers to complete their secondary education. 2012 ABS data revealed that only 38 per cent of all Australians with disability aged 18 – 25 years of age had completed secondary school (Year 12 or equivalent), despite that fact that this cohort are part of the generation of youth who have experienced increased rates of school completion and post-school education overall. Research conducted by the Brotherhood of St Laurence in 2014 singled out school completion as the critical factor associated with improving life chances. While the specific effects of early school leaving on young Australians with disability is unavailable due to lack of data however we can surmise these young people would experience the same, or likely worse, levels of disadvantage as their non-disabled peers that leave school early.

BSG was established to support students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. A further cohort, students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and having an intellectual and/or learning disability, have also formed part of the cohort receiving BSG support. It is this cohort of young people with disabilities who are at risk of poor post-school transitions and may experience lifelong psychosocial and economic difficulties, that BSG was established to support.

According to the Monash University Centre for Developmental Disability Health (CDDH) a person has an intellectual disability if, before the age of 18 years, they have an IQ below 70 (the average IQ being 100) and also have significant difficulty with daily living skills. The CDDH estimates that around two to three per cent of the Australian population have an intellectual disability. Intellectual disability can be mild, moderate or severe and factors such as personality, coping strategies and the presence of other disabilities (motor, social or sensory). Young people who take part in BSG generally sit within the definition of mild or moderate intellectual disability.

The terms 'learning differences' or 'learning difficulties' are broad ones and generally refer to persons experiencing difficulties in reading, writing and comprehension across the spectrums of literacy and numeracy. Learning Difficulties Australia reference Australian studies which estimate that 10 to 16 per cent of students are perceived by their teachers as having learning difficulties but within that population of students with learning difficulties there is a four per cent sub-set of Australian students whose persistent and long lasting learning impairments would categorise them as having a learning disability.

People with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may be considered as having an intellectual disability and/or learning disability. However, some people living with ASD may not be considered to have either of these disabilities. In the 2009 Victorian Autism State Plan it was estimated that approximately 80 per cent having an associated intellectual disability and 20 per cent with intelligence within the normal range. Over the course of the delivery of BSG many participating students have been diagnosed with ASD and attend either a special or mainstream school.

The review of intellectual and learning disabilities (including ASD) prevalence, literature, government plans and lived experience insights highlight the need for additional community support in order for this cohort of young people to fulfil their social and economic potential. The successful delivery of community-driven BSG programs to young people living with such disabilities is evidence of its capacity to play an important role in assisting with improved transition and community participation outcomes.

When reviewing research and policy in relation to people with disability, as well as the organisations that work with people with disabilities, the terms of social inclusion and social capital are often used interchangeably. Furthermore, the Australian Government 2009 'Shut Out' research report and the 2014 'Victorian Government Inquiry into Disability and Social Inclusion', explored these matters in more detail. BSG is demonstrative of incorporating both social inclusion and social capital in its mission, deliverables and outcomes. BSG has been designed to offer social inclusion opportunities for young people with disability as well as bringing together community networks to support these young people which is itself a source of positive social capital in that it facilitates coordination and cooperation between organisations for mutual benefit.

Numerous definitions of social inclusion specifically related to disability exist since the concept was first coined in the 1970s. One particular piece of research has brought together all elements to provide an ecological model of social inclusion. This definition focuses on the two domains of interpersonal relationships and community participation and, within these, incorporates the critical categories that capture the structural and functional components behind social inclusion.

Social capital refers to the idea that social networks are a potential resource for individuals, communities and society as a whole. Social capital has been defined as "features of social organisation such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit". The Australian Bureau of Statistics notes that social capital is produced by societal investments of time and effort and is the result of historical, cultural and social factors which give rise to norms, values and social relations that bring people together in networks or associations which result in collective action. Put simply, social capital is the developing and maintaining of relationships that allow people to work together and the sharing of resources to address opportunities and issues. Within BSG, social capital can be built by both participating young people and the organisations delivering programs and opportunities to this cohort. It could also be argued that parents are also enabled to develop social capital, through either direct engagement in BSG programs or by establishing connections with participating partner organisations.

The 2014 'Victorian Government Inquiry into Disability and Social Inclusion' noted that in order to understand what social inclusion means for people with disability a key starting point is to consider their life aspirations and how these relate to inclusion. The resulting report of this Inquiry noted that the dreams and goals of people with disability is no different from other people in the community and that negative experiences can reduce the aspirations of people with disability and decrease their opportunities for social inclusion. The Inquiry identified that people with disability "need access to communities and, for some, support to pursue their hopes and goals" and that "non-government organisations have considerable potential to make an effective difference in building the social capital of people with disability through innovative initiatives". BSG is a unique and aspiration raising model delivering programs which facilitate connectedness, prepare students for transition from school, support employment preparation, and enable relationships with community and business mentors and thus is already addressing recommendations presented in this Inquiry.

The 2009 Australian Government National Disability Strategy Consultation Report 'Shut Out' outlines the lived experiences of many adults living with disability. Through surveys with many Australians living with disabilities, their families, friends and carers, a number of issues were identified as barriers to full participation in social and economic life. More than half of the respondents cited social exclusion, discrimination and lack of services and support as the most critical issues facing those with disability. BSG is a model designed to mitigate some of the barriers to full participation in social and economic life identified by contributors to the 'Shut Out' research, by providing students with access to services and programs that not only build skill but also increase social participation. Furthermore, participation in these programs are a means of increasing student and parental awareness of services in their local community, while simultaneously assisting organisations to better understand the developmental and accessibility needs of students with disability.

Parents of children with disability are fearful of the lack of future prospects and support for their children. Research reports that the worries of parents of school age children centre around their child's transition out of education and loss of the supportive environment of school, a lack of self-determination planning regarding their child's future and a lack of post-school options. For parents of young people with moderate disabilities, the fact that their child may not be able to be left alone may lead to parental concerns about their own employment options. Researchers note that to achieve greater post-school participation for young people with disability, systemic change needs to occur in areas such as: strong home-school collaboration; comprehensive transition programs; exploration of and student immersion within the post-school settings; and, follow up within the new setting. Through the provision of a range of programs during the schooling years aimed at increasing self-determination skills and the successful transitions for students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability, BSG aims to reduce parental fears about their child's post-school lives.

BSG is predicated on the notion of collaborative and community-wide partnerships and planning, and sees itself as an intermediary body that brings together all of these partners in a coordinated fashion. BSG recognises that to improve outcomes for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability, a partnership-driven, multi-sectoral approach is required, and has evidence that partnerships comprised of schools, community organisations, employers, disability agencies and youth services do create more opportunities for skills acquisition and post-school pathways for young people collectively than they do if working individually or discretely. This is an approach recognised by Australian researchers as ideal to improving the post-school outcomes of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

BSG is built around a holistic partnership approach which draws together key local agencies that share a common desire to improve the post-school (and indeed lifelong) outcomes of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. Partners can innovatively explore what is needed in the local community and how they can combine their skills, knowledge and resources to offer programs and opportunities that will enhance young people's transition through and beyond school, and is predicated on knowledge that one organisation cannot deliver all the programs, services or opportunities needed by young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability to successfully transition through and from school.

In late 2015 the Victorian Department of Education (DET) released its ten year 'Strategic Intent' and 'The Education State' policy, which outlines the targets, deliverables and funding associated with the Strategic Intent. Elements of the Strategic Intent and The Education State agenda align closely with, and mirror, the objectives of BSG and its achievements to-date. Indeed, BSG can confidently highlight and demonstrate that it has, in fact, been contributing to the delivery of elements of these policies for years prior to (and since) the launch of these in 2015. In light of this, as the policy is rolled-out, BSG is well positioned to assist DET in the achievement of some of the desired strategic objectives, offer a state-wide community partnership model for the purpose of improving the post-school outcomes of vulnerable young people with disabilities, and potentially provide scope to receive DET funding for the ongoing delivery of the model and/or targeted programs.

While the majority of BSG programs were designed for student participants, a handful of programs were delivered specifically for the benefit of parents of children with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. Since 2012, 68 programs have been delivered, utilising the skills and resources of 28 community partner organisations with expertise in the specific program elements. Many of these programs were delivered over an entire school term or semester, or during specific periods such as school holiday times. In essence, BSG is transformative for many in the areas of positive psycho-social, physical and economic outcomes. Beneficiaries include not only the individual student participants but also their families, educators, service providers and the wider society. BSG delivers many acquisition benefits to student participants, primarily in the areas of employability skills and work experience, career exploration, friendship development, fun, health, sport and recreation, social skills, and vocational skills. Much literature attests to the importance of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability acquiring such benefits and skills as a means of improving lifelong outcomes.

BSG partner organisations deliver a range of programs across the three proponents of a good quality life: being engaged in employment, on-going learning and/or training; living in and participating in your local community in a way *similar* to same age peers; and, having active social networks with family and friends. Some of these proponents are delivered during the course of program delivery and all aim to result in participants developing skills, engaging in the community and establishing social friendships that outlive the actual program.

Outcomes for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability participating in BSG facilitated programs are innumerable and evidenced through anecdotal feedback and independent

research conducted in 2014. It is further evidenced by program participation levels and numbers of students who have undertaken more than one program; which has seen a total of 353 individual student participants in 62 BSG facilitated programs and given that some students participated in more than one program a total of 896 program participations have taken place between 2012 and mid-2016. Indeed, 48 Per cent of students have participated in one program and the remaining 52 per cent participated in between two to 14 programs.

An evaluation of programs and the depth and breadth of organisations that have delivered BSG facilitated programs also shows community commitment to the model. That many of these organisations have been involved for multiple years is also indicative of the BSG model and management approach being appealing and worth the ongoing investment of their organisational time and resources. Of the 68 programs delivered, almost 46 per cent were provided by organisations that offered up to eight programs.

The success of BSG points to a need for its introduction in other geographical regions. Indeed, in light of the data regarding the increasing population of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability, BSG could provide positive outcomes for this cohort in many regions Australia wide.

However, in considering an initial scaling-up and transfer of the model only three Victorian regions have been closely examined. It is felt that with further funding investment from the government, philanthropic and/or corporate sectors, the BSG model could be successfully transferred into two new regions as well as maintain an ongoing presence in its current region.

A mix of research and liaison with organisations has led to a recommendation that BSG should be introduced into the South East Melbourne (City of Greater Dandenong, City of Casey and Cardinia Shire) and South Gippsland (Bass Coast Shire and South Gippsland Shire) regions. It should also continue to service the region where BSG was first initiated (Bayside City Council, City of Kingston, Glen Eira City Council and City of Port Phillip). The Inner Northern Melbourne region was also explored but information shows that, at present, it is not a viable area in which to launch BSG.

The South East Melbourne region is comprised of three local government areas - Cardinia Shire, City of Casey and the City of Greater Dandenong. This region has and is continuing to experience significant population growth, is marked by a culturally and linguistically diverse population, has a significant number of young people living with disability, has a large number of special and cross-sectoral mainstream secondary schools, is serviced by a wide range of community and disability-specific organisations, and is a region with a significant number of businesses covering an array of industry areas.

The combined population of the three local government areas was estimated to be just over half a million in 2015 and is expected to grow to nearly three quarters of a million within the next decade. The region is one of the most ethnically diverse in Victoria and is also home to a significant population of young people who have come to Australia as humanitarian refugees. Almost 250 Indigenous students are enrolled at local secondary schools, a not insignificant population for a metropolitan region. The population of young people aged between 15 and 19 years has shown growth since 2001 with 33,349 young people in this age bracket recorded at the 2011 Census, with this forecasted to rise in the 2016 Census.

In terms of Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) ranking, the disparity of disadvantage between the City of Greater Dandenong and more advantaged adjoining local government areas are apparent. The City of Greater Dandenong is ranked as the most disadvantaged municipality in Victoria, whereas the City of Casey sits within the 37 per cent of least disadvantaged Victorian municipalities and the Cardinia Shire sits within 25 per cent of the least disadvantaged ones.

The Southern Gippsland region is comprised of two local government areas - Bass Coast Shire and South Gippsland Shire which are both rural, residential and holiday areas. This region has only experienced moderate population growth, is home to mostly Australian born residents, but is beginning to see growth in immigrants from non-English speaking countries, has a reasonable number of young people living with disability, has predominately government secondary schools including two special schools, is serviced by a wide range of community and disability-specific organisations, and has a wide range of businesses covering an array of industry areas.

The combined population of the two local government areas was estimated to be just under 60,000 in 2015 and is expected to experience a 20 per cent growth, to 70,365, within the next decade. In terms of SEIFA index ranking the combined region is considered to be disadvantaged, and sits below the Victorian SEIFA average.

The Southern Gippsland region is not a particularly diverse area, with over 80 per cent of the population born in Australia, 12 per cent higher than the Victorian average. More recently there has been an increase in immigrants from Asian countries, and the region has begun to see refugees re-settled in the region.

Whilst not an ethnically diverse region at present, its positioning as a region beside South East Melbourne is likely to result in some population migration from that area to the Southern Gippsland region over time. It is notable that, for a small population, 57 Indigenous students are enrolled in local secondary schools.

The population of young people aged between 15 and 19 years in the Southern Gippsland region has fluctuated between the Census periods of 2001, 2006 and 2011; with 3,198 young people in this age bracket recorded at the 2001 Census. A slight population growth in this age range is likely to be recorded in the 2016 Census.

The Southern Melbourne region is comprised of four local government areas – Bayside City Council, City of Glen Eira, City of Kingston and the City of Port Phillip. It is this region where BSG was launched and established in since 2012 and is a metropolitan region of Melbourne. Collectively, this region has only experienced moderate population growth, has over 40 per cent of its residents born overseas and is seeing growth in non-English speaking and some refugee cohorts. The region has a significant number of young people living with disability, has an almost equal mix of government to non-government secondary schools including five special schools, is serviced by a wide range of community and disability-specific organisations, and is home to many thousands of businesses covering an array of industry areas.

The combined population of the four local government areas was estimated to be just over half a million people in 2015 and is expected to experience a 10 per cent growth within the next decade. In terms of SEIFA index ranking the combined region is considered to be advantaged with all municipalities sitting above the Victorian average, however pockets of disadvantage can be seen in some areas.

The Southern Melbourne region is a somewhat ethnically diverse area, and in 2011 it was reported that 36 per cent were born outside of Australia, which is almost four per cent higher than the Victorian average. More recently there has been an increase in migrants from North East Asia, largely due to skilled migration and migration for the purpose of further education. Those born in Oceania are also increasing, and the numbers of people from the Sub-Saharan, North Africa and Middle East are also growing. Given the significant population size in this region, only a small number of 65 Indigenous young people were enrolled in local secondary schools

The population of young people aged between 15 and 19 years in three of the four municipalities has continued to show small growth between the three Census periods of 2001, 2006 and 2011; the difference being the City of Port Phillip region which has witnessed slight reduction in this population group over this period. Given that there were larger proportions of children in primary school for the same period, it is expected that an increase in secondary school student enrolments will be noted in the 2016 Census.

The Inner Northern Melbourne region was examined as a potential area of implementation of the BSG model. Whilst this region would benefit from its introduction, presently a Victorian Department of Human Services alternative community partnership model known as 'North West Community Transition Support Program (CTS Program)' aimed at building the capacity of special schools to deliver effective career practice operates in that area. Liaison with the CTS Program Manager identified that BSG would be a welcomed model in the region, however it was recommended that it would be better to delay introduction in that region until the conclusion of the CTS Program. Pleasingly, the CTS Program Manager felt that BSG could leverage the CTS relationships and partnerships if introduced there in the near future, making its ability to launch and initialise there a reasonably straightforward proposition.

Young people with disabilities have much to offer their local communities. While there is some support for this cohort, much more is needed to be done in order to help people living with disability to achieve their potential and become active participants in society and to avoid the unfortunate outcomes faced by many adults with disability who have experienced social isolation, discrimination and exclusion. The lived experience of many people with disability in Australia is deplorable. We can do better than this.

To improve the situation and future outcomes for young people with disabilities the approach must engage government, businesses, community groups, schools, parents, carers and individuals from the community to work together to enact true change. Through authentic participation, young people with disability can break down stereotypes and change public perception about disability.

As evidenced throughout this report, it is clear that the programmatic approach of BSG is achieving large gains by providing opportunities for young people to learn new skills, develop confidence, increase wellbeing and be better able to make decisions regarding their future. In addition, the BSG model makes it easier for service providers to engage with young people who have disabilities, a task that for some would not happen without the facilitation and training provided by BSG. Scaling up the BSG model will allow true change to happen.

## Section 5 - Beyond the School Gates and the NDIS

The National Disability Health Insurance (NDIS) is the most significant disability reform ever experienced in Australia, and is overseen by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The NDIS was trialled in selected sites from 2013 and is now being progressively rolled out across Australia. Full national roll-out of the scheme is expected to be completed by 2019.

NDIS support is available to eligible people between the ages of 0 – 65 years who have a permanent and significant disability that affects their ability to take part in everyday activities. The NDIS is designed to look beyond immediate need and focus on what is required across a person's lifetime through the provision of access to individualised support over which the individual has choice and control. The NDIS provides ongoing funding for all 'reasonable and necessary' disability equipment, care and support services, with persons supported by the NDIS referred to as 'Participants'.

Many of the young people who participate in Beyond the School Gates (BSG) programs are highly likely to be eligible for NDIS funding and support, given that they live with permanent and significant disabilities. As such, eligible young Participants will be able to work with a NDIS 'Planner' to identify the supports that they need in order to achieve their goals, become as independent as possible, develop skills for day-to-day living, participate in the community, and gain meaningful employment.

BSG may be able to interact with the NDIS in two ways - through connecting young people into activities conducted by an NDIS provider organisation (working in partnership with BSG) and/or as an NDIS provider in its own right. In addition, BSG may be eligible to apply to become an Information, Linkages and Capacity (ILC) Building Provider.

The NDIA is responsible for setting the summary Price Guide for NDIS funded supports, whereby most support services will come under a broad service/activity description called a 'cluster' and funding for these supports will need to be within the monetary value of that 'cluster group'.

BSG, as a model already predicated on working in partnerships with external organisations delivering BSG directed programs or activities, is well placed to work in partnership with approved NDIS Providers who would then deliver activities to young people. BSG could position itself in the NDIS environment by collaborating with approved NDIS Providers to use existing activities, or design new ones, which would benefit the development of BSG young people who are also approved NDIS Participants.

In order to be approved as an NDIS Provider the BSG would need to be a legal entity in its own right. It is anticipated that the NDIS marketplace will be a very competitive one, comprised of individuals, for-profit and not-for-profit providers. If BSG was to consider entering the marketplace it would benefit from specialising in one or more particular areas, and potentially ones where it already has a sound track record in delivering such as social skills and volunteering. It may also want to consider entering into new areas of service where, post an audit of other organisations, there may be a gap in servicing, for example youth-to-youth peer support or mentoring. Like anything new or emerging, should BSG become a legal entity and consider becoming an approved NDIS Provider, the Board of Management should carefully investigate whether the organisation is well positioned and ready to take on this service role. Evaluation in terms of staffing, finances, management and financial systems and marketing are but a few considerations that should be taken into account.

The Information, Linkages and Capacity (ILC) Policy Framework has two broad aims: the provision of information, referral and capacity building supports for people with disability, their families, and carers that are not directly tied to a person through an individually funded NDIS package; and, partnerships with local communities, mainstream and universal services to improve access and inclusion for people with disability. Within this framework there are five identified activity streams, which are deemed the most effective way of increasing the social and economic participation of people with disability. As the detailed ILC Program Guidelines have not yet been released the potential for BSG to apply for ILC funding is based on the broad ILC Policy Framework, rather than specific guidelines. In reviewing the policy, the BSG model may relate to two ILC investment areas – a) 'Cohort-focused delivery' and b) 'Delivery by people with disability, for people with disability'. Funding applications are not expected to be released until mid-2017 and it is anticipated it will be a highly competitive tender. In order to make an application BSG would need to be a legal entity with the capacity to enter into contracts in its own right and/or partner with another organisation and deliver ILC related services under a shared agreement arrangement.

As the NDIS is being progressively rolled-out, the determination as to whether BSG young people can apply to become a NDIS Participant will be driven by where they live. Young people already receiving

existing state or federal disability supports will continue to receive those until transitioned into the NDIS. Similarly, NDIS Providers will only be able to offer services in NDIS regions.

If the NDIS is to succeed it requires greater numbers of participants to become members of the workforce, so as to meet the economic reform required to meet the future costings of the NDIS. As the NDIS rolls-out, BSG is in a strong and unique position to not only support young people to prepare for the transition to work but to also support the efforts of the NDIA in ensuring that NDIS Participants become working members of our economy contributing to the scheme through taxation contributions.

The NDIS roll-out, with respect to the three proposed BSG regions, will occur from the following dates: Southern Gippsland (available from 1 October 2017); Southern Melbourne (available from 1 April 2018); and, South-East Melbourne Region (available from 1 September 2018).

It is also important to remember that, with regular amendments to the NDIS occurring during its current transitional phase, the environment may look very different by 2018.

The NDIS and BSG relationship is an untested one at this stage. At the time of writing it is very much a 'watch this space' situation contingent on many factors ranging from whether or not BSG will become a legal entity, whether BSG wants to deliver NDIS services or whether BSG is better placed working in partnerships with other approved NDIS Providers.

## Section 6 - Summary and Recommendations

Beyond the School Gates (BSG) has shown, over five years, to be a model that has successfully provided vulnerable young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability with access to an array of programs designed to improve their social, learning and economic capacities. BSG has acted as an intermediary bringing together various community partners to deliver these programs, allowing vetted partner organisations to design or co-design programs within their own scope of knowledge and expertise, then making these available to young people needing the skills development programs on offer. BSG works alongside schools, recognising that they are experts in the education of young people with disabilities but restricted by a lack of time and resources to actively develop and maintain partnerships with external organisations skilled in the provision of the programs and services that their young students also need in order to transition through school and into a successful life beyond it.

BSG is a unique and vital community partnership model that should, and must, continue. It has been recognised as a successful initiative in its current region, and there is a clear appetite and need for its extension into other Victorian regions. Organisations in other Victorian regions are conscious of the increasing rates intellectual disability and/or learning disability amongst young people in their geographic areas and recognise there is a gap in the provision of facilitated programs that can mitigate the poor post-school outcomes experienced by this vulnerable youth cohort. Research and evaluation of BSG, as well as years of 'positive chatter' about BSG, has influenced a genuine desire for the implementation of BSG in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

It has been shown that there is a strong case for scalability and transfer of BSG provided it is established as a legal entity. BSG initially requires a small investment during the phase where it will seek to establish itself as a not-for-profit entity and be implemented in two additional regions. However, after this time, it is in a strong position to sustain itself through a number of diversified revenue streams such as NDIS service provision, fee-for-service provision, other government funding contracts (such as ones that may be released as part of the 'The Education State' agenda in Victoria) and philanthropic / corporate grants.

There is inequity in access to educational, training and community participation opportunities between young people with intellectual disability and learning disability and their non-disabled peers, which adversely affects their chances of successfully transitioning into a post-school life that includes: being engaged in employment, ongoing learning and/or training; living and participating actively in their community; and having active social networks with family and friends. The BSG model has, since its inception in 2012 and throughout its many points of change, never wavered in its intention to address this inequity and to break down the barriers to social inclusion.

The strength of the BSG model, both then and today, is the multiple and varied strands of operations and advocacy. BSG provides the methods and opportunities to facilitate collaboration and improve community engagement, as well as pooling resources for greater efficiencies than if programs ran in isolation. The work that BSG undertakes to customise and coordinate the delivery of programs for students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability is regionally strategic and driven by the needs of its stakeholders. As well as the practical and tangible outputs of programs and events, BSG has contributed implicitly to the shifting mores of the disability sector by working to dismantle misconceptions about the

capabilities and aspirations of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

To lose BSG would mean a loss of the best-practice intellectual capital and momentum built over the last five years.

To lose BSG would stymie and thwart the desire for other already interested regions to implement it as a hub in their areas, as well as prevent the potential for future national expansion.

To lose BSG would increase pressure on schools to initiate and sustain partnerships with external providers so as to best prepare their students for post-school social and economic participation.

To lose BSG would mean that families miss out on opportunities to engage with a variety of community organisations and watch their children thrive in non-school settings prior to leaving the security of the school environment.

To lose BSG would mean loss of a social capital building model which connects often disparate community services in a cross-sectoral partnership manner.

To lose BSG would mean loss of a model that is well suited to providing young people with an opportunity to choose to participate in reasonable and necessary NDIS-funded programs aligned to their NDIS Plan.

To lose BSG would mean that our vulnerable young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability have reduced opportunities to participate in place-based programs which are not only engaging but play a part in preparing them to be active citizens 'beyond the school gates'.

In order to scale-up BSG, establish it as a legal charity entity with the capacity to access funding, deliver programs in three Victorian regions and begin to build revenue streams for BSG sustainability an investment of **\$288,000** over two years is sought. This amount is broken into **\$135,000 for Year 1** and **\$148,000 for Year 2**.

The Exploration Grant generously provided by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund has allowed BSG to learn all this, with the resulting research report evidencing a need for the continuance of BSG for the benefit of not only young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability but also for our wider society.



# CASE STUDY

In any given week, you'll find Hayley\* busy working her two part time jobs or catching up with her friends. You'll also find that she's a seasoned international traveller, that her hopes for the future are high, and that she knows how to make a great cup of coffee.

In her final year of school in 2013, Hayley participated in a number of Beyond the School Gates programs, including Cafe Skills, Advanced Coffee Making & Coffee Art, Cafe Skills Extension and Exploring TAFE. As a result of her participation in these programs, Hayley realised her passion for making coffee and her dream to one day run her own cafe. Through the Exploring TAFE program, Hayley was also supported to experience the TAFE environment whilst she was still in school, which led her to enrol in a TAFE course the following year.

Beyond the School Gates provided Hayley with opportunities to explore her career interests, build new skills, and enhance her confidence. Stuart Hunter from Holmesglen TAFE, noted that Hayley's participation in Beyond the School Gate's Exploring TAFE program "gave Hayley the increased confidence for a smooth transition from school to an adult learning environment. In 2014, she decided to enroll in Certificate I in Transition Education and, thanks to the support of Beyond the School Gates, Hayley was familiar with the environment, had met the teachers and made some friends." Hayley also successfully completed the Certificate 1 in Hospitality, which included very valuable work experience in two cafes.

Hayley's mother, Melissa\*, noted that the Beyond the School Gates programs helped to build her confidence and social skills, stating that "The programs enabled her to feel confident in new situations and environments and gave her the opportunity to interact with many different people including other students in the program, customers at the coffee shop and TAFE students and staff. I feel that the programs have helped Hayley to be much more independent and are extremely valuable both from a social and practical perspective."

At the end of 2014, Hayley travelled to Dubai with a friend she had made in TAFE. In 2015 she started working part-time in a family cabinet making business and travelled alone to Qatar to visit the same friend and to stay with the family for three weeks. Now, in 2016, Hayley is working three nights a week at a restaurant, tending bar and making coffees and being trained to undertake table service. She also continues to work part time in the family business. It's a very busy life but, as Melissa notes "she's still got time to catch up with friends for coffee, movies and shopping!"

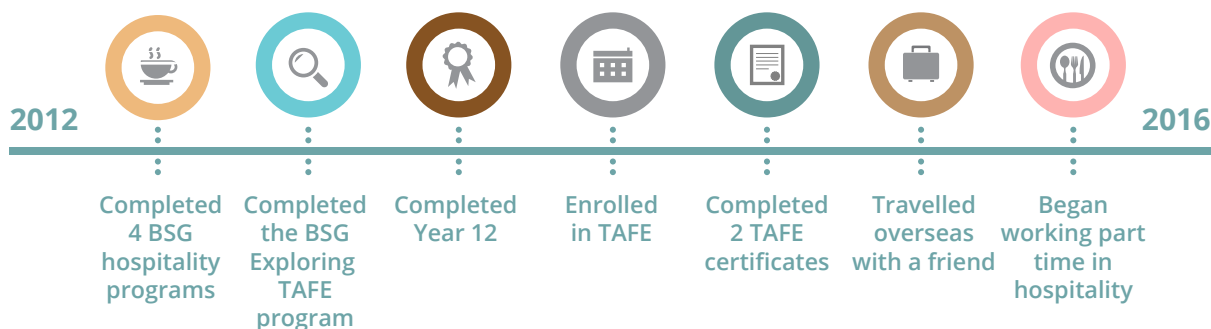
*\*Names have been changed*



# HAYLEY DREAMS OF OWNING A CAFE

*The programs enabled her to feel confident in new situations and environments and gave her the opportunity to interact with many different people including other students in the program, customers at the coffee shop and TAFE students and staff. I feel that the programs have helped Hayley to be much more independent and are extremely valuable both from a social and practical perspective.*

## Parent



## CASE STUDY

Simon\* is nervous about his forthcoming interview at Woolworths for a part-time job. He did work experience there while he was at school, but this, as Simon says, is “a lot more serious”.

Simon is in his first year out of school since he left Southern Autistic School aged 16. Mary\*, Simon’s mother, says she started thinking that he had “outgrown” school when he was in Year 10. “I was really excited when I heard about Beyond the School Gate’s Exploring TAFE program, as I knew this was an opportunity for Simon to test the waters in an adult learning environment while he was still at school.” Cindy, Simon’s teacher at Southern Autistic School, was in complete agreement with Simon’s family. “It was really obvious to all the staff who taught Simon that he was ready for the next step. The great thing about the Exploring TAFE program is that it gave us all a safe way to explore TAFE as an option for Simon.”

Mary is at pains to point out the Southern Autistic School “did a fantastic job in preparing Simon for life after school”, providing travel training, interview training and other work-readiness skills. However, it was Beyond the School Gates that provided the opportunities for Simon to experience life and learning beyond his school. Simon got to know the Holmesglen staff and felt safe and supported in the Community and Transition Education Department, so transitioning from school to the Certificate I in Transition Education at Holmesglen was the logical step. Simon’s response when asked about his TAFE program is simple – “I love it”.

Simon also participated in the Beyond the School Gates’ Media Program, which saw him travelling independently to the city and socialising with students from other schools. He really enjoyed the social aspect of the Media Program, so it’s hardly surprising that he also really enjoyed meeting people at the Beyond the School Gates Dance Party. He’s now looking for social groups in his area to make new friends, and has lined up some work experience at a local boarding kennel. Simon says that he is “very busy, but it’s good to be busy.”

Mary is pleased that Simon is active and involved. “Simon is doing more with his life than a lot of teenagers his age. He has more skills than he can imagine.” When asked what Simon wants for his future, Mary states simply “he wants to be valued.”

*\*Names have been changed*

# SIMON WANTS TO CONTRIBUTE AND BE VALUED



2014



Finished school at year 10



Completed the BSG Exploring TAFE program



Completed the BSG Media program



Expanded his friendship network



Completed work experience in retail and animal care



Currently applying for part time work

2016

*I was really excited when I heard about Beyond the School Gate's Exploring TAFE program, as I knew this was an opportunity for Simon to test the waters in an adult learning environment while he was still at school.*

**Parent**



Life beyond school



Socialisation opportunities



Adult learning experience

*It was really obvious to all the staff who taught Simon that he was ready for the next step. The great thing about the Exploring TAFE program is that it gave us all a safe way to explore TAFE as an option for Simon.*

**Teacher**

# CASE STUDY

A confident young woman with a passion for books, Jane\* has an interesting story to tell of a busy life and a bright future, thanks to a little help from Beyond the School Gates. The former Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (OLSH) College student took advantage of the opportunities provided by Beyond the School Gates to access employment, training and community participation opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities and learning differences while she was in secondary school.

Jane first participated in the Café Skills program in 2014, which provided hands-on hospitality training modified to suit students with a wide range of learning needs. After successfully completing this program, Jane then enrolled in Exploring TAFE, a joint initiative by Beyond the School Gates and Holmesglen designed to introduce students with intellectual disability to the world of adult learning in a supportive environment.

Both these Beyond the School Gates programs provided Jane with a range of opportunities where previously there were very few. Student Services Leader at OLSH College, Jennifer Fries, noted that Jane's participation in Beyond the School Gates' Exploring TAFE and Café Skills programs saw her not only develop her practical skills, but also her confidence and ability to adapt to another setting. It helped her to gain a greater idea of what career pathway she wanted to follow when she left school, and inspired her to enroll in a TAFE course when she finished school.

The fact that Jane was able to participate in these programs whilst she was still in school was very comforting to Jane and her family, as it made the often daunting transition from school to post-school life a gradual and supportive experience. As suggested by Jane's mother, "I have had to learn to 'let go' a little bit more, which is quite difficult, but she has shown me that she is responsible and that she can do something that I may have considered was out of her comfort zone."

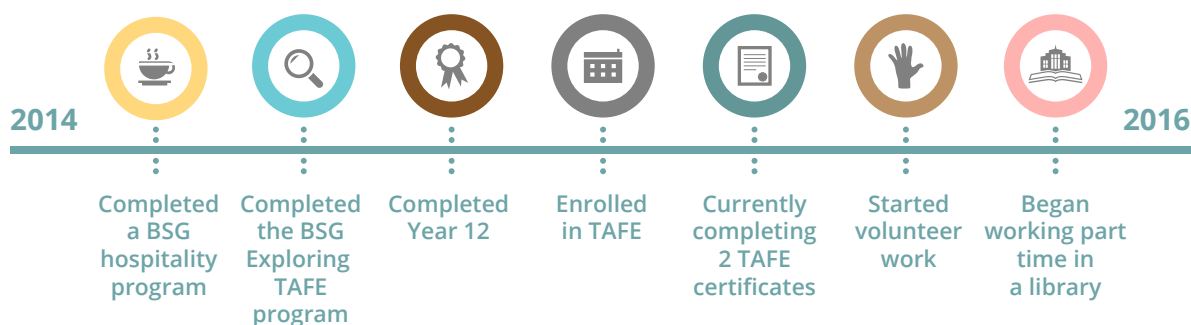
As suggested by Pathways/VCAL Coordinator at OLSH College, Maureen Malone, "For students like Jane, leaving the familiar and nurturing school environment can be daunting. The Beyond the School Gates programs, however, assist with this transition. It has contributed to boosting Jane's self-esteem and has enabled her to look to the future with a greater degree of confidence."

Jane's teachers also noted the impact that these programs have had on her social and emotional development, acknowledging the valuable role that mixing with people from different schools, ages and backgrounds plays. Her ability to cope with change has also been greatly improved, as she has had to adjust very quickly to different settings outside of the familiar school grounds.

In 2016, Jane is now attending Holmesglen, where she is undertaking both the Certificate 1 in Work Education and the Certificate 1 in Hospitality. Jane has also participated in the Beyond the School Gates Hands Up! Student Volunteer program in 2016, assisting the Bayside Council to prepare for an Aged Care Expo. She sees all these programs giving her valuable skills for the future. But while she still enjoys hospitality, an interest fuelled by her positive experience in the Beyond the School Gates Café Skills program, her true passion is books. Jane is currently doing a work placement in a Bayside library and she hopes to work in a library in the future.

*\*Names have been changed*

# JANE LOVES BOOKS & WANTS TO WORK IN A LIBRARY



*For students like Jane, leaving the familiar and nurturing school environment can be daunting. The Beyond the School Gates programs, however, assist with this transition. It has contributed to boosting Jane's self-esteem and has enabled her to look to the future with a greater degree of confidence.*

**Teacher**



- I** Social and emotional development
- M** Social network development
- P** Resilience development
- A** Greater adaptability
- C** Improved coping with change
- T** Increase in confidence

# OVERVIEW & BACKGROUND



1. Overview of Beyond The School Gates (BSG)
2. Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates
3. Informal Evaluation

## 1. Overview of Beyond the School Gates (BSG)

Beyond the School Gates (BSG) is an innovative regional partnership-based model that aims to increase access to employment, training and community participation opportunities for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. BSG is bridging the gap in employment and community engagement opportunities for these young people to meet their full potential beyond the school gates.

BSG received funding in 2012 under the Smarter Schools National Partnerships Project, as one of five Extended School Hub Field trials. The then Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) defined an Extended School as one that works with a range of organisations to provide services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community. The goals of the Extended School sites were to reduce barriers to learning experienced by students and to connect and coordinate external activities to provide complementary learning for students and families.

BSG funding under the Extended School Hub trial has now concluded and currently the initiative is operating through grants and residual funding. Presently BSG operates in the Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston and Port Philip regions and is project managed by the Bayside Glen Eira Kingston Local Learning and Employment Network (BGK LLEN). BSG is overseen by an Advisory Group comprised of senior representatives from local disability-focused education, employment and community agencies.

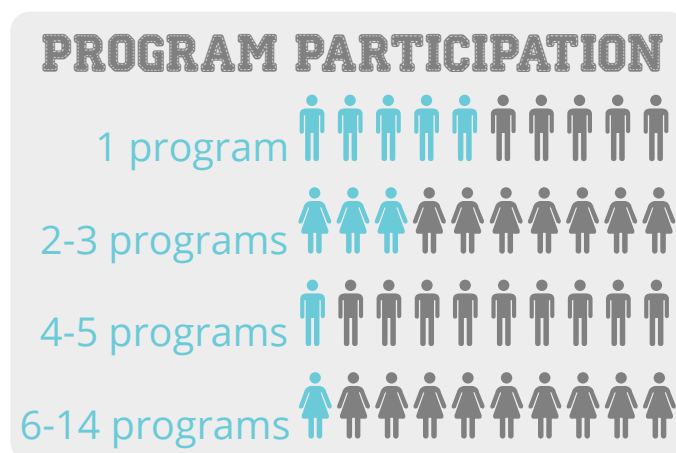
The overarching mission of BSG is to provide this vulnerable cohort of young people with access to community-led programs that will improve the likelihood of a successful transition out of school and increase their lifelong social, physical and economic participation prospects. To achieve this goal, BSG offers place-based programs aimed at positively building young people's current and future employment and community participation capacities.

BSG acts as a strategic facilitator and intermediary that builds partnerships with, and between, education providers, the business sector and community agencies for the purpose of delivering targeted activities to young people with disability. BSG is a geographic hub that brings these societal groups together via a mix of formalised networks and individualised partnerships. This collaborative partnership approach enables partners to share expertise, identify local needs and gaps, and source solutions and programs to address these.

Since its establishment BSG has offered 62 facilitated programs traversing the employment, training, health and wellbeing, recreation, and family support areas to 353 young people. Given that some students



participated in more than one program a total of 896 program participations have taken place between 2012 and mid-2016. In more recent years, a greater emphasis (driven by research, evaluations and consultations) has been placed on the provision of programs with specific employment and community inclusion outcomes; an approach that has also facilitated greater involvement of community and business volunteers and mentors.



BSG is increasingly taking an intermediary and advocacy role within the local community. The proven success of BSG and its local cross-sectoral positioning now sees it being approached by secondary schools (cross-sectoral special and mainstream), business and community agencies seeking opportunities to collaborate with one another and build mutually beneficial programs and activities for young people. BSG is increasingly taking on an advocacy role by assisting all members of the community raise their expectations regarding what young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability can and should aim to achieve post-school; whether that is at attitudinal, pathways, employment or engagement levels.

BSG was formally and independently evaluated by Dr Michelle Anderson (ACER / Interface2Consulting) in 2014, with the resulting report evidencing that the place-based partnership model was a critical factor in delivering successful outcomes for the youth, family and partner organisation participants. This evaluation also identified that the BSG model was one that had significant local, Victorian and national scalability and transferability capacity.

Whilst the BSG tagline 'A different way to learn' was specifically developed with the young people it would support in mind, it has actually proven to be a phrase that encapsulates the learnings that cross-sectoral BSG partners have garnered through working collaboratively towards a common good.

## 1.1 Beyond the School Gates Terminology

Key terminology used with regards BSG are outlined below. In addition, further literature and data pertaining to intellectual disability, learning differences and learning disability are discussed in greater detail in Section 4.

### What is intellectual disability?

Intellectual disability is characterised by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning (general mental capacity such as learning, reasoning and problem solving) and in adaptive behaviour, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. One way of measuring intellectual functioning is an IQ test. Generally, an IQ test score of around 70 or as high as 75 indicates a limitation in intellectual functioning.

### What is learning difference?

Learning difference (most commonly referred to as learning disability) is an umbrella term that applies to a range of issues, including dyslexia, autism, auditory processing and severe language disorder. Simply defined, a learning difference interferes with a person's ability to process information and creates a gap between intellectual capability and performance. Learning differences may include difficulties with reading, listening, thinking, talking, writing, spelling, arithmetic, organisation or ability to focus.

### What is a learning disability?

Within the population of students with learning difficulties there is a sub-set who show persistent and

long lasting learning impairments and these are identified as students with a learning disability.

### Respecting personal choice

In most instances, learning differences are called learning disabilities. However, BSG recognises and respects the choice of many students and parents not to identify with the term 'learning disability'. Whether students have dyslexia or severe language disorder, what they have in common is that they learn differently. BSG has adopted this inclusive terminology and thus references to "students with intellectual disability or learning difference" are noted.

### 'A different way to learn'

The phrase 'a different way to learn' was adopted as the BSG by-line and incorporated as part of the BSG brand and logo, as it expresses exactly what BSG is built upon. All the students who participate in a BSG program have individual and different ways of learning, and BSG's aim is to offer these students the chance to experience a learning environment that is modified to suit their needs, where the content is modified to allow for a range of learning styles and where learning differently is the norm.

## 2. Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates

Formal research and evaluation of BSG was undertaken by Dr Michelle Anderson in late 2014, resulting in the report 'Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: 'A different way to learn' Pilot'<sup>1</sup>. The major focus of the evaluation was aimed at the 'broader model' of BSG rather than the individual programs it delivers and involved a mix of literature research and consultations with key BSG partners and beneficiaries (student, parents, teachers and school principals). The final report is attached, with a summation of key results and recommendations provided herein.

The considerable literature review identified the critical opportunities that young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability require in order to increase their social and economic participation capacities. The consultations and focus groups undertaken with BSG participants and beneficiaries identified that the model was not only contributing to improved outcomes for the young people, but that it was delivering unexpected outcomes for partners and a model that could and *should* be replicated in other regions.

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### 2.1 Needs of Young People with Disability

This research identified that all young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability, as opposed to their peers without disability, need early intervention opportunities; opportunities that will build personal confidence; and skills that in turn can improve social and economic participation capacities. The research identified such young people's needs across the following areas:

- *Preparation opportunities* - to rehearse and to anticipate, thus building confidence in preparing for new and unexpected events.
- *Social opportunities* - to meet new people, to listen to people other than their family, to make new friends, and overcome isolation issues.
- *Meaningful opportunities* - to not just 'fill in time', but to feel that they belong and build capabilities for now and in the future.
- *Diverse opportunities* - to expose young people to new experiences, and to provide chances to participate in 'something different' that piques their interest and/or presents meaningful and relevant challenges.
- *Fun opportunities* - to develop a love of learning and build in confidence in their own skills and abilities.

*"You worry when they are 'out there' [in the community]. It's going to come around very quickly and the potential for work or study ... so [BSG] is about the preparation for life around school and beyond school."*(Parent)<sup>2</sup>

### 2.2 Benefits Delivered by BSG

This research with BSG partners and participants identified that BSG was perceived by these as a model that offers tangible and symbolic benefits to young people, educators, families and partner organisations.

<sup>1</sup> Anderson, M. (2014), *Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: 'A different way to learn' Pilot*, ACER / Interface2Consulting

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.12

These benefits, as delivered by BSG, were characterised in terms of:

- *Social benefits* – young people's development of new, stronger, diverse relationships and networks that in turn were also assisting in the understanding of social norms.

*"As the name says, 'Beyond the School Gates'. So things not just related to academic learning, but skills that will teach him how to manage in life. Things that a parent can't always teach." (Parent) <sup>3</sup>*

- *Educational benefits* – the acquisition of improved or new knowledge and skills by young people through the participation in 'real world' education or employment activities.

*"We're not aware of anything like this for our students... It provides opportunities for students beyond the school and employability skills and we couldn't offer it in the same way." (Teacher) <sup>4</sup>*

- *Psychological benefits* – the acquisition of improved levels of confidence, wellbeing and the feelings of 'making a difference' at young people's personal or wider social levels.

*"Pursue dreams and goals – putting into words their aspirations to 'get a job'." (Teacher) <sup>5</sup>*

- *Performance benefits* – improved capacity and capabilities of individuals, families, schools or partner organisations.

*"Our student that did Beyond the School Gates programs left here with far more independent skills than when she started here at the school." (Teacher) <sup>6</sup>*

## 2.3 Validity and outcomes of the BSG model

As a new and unique model, the research explored the validity and outcomes of BSG. Whilst only analysing the impacts within the current BSG region, the evaluation points to it being a successful model with considerable capacity for scalability and transferability. Simply put, the evaluation identified that BSG was delivering:

- *Improved coordination and community engagement.* BSG is predicated on a model that relies on community engagement for success, and that this approach has directly and indirectly led to improvements in service coordination across the region. BSG was seen as paradigm shifting, as it was seen as the first such model placing young people with disability at the centre and harnessing the community to deliver programs and activities for this cohort's specific benefit. Where initially BSG was the initiator of programs, approaching relevant services and organisations to deliver activities, it has witnessed a shift whereby agencies now approach BSG offering services they feel will suit the needs of young people. BSG is now a well recognised and respected intermediary 'broker' and it has played a significant role in building sustainable community engagement.

*"BSGs is proactive in showing what's 'out there'. Whereas before BSGs you had to seek things out yourself, which means we can focus on how the opportunity might adapt or cater to our specific needs." (Teacher) <sup>7</sup>*

*"We're very proud of our partnership with Beyond the School Gates. It's featured in our flyers and brochures among our other programs." (Partner) <sup>8</sup>*

- *Increasing opportunities.* All research participants recognised that BSG had improved opportunities for young people with disability or learning differences through the provision of a wide range of community-led and quality programs that address the unique needs of this cohort. Educators praised the model for being one that delivers opportunities and programs that schools are simply not equipped or resourced to offer to students. Student and family engagement was also rated as very strong, with parents directly attributing BSG program participation to improved levels of skills and confidence in their children. Parental feedback was underscored by a sense of urgency for BSG to 'succeed' due a fear that BSG would (like many other de-funded disability programs) cease or be inaccessible to their child once they finish school. For these families, BSG was viewed as making an important contribution to ameliorating the societal and economic barriers faced by young people

<sup>3</sup> Anderson, M. (2014), *Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: 'A different way to learn' Pilot*, ACER / Interface2Consulting, p.13.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p.12

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.15

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.16

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p.17

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p.18

with intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

*“Three boys have actually picked up jobs through BSG Café Skills. One is at The Point. We’ve probably had 16 students do Café Skills so far and three have gone on and got jobs.”(Teacher) <sup>9</sup>*

- **Sustainability.** The evaluation identified that the BSG approach offers a valid, viable and sustainable model for addressing the needs of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. It was recognised that BSG offers efficient and effective opportunities to these young people in ways that schools and community services cannot; largely due to structural, capacity or isolation issues. It was identified that: BSG has directly increased networking opportunities for students, school and agency staff; there was increased community interest (both locally and more remotely) in the BSG model; the governance structure of BSG was both robust whilst also flexible enough to facilitate considered responsive change in its landscape and environment; and, that delivery of programs has become more focused and attentive to needs identified through anecdotal and formal feedback from stakeholders. Stakeholders were vocal in their desire for BSG to be continued in, and also offered outside of, its current catchment zone.

*“All members are strongly committed to the model, mapping of others such as various tiers of government, peak bodies etc could be invited.” (Partner) <sup>10</sup>*

## 2.4 BSG Critical Success Factors

The critical success factors identified during the evaluation, and which can be adopted as the model is transferred into other regions, were:

- Powerful conceptualisation of, and engagement with, BSG as ‘a different way to learn’ for students, parents and the community with whom BSG symbolises new possibilities and opportunities.
- Highly structured and managed BSG governance, instilling confidence in stakeholders to set a foundation from which a new transferable model can be quickly developed and mobilised.
- Systematic provision of scaffolded practical learning and skills development opportunities for young people through access to collaboratively developed community-led programs.
- Dedicated focus on families as BSG partners and co-learners, coupled with a range of practical support mechanisms to underpin this commitment.
- Capacity and capability to generate additional funding to sustain BSG and test and deliver more targeted opportunities and activities that meet the needs of all stakeholders.
- Capacity to engage a suite of skilled community and business sector volunteers to support student learning and training.
- Collective wealth of knowledge and experience from ‘the BSG team’ and partners who share an unfailing commitment and determination to successfully collaborate and support young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability and their families.
- Collective understanding from partners that improved social and economic participation outcomes that young people derive from BSG participation is not only important for the young learners but also for society as a whole.
- Community buy-in through strong partner engagement.

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## 3. Informal Evaluations

Informal evaluations of BSG and consultations with stakeholders have been conducted over the course of its delivery and, coupled with the formal research conducted in 2014, has informed the ongoing development of BSG. This has seen BSG re-focus its model and identify and adopt new areas of delivery and scope. In light of these a number of additional areas were adopted and include:

- a) broader age range – upper primary transitions through to post-school young people;
- b) greater emphasis on work experience, exposure and earlier career development opportunities that aligns with NDIS directions; and
- c) building school clusters to create greater school ownership and leadership.

The adoption of new areas of delivery and scope, and the underpinning research and evaluations informing these, are discussed in more detail in Section 3.

<sup>9</sup> Anderson, M. (2014), *Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: ‘A different way to learn’ Pilot*, ACER / Interface2Consulting, p.10.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p.19

# PROPOSING A TRANSFERABLE BSG MODEL



4. Beyond the School Gates - Alternative Transferable models
5. Beyond the School Gates - a Not-for-Profit Charity
6. Local BSG Providers
7. BSG Advocacy and Best Practice Approaches
8. Summary

This section examines the Beyond the School Gates (BSG) initiative and explores the feasibility of it becoming a transferable model.

Evaluations of BSG, both formal and informal (and discussed in more detail in Section 1 and Section 3), pointed to the need for a continuance of BSG, with the proviso that it continues to offer broad and balanced programs that will deliver the best future socio economic opportunities to young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. This directive goal is in recognition of the fact that these young people, and their families, are keen to be meaningful contributors to our society post school.

A further recommendation made through these evaluations was the need for BSG to diversify its funding streams as a mechanism for ensuring sustainability in the current catchment region and to facilitate its transfer into other regions in Melbourne and Victoria. In later sections of this report it is shown that BSG could potentially support and/or seek funding through delivery of National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and/or the Victorian Government 'Education State' agenda initiatives and, if successful in these areas, could build revenue streams via these.

It was further advised that should BSG expand into other regions as it has a sound platform with which to do so, it must maintain its place-based approach to identifying local partners and delivering tailored programs and unique opportunities that best suit the needs of young people in other locales.

This section investigates the feasibility of transforming BSG from a local auspiced program into a stand-alone recognised not-for-profit entity capable of financially sustaining itself which in turn funds the delivery of place-based BSG activities via contracted partners in local Victorian communities. Established as such an entity BSG would be positioned to not only assist in the provision of services but take on the role of a neutral intermediary organisation possessing youth disability expertise and the experience to act in a networking, facilitation and advocacy role.

## 4. Beyond the School Gates – Alternative Transferable Models

Through considerable research it has been established that BSG is *highly likely* to be legally recognised as an Incorporated Association, an Australian Tax Concession Charity (TCC), a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) and a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) organisation.

The value of being a legal charity entity would enable BSG to 'trade' in its own right, enter into contracts, ensure that the personal liabilities of Committee of Management and staff are protected (provided additional insurances are also held) and have tax



concessions applied. Having DGR status would also enable BSG to make applications for a much larger number of government, philanthropic and corporate funding grants (given that many grants are offered only to charities with DGR status) thus providing greater level of financial and sustainability security. Being recognised as a PBI would entitle BSG to some additional tax concessions, such as salary sacrificing for staff, thus reducing some organisational costs and making it an attractive feature to potential staff and/or funders.

An explanation of how BSG would meet the criteria of each is outlined below. In addition, a description of steps and costs associated with applying for each is also provided.

Whilst this desk-top audit suggests that BSG would have a strong likelihood of success in becoming an Incorporated Charity with PBI and DGR endorsements, it cannot be taken as fact. It is highly recommended that BSG seeks advice from a professional (eg. lawyer, tax lawyer) to evaluate the proposed organisation structure and provide professional advice as to the likelihood of gaining charity, PBI and DGR endorsement. It is recommended that this takes place post conclusion of the 'LMCF Exploration Grant' period.

## 4.1 Incorporated Association

Incorporating allows an organisation to take on its own 'legal entity', allowing it to enter into legal contracts in its own name. Incorporating an Association in Victoria is conducted through Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV)<sup>11</sup>. An Incorporated Association protects its members and Committee Members from personal liability, however it is important to also hold relevant insurances to protect the organisation and members.

Applications for registration as an Incorporated Association are usually processed within 28 days, unless further information is required. The cost of applying for registration and to use the CAV Model Rules (generic Constitution) is \$34.

It is important to note that if BSG was to become an Incorporated Association it would also need to apply for an Australian Business Number (ABN)<sup>12</sup> and register its Business Name<sup>13</sup> with the Australian Securities & Investments Commission (ASIC). As this process is a mere formality and costs less than \$100 per year this is not discussed within this report.

Similarly, the name 'Beyond the School Gates' ('Beyond the School Gates Inc.') and associated logo should be trademarked with IP Australia<sup>14</sup>. A trade mark will protect the identity of BSG and provides protection from others using it. As this process is a swift and easy online process which costs approx. \$300 this is not discussed within this report.

To become an Incorporated Association the organisation must fulfil certain requirements and obligations, and it has been determined that BSG can fulfil all of these:

11 Consumer Affairs Victoria, <[www.consumer.vic.gov.au/clubs-and-not-for-profits/incorporated-associations/become-an-incorporated-association](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/clubs-and-not-for-profits/incorporated-associations/become-an-incorporated-association)>, accessed April 2016

12 Australian Securities and Investment Commission, <<http://asic.gov.au/for-business/registering-a-business-name/before-you-start/australian-business-number>>, accessed April 2016

13 Australian Securities and Investment Commission, <<http://asic.gov.au/for-business/registering-a-business-name>> accessed April 2016

14 IP Australia, <[www.ipaustralia.gov.au/get-the-right-ip/trade-marks/apply-for-a-trade-mark](http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au/get-the-right-ip/trade-marks/apply-for-a-trade-mark)>, accessed April 2016



Requirements for Incorporation	Description	Means of BSG	BSG Capacity
Size and type of organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have at least five members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Already has interest from Advisory Committee members and partners (exceeding 5 members)</li> <li>This can include people who agree to become a member of the Committee of Management or other general members</li> </ul>	YES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not operate for the profit of its members (although an incorporated association can provide services or benefits to its members).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Already operates in this manner, a fact which has been demonstrated since its establishment in 2012</li> </ul>	YES
Choose a name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your proposed name must not be identical or similar to one listed with Australian Securities &amp; Investments Commission (ASIC)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An ASIC search revealed that the name 'Beyond the School Gates' is <b>not</b> being used by any other business or organisation in Australia</li> </ul>	YES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your association must have the word 'Incorporated' as the last word of its name. You may also use 'Inc.' or 'Inc'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beyond the School Gates would be formally registered as 'Beyond the School Gates Inc.'</li> </ul>	YES
Create rules and purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your association must have a written set of rules, also known as a constitution, which deals with the 23 matters set out in Schedule 1 to the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (the Act).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beyond the School Gates can adopt the Model Rules provided by Consumer Affairs Victoria which would ensure its Constitution is correct.</li> </ul>	YES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rules also include the association's purpose; this is what the association intends to achieve.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beyond the School Gates, having already operated as a governed program, already has detailed information about its purpose and intended goals which can be included in the Model Rules.</li> <li>When confirming the purpose as used in the rules, it is important to ensure that the purpose also shows its charitable / altruistic purpose – as this will be critical when applying for charitable status.</li> <li>BSG Manager can use and adapt to Model Rules.</li> </ul>	YES
Vote to incorporate the association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In order to incorporate, the association must hold a meeting to vote on whether to do so. All members must be given at least 21 days notice of the meeting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG Manager can send Model Rules to all those who have agreed to be members.</li> <li>BSG Manager can send notice of meeting to all members.</li> <li>BSG Manager can coordinate the meeting.</li> </ul>	YES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At this meeting, a majority of votes cast by members must: authorise a person, who is at least 18 years old and lives in Australia, to incorporate the association approve proposed rules that comply with the Act, or approve adoption of the model rules.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High likelihood of approval by members, as many will be drawn from within the existing BSG network.</li> </ul>	YES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unless the association nominates another secretary, the person who lodges the application for incorporation becomes the first secretary of the incorporated association.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whilst this is yet to be determined, the likelihood is that the BSG Manager would take on the role of secretary and lodge the application for incorporation.</li> </ul>	YES

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unless the rules specify otherwise, the committee members of the unincorporated association form the first management committee of the incorporated association.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whilst it is yet to be determined who would form the first Committee Members of the Incorporated Association, there is a high likelihood that current Advisory Committee Members or key partners would take on these roles.</li> </ul>	YES
Prepare Annual Financial Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare financial statements based on your association's financial records from the past financial year; you may have to prepare additional statements based on your association's tier level.</li> <li>Tier revenue levels:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1: less than \$250K</li> <li>2: \$250K - \$1million</li> <li>3: more than \$1million</li> </ul> </li> <li>The committee considers the financial statements; two committee members certify that the statements provide a 'true and fair' view of the association's financial performance and position.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide financial statements (as prepared by the BGK LLEN) in the first year of operation.</li> <li>If BSG revenue in that year exceeds \$250,000 then the financial statements will need to be externally audited by an accountant.</li> </ul>	YES
Annual General Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The committee presents the financial statements (with the certificate signed by two committee members) to members at the annual general meeting (which must be held within five months of the end of your association's financial year). If applicable, a review or audit report must also be presented. The annual general meeting minutes must include a copy of each of these documents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG sends notification of meeting (along with financial statements) to members.</li> </ul>	YES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immediately following the annual general meeting, a committee member must certify that they attended the annual general meeting and that the financial statements were presented to members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A member of the Committee of Management certifies as per requirements.</li> </ul>	YES
Lodge Annual Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual statements must be lodged within one month of your annual general meeting. Lodgement can be made by either the secretary or an authorised delegate of the association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG Manager to submit Annual Statement online.</li> </ul>	YES

## 4.2 Australian Tax Concession Charity (TCC)

Registration as an Australian Tax Concession Charity (TCC) requires the organisation to be registered as a legal entity, with Incorporated Associations being one such accepted structure. In addition, to be registered as a Charity an organisation must be not-for-profit and operating for the public benefit. Registration is made through the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission<sup>15</sup>. To be registered as a charity, an organisation must have a charitable purpose or purposes. The types of purposes are prescribed in law and fall under 12 charitable purpose categories. Once approved as a Charity, the organisation can apply for Charity Tax Concessions (as part of the application to be approved as a Charity). In addition, once approved as a Charity the organisation can apply for other benefits such as Public Benevolent Institution and Deductible Gift Recipient status.

Applications for registration as a Charity are usually processed within 28 days, unless further information is required.

An assessment of the requirements to become a Charity and categories of Charities reveals that BSG is *highly likely* to be accepted and registered as a Charity. It is important to note that, whilst BSG staff are highly competent and capable of registering for charity status, it is advisable to engage the services of

<sup>15</sup> Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission, < [http://acnc.gov.au/ACNC/Register\\_my\\_charity/Who\\_can\\_register](http://acnc.gov.au/ACNC/Register_my_charity/Who_can_register) >, accessed April 2016

a professional who is skilled in preparing these applications and would be highly versed with what is required in order for expedited success.

Charity Requirements	Description	Means of BSG	BSG Capacity
Charitable purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A charitable purpose (also called a mission or object) is the reason a charity has been set up and what its activities work towards achieving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The mission and purpose of BSG is already clearly defined, however when developing the Constitution of the Incorporated Association it is important to ensure its purpose clearly outlines its charitable / altruistic purposes.</li> </ul>	YES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All charities registered with the ACNC must have a charitable purpose. This purpose is usually set out in the charity's governing document. A charity may have one charitable purpose, or it may have more than one charitable purpose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This would be outlined clearly in the Constitution of BSG Incorporated Association.</li> </ul>	YES
Charitable purpose categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It would appear that BSG falls within three distinct charitable purposes:</li> </ul>	BSG could easily fit within the following category clauses:	YES
	1. 'Advancing Education'	<i>Clause #9</i> - "The [organisation] is established to be a charity whose purpose is to advance education by providing life-skills training to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds."	
	2. 'Advancing Social or Public Welfare'	<p><i>Clause #5</i> - "The [organisation] is established to be a charity whose purpose is to advance social or public welfare by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a free service to assist people with a physical or mental disability to be able to participate in work, and</li> <li>assistance to people with a physical or mental disability to travel to or from their place of employment, if they have difficulties travelling to their place of employment themselves due to their disability."</li> </ul> <p><i>Clause #6</i> - "The [organisation] is established to be a charity whose purpose is to advance social or public welfare by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>providing care to people with a physical or mental disability who require continuous care</li> <li>providing respite care to people with a physical or mental disability who generally are cared for continuously by a family member, and</li> <li>arranging opportunities for people with a physical or mental disability to interact with other people and have the same life experiences as people who do not have a physical or mental disability."</li> </ul>	
	3. 'Promoting or Protecting Human Rights' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within each category the ACNC provides example clauses to reflect the sub-type of activity the charity is undertaking.</li> </ul>	<i>Clause #3</i> - "The [organisation] is established to be a charity with the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights by acting as an advocate for people with disabilities in relation to their rights under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities."	

Benefit the public	Your not-for-profit's charitable purpose must be for the public benefit. There are many ways it can benefit the public – it can provide goods, services, education, counselling or spiritual guidance, or improve the environment. Charities may aim to benefit the public generally, or a particular group of people (for example, a local community, refugees or young people).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSG benefits the public through the provision of services and programs that will enhance the physical, social and economic wellbeing of the young people with disability participants.</li> <li>• BSG advocates for the rights of young people with disability through its promotional activities, contributions to submissions and conducting research/evaluations.</li> <li>• By improving the outcomes of young people with disability it has a direct benefit for their families and society as a whole, as it enables these young people to participate in their communities at social and economic levels. This, in turn, may reduce costs on government services.</li> </ul>	YES
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### 4.3 Public Benevolent Institution

A Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) is a type of charitable institution whose main purpose is to relieve suffering that is serious enough that it would arouse a feeling of pity or compassion in members of the community. Benevolent relief includes working for the relief of poverty or distress (such as sickness, disability, destitution, suffering, misfortune or helplessness). The purpose does not have to be to relieve financial hardship or need caused by poverty, but can relieve other needs. For example, a charity that provides counselling services to people traumatised by a natural disaster, or one that provides education and activities to disadvantaged young people to help them gain skills in life may be a public benevolent institution. Registration for PBI status made through the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission<sup>16</sup>.

An assessment of the requirements to become a PBI reveals that BSG is *highly likely* to be accepted and registered as a PBI. It is important to note that, whilst BSG staff are highly competent and capable of registering for PBI status, it is advisable to engage the services of a professional who is skilled at preparing these applications and would be highly versed with what is required in order for expedited success.

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### 4.4 Deductible Gift Recipient

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) decides on Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) endorsement, and any organisation applying for this status must be an ACNC endorsed charity. Not all charities are able to be endorsed as having DGR status.

The ATO has a DGR Table<sup>17</sup> which sets out the more than 40 specific categories set out in tax law. An overview of these would suggest that BSG would satisfy one of these categories - 'Welfare and Rights – Registered Public Benevolent Institution (PBI)'. Obviously, BSG would have to be approved as a PBI prior to applying for DGR endorsement.

The importance of having DGR status cannot be overstated, as DGR status is a requirement of many (and increasingly more) funding grants offered through government, philanthropic and corporate bodies. Without such status, BSG would need to continue (as it has been doing) making applications in the name of a partner organisation with DGR status. Indeed, this LMCF grant was only made possible because a key BSG partner (Marriott Support Services) made the application and is part of the overall 'LMCF Exploration Grant Project'. The generosity of partners, such as Marriott Support Services, has enabled BSG to make applications for funding to-date; however for future financial and sustainability security it is necessary that BSG has DGR status in its own right.

In light of this, and as noted earlier, it is highly recommended that BSG engages professional assistance (eg. lawyer, tax lawyer) to make an application for DGR endorsement. Indeed, it is recommended that a professional is engaged to oversee the application for Charity TCC and PBI endorsement with the ACNC, and application for DGR with the ATO. It is further advised that this professional is engaged prior to the

<sup>16</sup> Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission, <[http://acnc.gov.au/ACNC/Pblctns/Factsheets/FS\\_PBI/ACNC/FTS/Fact\\_PBI.aspx](http://acnc.gov.au/ACNC/Pblctns/Factsheets/FS_PBI/ACNC/FTS/Fact_PBI.aspx)>, accessed April 2016

<sup>17</sup> Australian Taxation Office, <[www.ato.gov.au/Non-profit/getting-started/endorsement/deductible-gift-recipient-%28dgr%29-endorsement/types-of-dgrs/#Welfareandrights](http://www.ato.gov.au/Non-profit/getting-started/endorsement/deductible-gift-recipient-%28dgr%29-endorsement/types-of-dgrs/#Welfareandrights)>, accessed April 2016

registration of BSG as an Incorporated Association because it is the organisational purpose (as set out in the Incorporated Association 'Constitution' or 'Rules') which will play a contributing factor when the ACNC and ATO make their endorsement application assessments.

## 5. Beyond the School Gates – A Not-for-Profit Charity

After considerable investigation and research into alternative models, the most viable organisational structure of BSG is to establish it as an Incorporated TCC with PBI and DGR endorsement.

Obviously, it will take some time to establish and formalise BSG under this organisational structure. It is thus proposed that the 'new' BSG will transform over a two phase stage.

It is important to note, however, that an investment is required for three years to enable BSG to become a self-sustaining independent entity supporting organisations in new regions across Victoria to become 'Local BSG Providers'.

### **Stage 1 – BGK LLEN will be the auspiced 'Lead Agent' managing BSG during its transition to a charitable not-for-profit entity.**

- Under this auspicings arrangement an Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from relevant organisations and/or possessing specific skill-sets, will act as the governing oversight body. The Advisory Committee should also consider inclusion of a consumer (parent or young person) on this governing body.
- BSG will be managed by a 'BSG Manager', who will be responsible for the operational and administrative management of BSG including its launch into new regions ('Local BSG Providers'), reporting and evaluation, marketing and communications and funding applications.
- The BGK LLEN will offer its support through the provision of office space and financial administration assistance.
- It is anticipated that this arrangement will be in place from January 2017 – December 2017.

### **Stage 2 – BSG will be formally incorporated as a charitable not-for-profit entity and registered as a Victorian Incorporated Association.**

- Under this arrangement BSG will be governed by Board of Management Directors, comprised of representatives from relevant organisations and/or possessing specific skill-sets. The Board of Management should also consider inclusion of a consumer (parent or young person) on this governing body.
- BSG will be responsible to Consumer Affairs Victoria and (if Charitable Status is granted) also to the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC).
- BSG will be managed by a 'BSG Chief Executive Officer', who will be responsible for the operational and administrative management of BSG including staffing, accommodation, ongoing management of 'Local BSG Providers' and launch into new regions, reporting and evaluation, marketing and communications, advocacy, and funding applications.
- It is anticipated that BSG will take form as a not-for-profit charity by December 2017 (if not earlier).

It is important to note that it is recommended that the governing and oversight bodies (utilised in Stages 1 and 2) include participation and/or input from BSG consumers. Consumers may include parents and/or young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability aged 18+. The input of consumers is a highly recommended means of ensuring that the consumer voice is heard and assurance of inclusivity. Research conducted by the Queensland Government notes that "active participation recognises and acknowledges a role for citizens and clients in proposing and/or shaping policy dialogue, program and service options. Effective active participation processes can help to build trusting relationships between agencies and community members."<sup>18</sup> The type of consumer participation may include playing a role on the governing body, consultation, or possibly via a separate consumer reference group which contributes to governance and operational planning. This issue is further discussed in section '6.4 Community and Consumer Engagement'.

Detailed descriptions/reviews of the two stage structures of the new and sustainable BSG outlined below.

<sup>18</sup> Queensland Government, 'Actively engaging people with a disability', 2011

## 5.1 Stage 1 - BGK LLEN 'Lead Agent' of BSG

It is anticipated that this arrangement will be in place between January 2017 – December 2017, during which period BSG will maintain current operations, launch 'Local BSG Providers' in new regions and will submit applications to become a Charity.

### 5.1.1 Definitions

Please note the following terms and definitions:

- *'BGK LLEN - Lead Agent'*: the organisation responsible for facilitating ongoing support to BSG during the period it will transition from a local program to an independent not-for-profit charity entity.
- *'BSG Advisory Committee'*: the voluntary governance Advisory Committee with oversight for BSG during the period it will transition from a local program to an independent not-for-profit charity entity.
- *'BSG Manager'*: the staff member responsible for managing the administration and operations of BSG, and responsible for reporting to the BSG Advisory Committee.
- *'Local BSG Provider'*: the organisation contracted to deliver BSG related functions and programs within a specific region, and responsible to the BSG Manager.
- *'Local BSG Provider Contract'*: the financial contract between the Local BSG Provider and BSG outlining the terms, outputs and responsibilities of each party.
- *'Guidelines Framework'*: document which outlines the BSG guidelines that must be adhered to by any accredited Local BSG Provider, including materials and documents designed to assist the provider deliver the BSG program in their region. Such documentation will include: program development resources, marketing materials and templates.
- *'BSG Provider Network'*: this Network will be led by the BSG Manager and include representatives from each provider organisation, allowing for providers to liaise with one another and discuss activities occurring in each region. In turn, this Network will help to ensure that each region is meeting its contractual requirements, allow for cross-fertilisation of ideas between regions and identify areas of concern.
- *'Local BSG Network'*: the Network established by each Local BSG Provider and comprised of place-based voluntary representatives from relevant key organisations in their region who can support and positively influence BSG engagement in the region. The coordination of this Network will be the responsibility of the contracted Local BSG Provider, however guidance and support to establish and maintain this local network will be provided by the BSG Manager.

## 5.1.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The structure, roles and responsibilities of parties are described below. The key features of the BSG model during this period include: Governance; Operations and Administration; Marketing and Communications; Research and Advocacy; and, 'Local BSG Providers' Management.

Governance	
BSG Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG Advisory Committee (voluntary) comprised of representatives from organisations with expertise in the areas of youth disability, education, employment and community. In addition, representatives with specific skills in accounting, research and marketing will also be sought.</li> <li>Advisory Committee will provide oversight and support to BSG (in its current form) and the BSG Manager.</li> <li>Advisory Committee will play a critical role in using this period to convert BSG into a stand-alone Incorporated Association and Charity, submitting applications with relevant government and statutory bodies.</li> <li>Advisory Committee will share resources and skills to make applications for ongoing funding for BSG to ensure financial sustainability during and beyond the transition period.</li> </ul>
Operations and Administration	
BSG Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG Manager will maintain responsibility for the overall operational and administrative functions of BSG.</li> <li>BSG Manager will report to the BSG Advisory Committee.</li> <li>BSG Manager will, in conjunction with the Advisory Committee, act as a secretariat completing applications for BSG to become an Incorporated Association and Charity.</li> <li>BSG Manager will be responsible for managing the delivery of BSG in new regions by approved 'Local BSG Providers'.</li> <li>BSG Manager will oversee and manage the BSG financial budget (in conjunction with the BGK LLEN Business Manager).</li> <li>BSG Manager will manage and support staff employed in the current BSG.</li> <li>BSG Manager will manage and coordinate marketing and communications activities (in conjunction with relevant staff and/or Advisory Committee members).</li> </ul>
Financial Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The BGK LLEN will provide in-kind support to BSG through the provision of financial administration assistance (salary payments, invoicing, budgeting, financial reports to Advisory Committee).</li> <li>The BGK LLEN will provide in-kind support to BSG through the provision of office space and access to office technologies.</li> </ul>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG Manager will source and prepare applications and tenders for BSG funding from government, philanthropic and corporate sectors.</li> </ul>
Human Resource Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG Manager will be responsible for managing and supporting staff.</li> <li>BSG Manager (in conjunction with Advisory Committee and BGK LLEN Business Manager) will ensure that staff compliance matters are managed – salary, leave provisions, WorkCover insurance and contracts.</li> </ul>
Marketing and Communications	
Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG Manager will maintain a strong brand through compliance with marketing guidelines such as brand positioning guides.</li> </ul>
Communications (including social communications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG Manager will oversee the website, including re-development to accommodate the profiling of new Local BSG Network Providers.</li> <li>BSG Manager (and staff) will continue to market BSG via its website and social media platforms (Facebook, E-News).</li> <li>BSG Manager (and staff) will continue to promote BSG through the use of media, presentations and articles in relevant publications.</li> </ul>
Research and Advocacy	
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG Manager will undertake internal BSG related research and develop related case studies.</li> <li>BSG Manager will seek opportunities for independent external research of the BSG and/or Local BSG Provider regions.</li> <li>Where appropriate, research materials will be provided to government departments, agencies and organisations to promote the program, source funding and contribute to understanding.</li> </ul>

Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSG will advocate for the model and Local BSG Providers at local, state and national levels.</li> <li>Advocacy may be in relation to policy issues and government agendas, as a response to consultations and to source funding / other supports that will benefit the BSG as a whole as well as local provider regions.</li> <li>BSG Manager is also available to assist Local BSG Providers advocate for the program in their regions, as required.</li> </ul>
<b>'Local BSG Providers' Management</b>	
Source and contract Local BSG Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2017, two regions will be identified as areas in which there is an appetite and need for BSG (including the BGK region this will mean a total of 3 Local BSG Providers in 2017).</li> <li>BSG Manager will seek 'Expressions of Interest' from organisations wanting to be contacted to operate as a 'Local BSG Provider'.</li> <li>BSG Manager (and two members of the Advisory Group) will assess Expressions of Interest and award 12 month contracts to two organisations to deliver a localised BSG in their region.</li> </ul>
Funding, contract and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding of \$20,000 will be provided to each Local BSG Provider who will be contractually obliged to deliver BSG as per their contract and a 'Guidelines Framework'.</li> </ul>
Guidelines Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Guidelines Framework will outline the responsibilities of contract holders and provide resources to assist them to fulfil their role, including:</li> <li>the appointment, by the contract holder, of a part-time BSG Coordinator</li> <li>establishment of Local BSG Network</li> <li>development of place-based programs/activities for young people via a partnership approach, meet targets for student/program/partner participation rates</li> <li>reporting of outcomes via bi-annual formal qualitative and quantitative reports</li> <li>provide annual financial acquittal reporting</li> <li>participation in bi-monthly BSG Provider Network meetings</li> <li>consistent marketing and social media guidelines and templates</li> <li>approaches and mechanisms for the local sourcing of funding for provision of regional BSG programs.</li> </ul>

### 5.1.3 Funding for Stage 1

In order to operate for 12 months under this arrangement, including the provision of funding to the BGK region and two new 'Local BSG Providers', will require an investment of **\$135,000**. This funding will cover the following:

Item	Investment
BSG Operations (staff, operations, marketing, consumables)	\$75,000
Local BSG Provider – BGK region	\$20,000
Local BSG Provider - #1 region	\$20,000
Local BSG Provider - #2 region	\$20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$135,000</b>

## 5.2 Stage 2 - BSG Incorporated Charity

It is anticipated that this arrangement will be in place from January 2018 onwards. An assumption is made within this section that BSG has not only become a not-for-profit Incorporated Association, but that it has also been successfully endorsed as a PBI and DGR charity during the transition period (January 2017 – December 2017).

Many of the elements and functions outlined below are similar to those already outlined for Stage 2, as Stage 1 was a period during which BSG was already beginning to run an unincorporated organisation and thus put in place the structure that would follow in Stage 2.

### 5.2.1 Definitions

Please note the following terms and definitions:

- *'Beyond the School Gates Inc.'* – legal name of Beyond the School Gates.
- *'BSG Board of Management'*: the voluntary Board of Management comprised of Directors working under the Incorporated Association's Constitution, responsible for governing BSG.
- *'BSG Chief Executive Officer'*: the staff member responsible for managing the administration and operations of BSG, and responsible to the BSG Board of Management.
- *'Local BSG Provider'*: the organisation contracted to deliver BSG related functions and programs within a specific region, and responsible to the BSG Chief Executive Officer.
- *'Local BSG Provider Contract'*: the financial contract between the Local BSG Provider and BSG outlining the terms, outputs and responsibilities of each party.
- *'Guidelines Framework'*: document which outlines the BSG guidelines that must be adhered to by any accredited Local BSG Provider, including materials and documents designed to assist the provider deliver the BSG program in their region. Such documentation will include: program development resources, marketing materials and templates.
- *'BSG Provider Network'*: this Network will be led by the BSG Chief executive Officer and include representatives from each provider organisation, allowing for providers to liaise with one another and discuss activities occurring in each region. In turn, this Network will help to ensure that each region is meeting its contractual requirements, allowing for cross-fertilisation of ideas between regions and identify areas of concern.
- *'Local BSG Network'*: the Network established by each Local BSG Provider and comprised of place-based voluntary representatives from relevant key organisations in their region who can support / positively influence BSG engagement in the region. The coordination of this Network will be the responsibility of the contracted Local BSG Provider, however guidance and support to establish and maintain this local network will be provided by the BSG Chief Executive Officer.

*It is important to note that the BSG Chief Executive Officer has many responsibilities under this arrangement. Should sufficient funding be brought into the organisation some functions of the Chief Executive Officer may then become the responsibility of another BSG staff member (eg. a 'Programs Manager' may be employed, who would then be responsible to supporting and managing Local BSG Providers)*

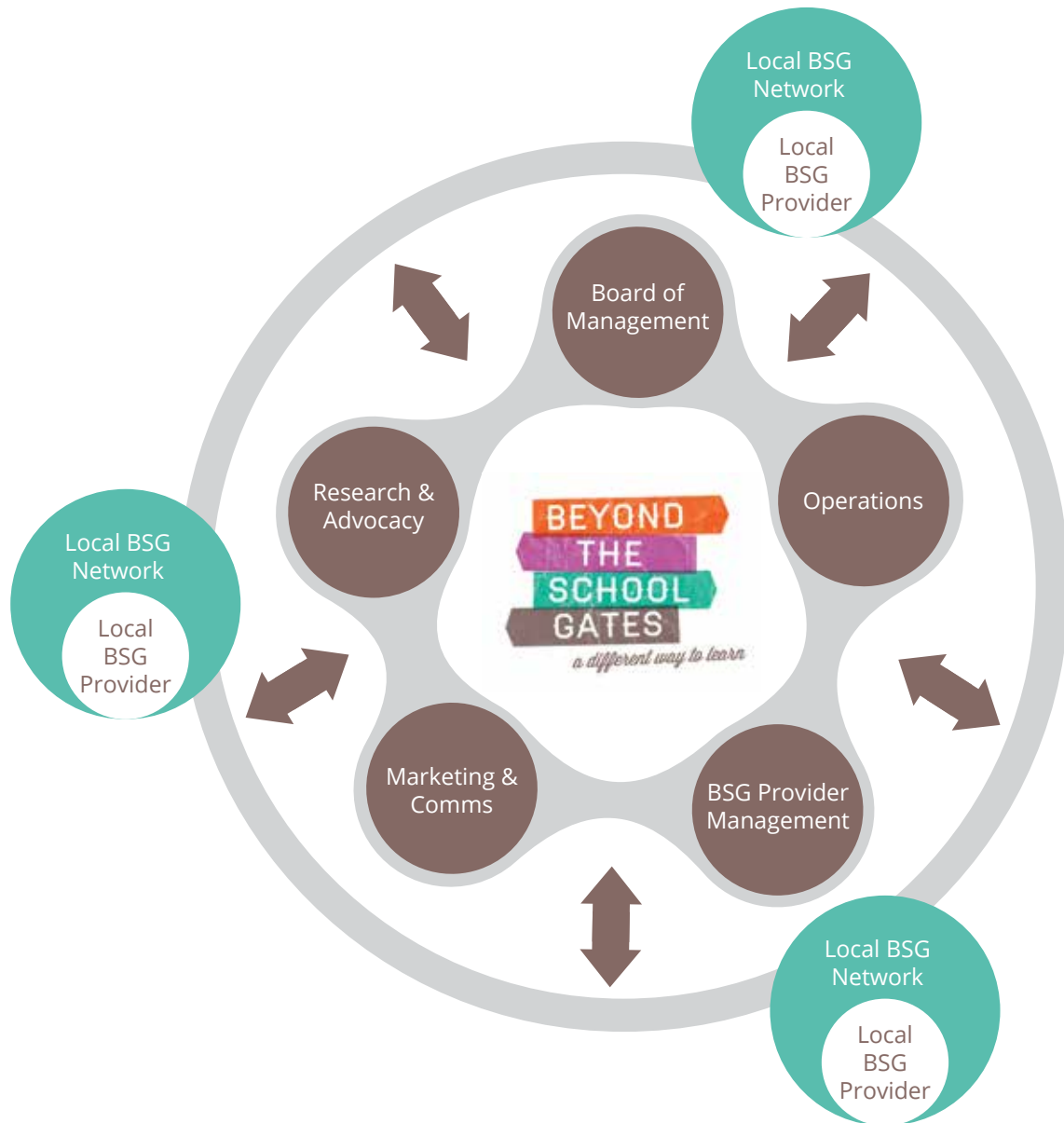
## 5.2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The structure, roles and responsibilities of parties are described below. The key features of BSG Incorporated Charity during this period include: Governance; Operations and Administration; Marketing and Communications; Research and Advocacy; and, 'Local BSG Providers' Management.

Governance	
BSG Board of Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voluntary Directors with expertise in the areas of youth disability, education, employment and community. Representatives with specific skills in accounting, research and marketing will also be sought. In addition, consumers (parents / young person) should also be considered as potential Directors.</li> <li>• Board of Management will form an Executive Committee comprised of key Office Holders.</li> <li>• Board of Management will (with BSG CEO) develop the Strategic Plan.</li> <li>• Board of Management will (with BSG CEO) develop key policies and related documentation.</li> <li>• Board of Management will provide oversight and support to BSG and the BSG CEO.</li> <li>• Board of Management will be responsible for ensuring the legal and financial compliance of BSG.</li> <li>• Board of Management (with BSG CEO) will set-up banking and financial accounts.</li> <li>• Board of Management will hold Annual General Meeting.</li> <li>• Liaison with financial auditor.</li> </ul>
Operations and Administration	
BSG Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSG CEO will maintain responsibility for the overall operational and administrative functions of BSG.</li> <li>• BSG CEO will report to the BSG Board of Management.</li> <li>• BSG CEO will, in conjunction with the Board of Management, act as the Secretary (public secretary) submitting relevant legal and compliance documents to ensure ongoing legal endorsement as an entity with relevant government agencies (ATO, ACNC, CAV).</li> <li>• BSG CEO (and/or staff) will be responsible for managing the delivery of BSG in new regions by approved 'Local BSG Providers'.</li> <li>• BSG CEO will oversee and manage the BSG financial budget (submitting financial reports to the Board of Management).</li> <li>• BSG CEO will manage and support any BSG staff.</li> <li>• BSG CEO (and/or staff) will manage and coordinate marketing and communications activities.</li> </ul>
Financial Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial administration - salary payments, invoicing, budgeting, financial reports to Committee of Management.</li> <li>• Coordinating the annual independent external financial auditing.</li> </ul>
Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Source new office space and/or maintain a current space within the BGK LLEN while the BSG is becoming more established and sustainable.</li> </ul>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSG CEO will source and prepare applications and tenders for BSG funding from government, philanthropic and corporate sectors.</li> <li>• BSG CEO will report to funders as per funding contract requirements.</li> </ul>
Human Resource Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSG CEO will be responsible for managing and supporting staff.</li> <li>• BSG CEO (in conjunction with BSG Board of Management) will ensure that staff compliance matters are managed – salary, leave provisions, WorkCover insurance and contracts.</li> </ul>
Marketing and Communications	
Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSG CEO will maintain a strong brand through compliance with marketing guidelines such as brand positioning guides.</li> <li>• BSG CEO will ensure that the BSG trademark remains current.</li> </ul>
Communications (including social communications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSG CEO will oversee the website, including re-development to accommodate the profiling of new Local BSG Network Providers.</li> <li>• BSG CEO (and/or staff) will continue to market BSG via its website and social media platforms (Facebook, E-News).</li> <li>• BSG CEO (and/or staff) will continue to promote BSG through the use of media, presentations and articles in relevant publications.</li> </ul>

Research and Advocacy	
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSG CEO (and/or staff) will undertake internal BSG related research and develop related case studies.</li> <li>• BSG CEO (and/or staff) will seek opportunities for independent external research of the BSG and/or Local BSG Provider regions.</li> <li>• Where appropriate, research materials will be provided to government departments, agencies and organisations to promote the program, source funding and contribute to understanding.</li> </ul>
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSG will advocate for the model and Local BSG Providers at local, state and national levels.</li> <li>• Advocacy may be in relation to policy issues and government agendas, as a response to consultations and to source funding / other supports that will benefit the BSG as a whole as well as local provider regions.</li> <li>• BSG CEO (and/or staff) is also available to assist Local BSG Providers advocate for the program in their regions, as required.</li> </ul>
'Local BSG Providers' Management	
Source and contract Local BSG Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2018, three 'Local BSG Providers' (at a minimum) will be operating in three separate regions.</li> <li>• BSG CEO (and/or staff) will research and identify potential new regions where Local BSG Providers could be contracted, and investigate / seek funding to initialise in those areas.</li> </ul>
Funding, contract and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding of \$21,000 (Year 1), \$23,000 (Year 2) will be provided to each 'Local BSG Provider' who will be contractually obliged to deliver BSG as per their contract and a 'Guidelines Framework'.</li> </ul>
Local BSG Provider Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold regular meetings that allow Local BSG Providers to connect and collaborate.</li> <li>• Consider holding a forum that allows Local BSG Providers (and their stakeholders of young people, parents, educators and organisations) to profile programs and successes in their region. This would generate cross-fertilisation of ideas, provide a chance to showcase BSG outcomes and achievements to current / potential funders, and provide a chance to engage media attention.</li> </ul>
Guidelines Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Guidelines Framework will outline the responsibilities of contract holders and provide resources to assist them to fulfil their role, including:</li> <li>• the appointment, by the contract holder, of a part-time BSG Coordinator</li> <li>• establishment of Local BSG Network</li> <li>• development of place-based programs/activities for young people via a partnership approach, meet targets for student/program/partner participation rates</li> <li>• reporting of outcomes via bi-annual formal qualitative and quantitative reports</li> <li>• provide annual financial acquittal reporting</li> <li>• participation in bi-monthly 'BSG Provider Network' meetings</li> <li>• consistent marketing and social media guidelines and templates</li> <li>• approaches and mechanisms for the local sourcing of funding for provision of regional BSG programs.</li> </ul>

### 5.2.3 Model Diagram



### 5.2.4 Funding for Stage 2

It is recommended that BSG requires an investment of an additional year of operating funding to establish itself as a sustainable new charity and provide time during which BSG will source additional funding streams. This funding would also allow BSG to fund 'Local BSG Providers' to deliver BSG activities in their regions. It is anticipated that, in time and as Local BSG Providers are soundly operating in their region, significant opportunities to source local financial support to fund Local BSG Providers will emerge.

In order to operate BSG and three regions for two years, an investment and sourcing of revenue of **\$307,000** is required. In the first year (2018) BSG would seek investment funding, but by the second year (2019) anticipates that it will have sourced additional sustainable funding or be generating revenue through service provision (eg. via the NDIS as discussed in a latter part of this report). Over the two years funding and revenue will cover the following:

Item	Jan – December 2018 Costs	Jan – December 2019 Costs	Total Investment
BSG Operations (staff, operations, marketing, consumables)	\$85,000	\$90,000	\$175,000
Local BSG Provider – BGK region	\$21,000	\$23,000	\$44,000
Local BSG Provider - #1 region	\$21,000	\$23,000	\$44,000
Local BSG Provider - #2 region	\$21,000	\$23,000	\$44,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$148,000</b>	<b>\$159,000</b>	<b>\$307,000</b>

## 6. Local BSG Providers

BSG recognises that local communities play a central role in the success of skills-based outcomes that best serve the needs of young people, and places a major focus on involving a range of stakeholders in the process of the design and delivery of BSG programs and activities. Thus the engagement of Local BSG Providers, who work and are located within a designated geographic area, is critical.

The success of BSG is based on the building of a model whereby BSG ('the entity') identifies regions in which its approach to providing opportunities for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability will make a difference. The identification of these will be based on considerable research into the demography of specific regions (eg. numbers of young people within this cohort, culture, socio-economics) and analysis of the need and appetite for consolidated BSG style servicing within that region.

Once a region has been identified as one that would benefit from the introduction of BSG, consultations with local relevant stakeholders will take place to investigate whether there is interest from a local organisation that could then be contracted as a 'Local BSG Provider'. When operational the name of the Local BSG Provider would incorporate the name of region (eg. 'South East Melbourne BSG Provider' or 'East Gippsland BSG Provider').

Once a Local BSG Provider has been contracted it is their responsibility to employ a BSG Coordinator, establish a Local BSG Network and build partnerships that will lead to development of innovative, place-based programs and activities for the young people in their region. Underpinning their activity will be attention paid to community and consumer engagement approaches. As per the contract, a Local BSG Provider will report back to BSG through a mix of formal and informal mechanisms.

### 6.1 Local BSG Provider Benefits

The overarching benefit of becoming a Local BSG Provider to organisations is that it would be provided with support from BSG to deliver better post-school outcomes for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in their community.

However, there are also many other win-win benefits of becoming a Local BSG Provider. Such benefits may include:

- Positively raising their own organisational profile in the local region.
- Receiving start-up funding from BSG to operate as a contracted Local BSG Provider (with a view to ongoing collaboration with BSG to sustain funding for delivery of this service in that region – whether through joint applications for funding or BSG sourcing ongoing funding)
- Building mutually beneficial relationships with an array of BSG stakeholders and program providers in the local region.
- Finding that BSG related activities also contribute to other programs/services offered by the contracted provider.
- Playing a role in contributing to local, state and national youth disability related advocacy.
- Developing innovative and best-practice programs and activities that are then adopted in other regions.
- Assisting their local community to raise their expectations regarding what young people with disability can and should aim to achieve post-school; whether that is at attitudinal, pathways, employment or engagement levels.



## Award Winner

Emily Declercq

is congratulated on winning a 'School-based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (Certificate II in Horticulture)' 'Excellent Learning Award' in the 2012 Boyside Glen Eira Kingston Applied Learning Awards. The Boyside Glen Eira Kingston Applied Learning Awards celebrate student achievement, dedication and success while undertaking an applied learning program. This award recognizes your outstanding applied learning achievements.

Presented by:



## 6.2 Innovation and Collaboration

The BSG organisation encourages Local BSG Provider innovation. BSG is designed to be a partnership-driven and place-based model that develops programs aimed at positively building young people's current and future employment and community participation capacities. In order to achieve this, the model must remain flexible, grass roots, innovative and suit the needs of the region in which it is being delivered. However, BSG must also temper that with ensuring that providers are delivering programs and building networks that fit within the spirit of the BSG philosophies and goals; hence the need for contracts and consistent reporting and check points.

BSG commits to supporting and encouraging innovation in regions, provided the good name and philosophy of BSG is maintained and that BSG is kept abreast of innovative approaches. BSG also believes that innovation and enterprise will be encouraged by enabling all Local BSG Providers to connect with one another in formal (BSG Provider Network Meetings) and informal manners.

## 6.3 Local BSG Networks

As has been identified through over four years of BSG provision, success is strongly aligned to the establishment of a partnership-driven, voluntary Local BSG Network comprised of an array of stakeholders connected or committed to improving outcomes for young people with disability in the community. It is through this networked and community engagement approach that a range of organisations can participate in facilitated meetings that allow for the identification of issues facing local young people with disability and the sourcing of solutions or programs to address these.

Contracted Local BSG Providers will be required to act as an intermediary to build a Local BSG Network comprised of organisations relevant to BSG delivery in their region. As each region will be different, it is up to the Local BSG Provider to identify and approach organisations that could contribute to or benefit from being part of the 'BSG movement' in their region. BSG can obviously recommend types of organisations to approach and use its expertise to assist the Local BSG Provider to make contact with organisations. However, the Local BSG Provider will 'know their region' and is thus likely to already have very strong connections with relevant organisations in the community that should form part of their Local BSG Network. It is also important to note that any Local BSG Network needs to enable membership fluidity in order to allow existing members to leave and new members to join over time.

Natural BSG allies in any community are likely to be:

- Secondary schools – cross-sectoral disability-specific and mainstream
- Disability employment services
- Disability community organisations
- National Disability Coordination Officers
- Local Learning and Employment Networks
- Training providers (eg. TAFE, Registered Training Providers, Learn Local Providers)
- Youth organisations
- Local Council representatives (eg. youth services, human resources, economic development)
- Relevant state or federal government department representatives (eg. education, health, social services)
- Representatives of key regional cultural groups (eg. Indigenous, multi-cultural, refugee)
- Volunteerism organisations
- Businesses (either key local employers or employer networks)

The benefit of Local BSG Network involvement can also enable organisations who have never met or collaborated before to build relationships which in turn can have positive results that extend beyond only BSG related activities. Members may find 'common ground' with which to share resources and expertise to address other issues or challenges their organisation or stakeholders are experiencing, thus delivering even greater benefits to that community. This has certainly been an outcome for partners involved in BSG in the Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston and Port Philip regions.

## 6.4 Community and Consumer Engagement

Much international research has focussed on the value of community and consumer engagement to ensure adequate service delivery. A number of consistent positive benefits would:

- Increase the likelihood that projects or solutions will be widely accepted. Citizens who participate in these processes show significant commitment to help make the projects happen.
- Create more effective solutions. Drawing on local knowledge from a diverse group creates solutions that are practical and effective.
- Improve citizens' knowledge and skills in problem solving. Participants learn about the issues in-depth. Greater knowledge allows them to see multiple sides of the problem. Citizens can practice communication and decision-making skills.
- Empower and integrate people from different backgrounds. Groups that feel ignored can gain greater control over their lives and their community. When people from different areas of the community work together, they often find that they have much in common.
- Create local networks of community members. The more people who know what is going on and who are willing to work toward a goal, the more likely a community is to be successful in reaching its goals.
- Create several opportunities for discussing concerns. Regular, on-going discussions allow people to express concerns before problems become too big or out of control.
- Increase trust in community organisations and governance. Working together improves communication and understanding. Knowing what government, community citizens and leaders, and organisations can and cannot do may reduce future conflict.<sup>19</sup>

In addition a well-designed partnership engagement effort allows each Local BSG Provider to identify and understand:

- Differing values and priorities
- Differing frames, or ways citizens view the community or a particular project
- Various alternatives and consequences
- Perceptions of benefits and risks
- Different ideas and potential solutions and actions.

## 6.5 Support for Local BSG Providers

To ensure that each Local BSG Network is working for a common purpose, the Local BSG Provider will utilise a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Through this MoU members must agree that they have joined the network in good faith, commit to the overarching tenet of BSG and are committed to improving psycho-social and economic outcomes of young people with disability in their region. BSG will provide Local BSG Providers with a generic MoU template to be utilised for this purpose.

The provision of support from BSG to contracted Local BSG Providers will be a critical aspect of success in each region. Key features of support from BSG to the contracted parties will include the following elements.

### Guidance:

- Access to timely support from BSG staff.
- Support in establishing Local BSG Networks through the provision of resources and materials (eg. MoU, meeting agenda pro-formas, means of attracting members, generic PowerPoint presentation).
- Training and mentoring from BSG staff to assist providers develop and deliver place-based partnership programs and opportunities.

Data and research:

- Provision of national and local research and data to assist providers better understand their region and its needs with regards young people with disability and learning differences. This research and information will have been collated as part of the organisation's commitment to identifying regions

<sup>19</sup> Bassler et al., 2008

that would benefit from BSG provision.

- Access to any evaluation and research conducted by BSG.

#### Marketing and communications:

- Provision of generic BSG branded collateral (eg. flyers, posters) that can be adapted by providers for the inclusion of their (and that of their network partners') own logos and details.
- Provision of a section of the BSG website, dedicated to describing each Local BSG Provider and BSG-related programs and activities occurring in their region.
- Access to a secure portal within the website where BSG related materials and resources will be housed, thus ensuring that materials are accessible from any location and at any time.
- Assistance in developing Local BSG Provider social media channels, such as Facebook Group Pages, to promote local BSG related activities and successes.
- Support in generating local media attention, through the development of media releases.

#### Program development

- Access to support from BSG staff when considering, developing or delivering local programs.

#### Cross-region networking

- Participation in BSG facilitated 'Local Provider Network Meetings' which will allow providers in different regions to connect with one another, share ideas and learn from each other's successes and errors.
- Participate in an annual 'BSG Forum' whereby Local BSG Providers from across a range of regions can gather to profile programs, successes and involve student and partner involvement. This event will also provide a forum to showcase BSG to current funders, potential funders, community influencers and media.

## 6.6 Critical Success Factors

The critical success factors of Local BSG Providers will include (but are not limited to):

Support from the overarching BSG organisation.

Scope to develop innovative ideas and opportunities that will meet the needs of young people in their region.

Awareness that they have been awarded their contract on the basis that they understand their region, are committed to the BSG tenets and have demonstrated skills in bringing together regional partners for a common purpose.

Development of Local BSG Networks comprised of organisations and individuals that share the mission of BSG and are committed to improving the outcomes of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

Cross-cultural competency skills which ensure that the needs and opinions of diverse populations, who are also affected by intellectual disability and/or learning disability, in a region are reached and supported.

A genuine need and appetite for provision of BSG programs and activities in their local region.

## 7. BSG Advocacy and Best Practice Approaches

BSG, as a stand-alone organisation initiating and supporting place-based Local BSG Providers, is well positioned to advocate for the rights of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability to gain access to opportunities that will improve their lifelong psycho-social and economic participation outcomes. It is also well positioned to identify, encourage and share best-practice approaches with community stakeholders at local, state and national levels.

To achieve these, BSG will:

- Source, research, spotlight and support the implementation of sound evidence-based transition practice with policy makers, educators, practitioners, parents, employers and young people.
- Reduce or break down barriers to sectoral collaboration via advocacy, resource development, professional development, ongoing governance of Local BSG Providers (and their Local BSG Networks).
- Generate case studies and media stories that present the effective benefits derived from BSG related programs from the perspectives of participating young people, businesses, community organisations, educators and parents.
- Conduct internal evaluations measuring the successes and outcomes of BSG through the collection of data from Local BSG Providers.
- Seek opportunities for independent research and evaluation of BSG and its outcomes.
- Initiate and contribute to dialogue regarding education, training, employment, social inclusion and policy that improves the psycho-social and economic outcomes of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in Australia.
- Continue to use research to identify local communities where BSG activities could be implemented via the positioning of a Local BSG Provider in specific areas.

## 8. Summary

Much consideration and planning must underpin such a change, which not only involves applications for legal status but also the establishment of a formal Board of Management. Financial planning to allow for BSG to operate until it is in such a position to trade in its own right and source ongoing sustainable funding is an imperative; from which decisions around location, staffing and other key matters will follow.

### Recommendations and Considerations:

- BSG seeks advice from a professional (eg. lawyer, tax lawyer) to evaluate the proposed organisation structure and provide professional advice as to the likelihood of gaining TTC, PBI and DGR endorsement.
- BSG engages the services of a professional who is skilled in preparing TCC, PBI and DGR endorsement applications and would be highly versed with what is required in order for expedited success.
- Thorough qualitative and quantitative research into Victorian regions that would benefit from the introduction of BSG activities via contracted 'Local BSG Providers' is conducted, followed by consultations with stakeholders regarding the feasibility of introductions in that locale.
- Thorough investigation into potential funding streams, that would enable BSG to become a sustainable entity, is conducted.

An important aspect of proposing a new BSG model was gaining a commitment from the BGK LLEN that it would provide in-kind support (office space and administration management assistance) in Stage 1 and Stage 2. This has now been confirmed, and the BGK LLEN has agreed to providing support while BSG establishes itself as a legal entity and begins to contract 'Local BSG Providers' over that period.

# NEW AREAS OF BSG DELIVERY & SCOPE



- 9. Beyond the School Gates - Evolution and Change
- 10. Age Range Extension
- 11. Work-based Learning and Inclusion Focus
- 12. School Cluster

This section examines the new areas of delivery and scope built in to the Beyond the School Gates (BSG) model based on recommendations from the pilot evaluation (2014) and evidence from the pilot's partners, schools, parent cohorts and young people.

Areas for development identified by evaluation include:

- a) broader age range – upper primary transitions through to post-school young people;
- b) greater emphasis on work experience, exposure and earlier career development opportunities that aligns with NDIS directions; and
- c) building school clusters to create greater school ownership and leadership.

As a result of these evaluations and consultations, during 2015 and 2016, the BSG model has been expanded to accommodate these recommendations and create an enhanced program model.

## 9. Beyond the School Gates - Evolution and Change

*“Conceptualising how to adapt, change or reinvent what is currently in place in specific and powerful ways is important for sustainability. Discussions need to focus on what and how BSG would adapt or change”.<sup>20</sup>*

### 9.1 Starting Point

BSG received funding in 2012 under the Smarter Schools National Partnerships Project, as one of five Extended School Hub Field trials. The then Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) defined an Extended School as one that works with a range of organisations to provide services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community. The goals of the Extended School sites were to reduce barriers to learning experienced by students and to connect and coordinate external activities to provide complementary learning for students and families.

The BSG Extended School Hub was created to strategically engage partner organisations to work together to raise aspiration, expectations, opportunities and outcomes for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. To do this, BSG focused on providing programs and activities that addressed the barriers to social inclusion faced by this cohort.

<sup>20</sup> Anderson, M. (2014), *Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: 'A different way to learn' Pilot*, ACER / Interface2Consulting, p.22.



Guiding principles were developed by the BSG program team to assist in maintaining a focus on its overarching goal to prepare young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability to make a successful transition from school to further employment or training, community participation and a healthy life style. These principles guided the selection of programs during the pilot and remain in place in the post-pilot phase.

- Young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability should have access to the same employment, training and community participation opportunities as their peers.
- The interests and needs of students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability and their families are the focus of program planning.
- Working towards sustainability underpins all Beyond the School Gates programming.
- Beyond the School Gates programs should offer content and activities appropriate to participants' needs and abilities.
- Programs will run within the funded region and be directed to the funded target group.
- Beyond the School Gates will draw together existing community resources, create new partnerships and collaborate with relevant organisations to develop programs.
- Beyond the School Gates will coordinate and customise programs for students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in a regionally strategic and needs-led way.

In order to further guide the creation of a balanced calendar of program offerings, BSG undertook a pre-pilot literature review and public community consultation. Stakeholders, including students, parents, school staff and community organisations were asked the following questions:

- What skills do students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability need to develop to help them live full and productive lives while still at school and in their post-school life?
- What sorts of activities do students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability participate in that help them develop some or all of the skills?

The responses fell into four areas that became the 'Four Pillars' of BSG programming:

1. Work Skills
2. Recreation
3. Health/life skills
4. Family support.

## 9.2 Change Point

The evaluation of BSG undertaken by Dr Michelle Anderson in late 2014, resulting in the report 'Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: 'A different way to learn' Pilot'<sup>21</sup> has been noted and summarised previously in the report. The evaluation of BSG also included five short written interim reports at key milestone points, occurring at Year 1 of the pilot November 2012 and May 2013; Year 2, November 2013 and May 2014; and Year 3: November 2014. The interim reports were fed by multiple feedback sources, including Committee of Management Relationship surveys, focus groups (students and parents) and surveys (students and parents).

While the formal feedback was key to the continual process of evaluation, it was not the only change driver. The BSG team was responsive to informal feedback garnered from stakeholders (students, parents, school staff and partner organisation staff) throughout the day-to-day BSG operations, as well as to data obtained through the online booking system for programs. Analysis of the program booking data informed "fine tuning" of the program offerings, based on the demand for available places, the location of the participants' schools and the age and range of abilities of each group.

### Schools as key stakeholders

While individual young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability remained as the focus of the Beyond the School Gates model, schools, both special and mainstream, emerged in the 2014 evaluation reports as the key stakeholders of the initiative. Schools proved to be the main source of program participants and the experts in the needs and abilities of their students, making them potential drivers of the initiative. While the influence of parents and their understanding of their child's needs

<sup>21</sup> Anderson, M. (2014), *Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: 'A different way to learn' Pilot*, ACER / Interface2Consulting, p.22.

continues to be acknowledged, accessing and informing individual parents is less effective, in marketing terms, than accessing and informing schools. Other stakeholders, such as community organisations, local governments and industry, remain as important stakeholders, but their role has emerged as one of reactor rather than driver.

### Language

A slight change in language was implemented in 2014 so that the goal of Beyond the School Gates became more relevant, accessible and attractive to major stakeholders, including schools, parents, industry and community organisations. The use of 'transition' rather than the more general 'successful life beyond school' resulted in a more focused, measurable goal that incorporated the familiar language of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

*The goal of the Beyond the School Gates **model** is to prepare young people with intellectual disabilities and learning differences to make a successful **transition** from school to further employment or training, social inclusion in the community and a healthy life style.*

The aims of the BSG **programs** remained unchanged:

*"... to **increase access** to employment, training and community participation opportunities."*

With the increased use of the term 'transition', came the accompanying, logical move to incorporating the term 'pathways' in BSG terminology. It is a school and community user-friendly descriptor for everything that BSG does to help prepare students for their post-school transition, from health programs to volunteering.

## 9.3 Reflection Point

*"Have we learned enough to expect that the culmination of public education for young people with disabilities should be a job and a clear career path? Can we reasonably expect youth to experience employment in authentic workplaces where they earn a commensurate wage working alongside of co-workers without disabilities? Can we elevate everyone's expectations accordingly? Can schools craft educational services and curricula that set the stage for such expectations? Based on what the research has shown us and what we know, the answer to all these questions is a resounding yes!" (Dr Richard Luecking)*

*"Beyond the School Gates programs have given me confidence, knowledge and skills. I will use all of these things in the future." (Student, Berendale School)*

There is inequity in access to educational, training and community participation opportunities between young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability and their non-disabled peers, which adversely affects their chances of successfully transitioning into a post-school life that includes: being engaged in employment, ongoing learning and/or training; living and participating actively in their community; and having active social networks with family and friends. The BSG model has, since its inception in 2012 and throughout its many points of change, never wavered in its intention to address this inequity and to break down the barriers to social inclusion.

The strength of the BSG model, both then and today, is the multiple and varied strands of operations and advocacy. BSG provides the methods and opportunities to facilitate collaboration and improve community engagement, as well as pooling resources for greater efficiencies than if programs ran in isolation. The work that BSG undertakes to customise and coordinate the delivery of programs for students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability is regionally strategic and driven by the needs of its stakeholders. As well as the practical and tangible outputs of programs and events, BSG has contributed implicitly to the shifting mores of the disability sector by working to dismantle misconceptions about the capabilities and aspirations of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

## 10. Age Range Extension

*"So much cuts out at 18." (Parent) <sup>22</sup>*

### 10.1 Drawing on evaluation and feedback

The decision to focus the BSG pilot activities on secondary school age young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability was informed by information at both the state and local levels. A 2010 paper co-authored by Fiona Waugh and Michelle Wakeford ('Rationale and Recommendations for a Pilot School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT) Program for Young People with Disability in the Inner Melbourne Region') noted that the "correlation between undertaking work place learning and vocational education during schooling and higher post-school employment for young people with disabilities is well documented. However, the poor labour market statistics suggest there is a critical need for more work-based learning opportunities during the secondary schooling years for young people with disability."<sup>23</sup> The bottom-line is that young people with disability in Victoria are not getting adequate access to training, employment and community inclusion opportunities while at school compared to their non-disabled peers.

At a local level, feedback captured during the literature review and community consultations carried out in the pre-pilot phase indicated that there were important transition points experienced by all members of this cohort during this time, including the transition from primary to secondary school, and the transition from school to post-school activities. Analysis of the data revealed a recurring theme – that "lack of opportunities, and knowledge of and access to these, were inhibiting positive outcomes for young people and their families. This was perceived as an issue especially for young people at the post-school pathway end of their schooling". Reflective of this were comments such as:

*"You worry when they are 'out there' [in the community]. It's going to come around very quickly and the potential for work or study ... so [BSG] is about the preparation for life and around school and beyond school." (Parent) <sup>24</sup>*

*"We're not aware of anything like this for our students... It provides opportunities for students beyond the school and employability skills and we couldn't offer it in the same way." (Teacher) <sup>25</sup>*

At an operational level, the BSG team was charged with identifying the needs of the targeted cohort during the secondary school years and mapping these to existing local activities and services in order to identify and address gaps in the provision of programs to address these needs.

Feedback from parents and teachers who took part in Dr Michelle Anderson's evaluation report (2014) clearly showed that the resulting BSG programs clearly aligned to the learning needs of their children or students. However, parental feedback captured by Dr Anderson's evaluation during the life of the BSG pilot illuminated "a high degree of concern and some scepticism (born out of being let down 'by the system' before) that what this pilot has commenced will soon cease or cease to be accessible to their child once they finish school"<sup>26</sup>. Parents and teachers were consistent in their preference for the ability of young people to access BSG programs post school. "With regard to whom BSG is for, the most frequent issue expressed was that BSG should be accessible to families beyond 18 years of age. This would assist them and their children bridge the all-important transition from school to 'beyond the school gates'.<sup>27</sup>

### 10.2 Beyond the School Gates Response

In response to the feedback gathered during the pilot phase, BSG has introduced programs that are accessible for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability that have finished school. The Hands Up! Student Volunteer program is open to participants up to the age of 25, as is The Social Club, while the Social Impact program is available to people of all ages. These programs offer the mix of social inclusion, community participation and work based learning enshrined in the original BSG goals. Details of each program, including partner organisations, program intent and overview and program outcomes are provided below.

<sup>22</sup> Anderson, M. (2014), *Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: 'A different way to learn' Pilot*, ACER / Interface2Consulting, p.i.

<sup>23</sup> Wakeford, M. and Waugh, F. (2010), *Rationale and Recommendations for a Pilot School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT) Program for Young people with Disability in the Inner Melbourne Region*, Unpublished.

<sup>24</sup> Anderson, M. (2014), *Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: 'A different way to learn' Pilot*, ACER / Interface2Consulting, p.12.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Anderson, M. (2014), *Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: 'A different way to learn' Pilot*, ACER / Interface2Consulting, p.21.

<sup>27</sup> Anderson, M. (2014), *Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: 'A different way to learn' Pilot*, ACER / Interface2Consulting, p.14.

### 10.2.1 The Social Club

Partner organisation/s – Donna Gabriel Consulting

#### Intent

This program is designed to give young people aged 16 to 25 years with intellectual disability and/or learning disability the opportunity to acquire social competence skills in a group setting with peers.

#### Overview

The Social Club is held once a week from 6.00pm to 8.00pm and is hosted by an experienced social competence facilitator. Participants are involved in designing the program, working as a group to create The Social Club rules and planning activities for each session. The facilitator incorporates informal learning opportunities in to the evening, providing the opportunity for the group to learn and practice their social skills and increase their confidence in social settings.

#### Outcomes

- Ability to identify appropriate/inappropriate social interactions
- Ability to demonstrate appropriate social interactions

### 10.2.2 Social Impact Program

Partner organisation/s – Melba Support Services, Pathways to Care, Access Skills Training

#### Intent

The Social Impact program is designed to provide people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability the skills to form and maintain friendships and relationships. It is incorporated in to the Certificate 1 in Transition Education.

#### Overview

Social Impact is delivered over 40 weeks via an accredited training model (Certificate 1 in Transition Education). The program is delivered through training room discussion, role play and supported social events, with the aim of increasing the social skills, resilience, emotional independence and assertiveness of all participants. The program topics include:

- Let's begin with me – increasing my personal effectiveness
- Meeting New People, Conversations and Communication
- Getting to know me, assertiveness & setting my goals
- Body image & dating, includes safe dating
- Healthy Mind and Healthy Body
- Building Relationships and friendships
- Safe Sex, and Sex
- Lifestyle, alcohol & money management
- Social Media Awareness and Sexting

#### Outcomes

- Ability to identify appropriate/inappropriate social interactions
- Ability to demonstrate appropriate social interactions
- Self-identified increase in confidence in social setting
- Increased participation in community activities

### 10.2.3 Hands Up! Student Volunteer Program

Partner organisation/s – DHS Engage! Initiative

#### Intent

The Hands Up! Student Volunteer Program is designed to increase access to volunteering opportunities for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability and to raise awareness in the community of the benefits of accessing this pool of volunteers.

#### Overview

The Hands Up program works with two streams of participants. The first stream involves a core group of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability who lead an initiative to explore and create volunteering opportunities for themselves and their peers, guided and supported by a Hands Up facilitator. Work readiness, mentoring and personal development skills training are provided, and the opportunity to speak to interested local organizations as *Hands Up!* Volunteering Ambassadors. The Hands Up program manager sources volunteer opportunities for the second stream of participants, comprised of any eligible young person who is interested in volunteering. Where necessary, Hands Up can provide pre-volunteer training to all participants.

The BSG grant application submitted in 2014 sought and received funding for participants aged up to 18 years. However, in response to BSG stakeholder feedback regarding the “cut-off” of programs for school leavers, BSG successfully applied for an extension of the upper age limit in 2015, increasing the maximum age of eligible Hands Up! participants to 25 years.

#### Outcomes

- Participation in volunteering activity
- Demonstrated understanding of the nature and benefits of volunteering



## 11. Work-based Learning and Community Inclusion Focus

*"We have known for a long time that it is critically important for youth with disabilities to experience learning in work-based environments .... Work experiences, of course, are not the only factors that contribute to post school success, but it can be argued that they are among the most important."*<sup>28</sup>

*"I really enjoyed work experience at the Bayside Council because it gave me an understanding of what a job actually is and made me want to get a job like that in the future. It taught me about time management and how to tell the time without the school bell." (Student, Berendale School)*

### 11.1 Drawing on Evaluation and Feedback

The 'four pillars' (Health, Vocational, Recreation and Family Support) established in response to pre-pilot scoping and research proved useful in the initial scheduling and provision of programs and activities. Identifying programs suitable for each of the four categories allowed for the creation of a balanced calendar of program offerings in the first twelve months of operation. However, as the initiative evolved, it became apparent that the four pillars were, in many ways, an artificial construct that, much like the decorative columns of a colonial mansion, did not add to the strength or integrity of BSG.

The first issue identified was the difficulty of fitting programs in to either one area or the other. Many programs covered more than area – for example, the Introduction to Work program, nominally a vocational program, incorporated health program aspects such as personal grooming and hygiene, while the recreational Holiday Program included health components such as exercise activities and healthy cooking classes. A more holistic approach to programming allowed for programs to be sourced according to an identified need rather than suitability for a particular category.

The range and scope of program provision by other organisations in the region was also a factor that affected the original undertaking to provide a balance of programs in the four key areas of health, recreation, vocational and family support. Closer analysis of activities and programs for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in the BSG funded region than was possible in the pre-pilot research showed that in some areas, the target cohort was already well serviced and so the demand for BSG programs was low. This was borne out by the data collected via the BSG website online booking system, which showed less than expected demand for programs in some areas. Recreational programs, for example, are varied and plentiful, running both inside and outside of schools and school hours. Local councils, sporting groups and organisations such as SEDA offer well established and well attended all abilities programs. Changes in the funding environment also had an impact upon the provision of programs. For example, when the Access for All Abilities funding, coordinated by Sport and Recreation Victoria, was shifted from local councils in 2013 and diverted to State Sports Associations (SSAs), Regional Sports Assemblies (RSAs) and disability sports and community based organisations, there was a resulting increase in SSA driven activities in schools that greatly reduced the need for BSG to source and coordinate recreational activities.

As the pilot progressed, the BSG team also became increasingly aware that local council and community organisations offer a wide range of health focused programs, and all schools had health programs embedded in the curriculum. There was a clearly articulated consensus from the BSG Committee of Management and Steering Group that replicating work was to be avoided, and so the Health component of the BSG calendar of program offerings was consequently reduced. For these reasons BSG moved away from the four pillars approach to programming and instead became truly responsive to need and demand, with the focus on work-based learning and community participation opportunities for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

## 11.2 Beyond the School Gates Response

*"It makes you more confident about leaving school because it gives you skills and experience before you go out into the workplace." (Student, Berendale School)*

*"My favourite Beyond the School Gates program was the work experience that they organized for me at Bayside City Council in the Childcare department. It was a good experience to work with young children. I want to work in childcare in the future so it was good to know what to do. It made me want to do childcare even more." (Student, Berendale School)*

With the four pillar concept gradually dismantled, the programming was refined in 2015 to focus on work-based learning and community inclusion opportunities. This required gradual reframing of programming decisions in line with the big picture parameters, involving both a tightened focus on existing programs and the active acquisition of new programs.

### Extension and strengthening of existing programs

BSG began the process by identifying a range of its 'flagship' programs that fulfilled the requirements of offering work-based learning and community inclusion opportunities and worked with the program providers to lock in multiple delivery opportunities for 2016. Where necessary, the program was adjusted to ensure that the outcomes closely aligned with the modified BSG scope. The flagship programs are detailed below, including the partner organisations, program overview and program outcomes.

#### 11.2.1 Introduction to Work Program

Partner organisation/s – Family Life

##### Intent

This program is designed to provide extended, hands-on learning opportunities for students in a real, supportive work place.

##### Overview

The Introduction to Work program introduces students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability to a real work environment without the stress of being an employee. Participants are based in the Family Life warehouse in Moorabbin, where for the first half of the program, they have the opportunity to observe and absorb the busy environment of a working warehouse for donated goods destined for the Family Life Opportunity shop. However, at this stage, students are not expected to "work" in the warehouse. Instead, they have the opportunity to select a donated item and creatively revamp it for re-sale in the Family Life Opportunity shop. Participants then move on to practice real, hands-on work skills, such as customer service, cash handling and pricing and tagging merchandise. The group then organizes and runs a Pop-up Shop to showcase their skills.

##### Outcomes

Development of transferrable work place skills

Development of retail-specific work skills

Demonstrated ability to follow OH&S requirements

Demonstrated ability to provide customer service

Increased confidence in social interactions

#### 11.2.2 Exploring TAFE Program

Partner organisation/s - Holmesglen

##### Intent

The aim of this program is to provide participants with a supported introduction to an adult learning environment, as well as expanding their awareness of a range of career options.

##### Overview

This program provides an introduction to an adult learning environment in a supportive environment.

Participants enjoy weekly sessions focusing on the following industry areas: Photography; Hospitality; Sport and Fitness; Textiles; Horticulture; and Multimedia. All classes are taught by experienced VCAL Foundation and Certificate 1 in Transition Education teachers. Participants also develop social and independence skills as they interact with peers and explore the TAFE campus. The classes are run by the Community and Transition Education staff but students access all areas of the TAFE, eating lunch in the canteen and doing their Industry Tasters in the relevant TAFE departments.

#### Outcomes

- Increased understanding of a range of industry areas
- Increased understanding of career options
- Increased confidence and independence

#### 11.2.3 Career Fit Program

Partner organisation/s – Melbourne Sports Hub (MSAC Institute of Training)

*“Work experience will help me in the future because it leads to getting a job and I want that in the future.” (Student, Berendale School)*

#### Intent

This program is designed to provide participants with the opportunity to learn in the workplace, with classes and work placements all offered at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre complex.

#### Overview

This program combines hands-on work experience with classroom learning provided by the MSAC Institute of Training. Program content includes: Emergency Procedures; OH&S; and Workplace Communication. Work experience placements are available in a range of areas at MSAC, including: life-guarding; child care; gym; retail; catering; and operations (events). Students will have the opportunity to work in more than one area.

#### Outcomes

- Increased understanding of appropriate workplace communication
- Increased understanding of OH&S
- Increased understanding of work place requirements
- Development of transferrable workplace skills

#### 11.2.4 Café Skills Program

Partner organisation/s – Berendale School

*“Three boys have actually picked up jobs through Café Skills. One is at The Point. We’ve probably had 16 students do Café Skills so far and three have gone on and got jobs.” (Teacher) <sup>29</sup>*

#### Intent

This program aims provide hands-on hospitality skills in an environment modified to suit learners of all needs and abilities.

#### Overview

This program provides a thorough grounding in essential hospitality skills in the commercial kitchen at Berendale School, which then leads to on-the-job training in the fledgling Berendale Cafe. The cafe currently serves coffee and cake for Berendale staff and students, with the aim of working towards providing a more comprehensive service to the local community. The Café Skills program incorporates non-accredited Learning Outcomes from: Follow workplace hygiene procedures; Follow health, safety & security procedures; Work with colleagues & customers; Work in a socially diverse environment; Prepare & serve non-alcoholic beverages; and Prepare & serve espresso coffee.

<sup>29</sup> Anderson, M. (2014), *Evaluation of Beyond the School Gates: ‘A different way to learn’ Pilot*, ACER / Interface2Consulting, p.20.

## Outcomes

- Demonstrated ability to adhere to OH&S requirements
- Demonstrated ability to prepare coffee
- Demonstrated ability to follow workplace hygiene procedures
- Demonstrated ability to provide customer service

### 11.3 Development of New Programs Aligned to Modified BSG Scope

During 2015 and 2016, BSG worked to create or source a range of new programs that offered work-based learning and community inclusion opportunities. Some, such as the Hands Up! Student Volunteer program, were devised by BSG and funded by external entities, while others, such as the SYN Radio program, came about through collaboration with partner organisations. Some are up and running, while others are still under development. A brief overview of the new programs is provided below.

#### 11.3.1 Hands Up! Student Volunteer Program

BSG created the Hands Up! Student Volunteer program and successfully applied for funding under the DHS Engage! initiative. The aim of the Hands Up! program is to increase volunteer opportunities available to young people with an intellectual disability and/or learning disability whilst also having young people with such a disability connect and engage with local community organisations in a meaningful way. The need for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability to have access to volunteering opportunities is a universal as well as a local truth. Through volunteering, young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability are introduced to real work places without the stress of productivity demands. They connect with their local organisations in meaningful and productive ways, building self-confidence and community connectedness.

The main objectives of the Hands Up! program include:

- Provide work readiness and skill development to all participants
- Work with the core group to source and identify volunteer opportunities as well as potential hosts within the local community where presentations can be held
- Increase the local community's interest and awareness of the benefits of employing people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability as a volunteer
- Increase the level of social inclusion and help improve the success of school to employment transition in young people with an intellectual disability and/or learning disability via participants undertaking volunteer opportunities and training.
- Increase the number of volunteer opportunities available to young people with an intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

In its first 12 months of operation in 2015, Hands Up! has provided over 80 young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability with more than 1000 hours of volunteering with more than 15 community organisations. Funding for Hands Up! will continue until the end of 2017.

#### 11.3.2 Work Place Social Skills Program

BSG is currently working with experienced disability and social coaching program facilitator, Donna Gabriel, to develop a program designed to introduce the concept of appropriate work place behaviour through the medium of interactive activities. It explores essential workplace social skills through a series of practical, engaging activities driven by the interests and needs of the participants. Donna will work with the students to identify appropriate or inappropriate work place social interactions, and underpin this learning by providing opportunities to demonstrate appropriate workplace social interactions. The Work Place Social Skills program will run in three special/SDS schools, with each school hosting five sessions of 90 minutes duration.

#### 11.3.3 SYN Radio Programs

BSG is partnering with SYN Radio to offer two programs late in 2016 designed to introduce participants to the radio industry. Students learn the basics of radio production and presentation, both on air and behind the scenes. The two programs are designed for two different audiences.



### Program 1:

This is a program specifically designed for Year 10, 11 and 12 students on the Autism spectrum. Training is modified to suit a range of needs, and students who complete the sessions and are genuinely interested in radio may choose to become involved in SYN Radio's program *Great Minds Don't Think Alike*. This is a "show about Neurodiversity produced and presented by Neurodiverse young people. Through a human rights lens we discuss the big issues facing our community, we bust myths and stereotypes and talk to the people on the spectrum who are generally kicking it."

### Program 2:

This program is suitable for students in Years 10, 11 and 12 with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. Training has been modified to suit a wide range of learning styles, and students who complete the program and are genuinely interested in radio may choose to stay involved with SYN Radio by volunteering. SYN Radio volunteers can work behind the scenes or on air.

Once the participants have successfully completed the program, they have the opportunity to work as a group to present an on-air program once a week over a school term.

## 12. School Cluster

*"We need an external facilitator to assist schools to make and maintain partnerships. This works best because an external person has experience, knowledge, existing relationships and time (it's their core function)." (Teacher) <sup>30</sup>*

### 12.1 Drawing on Evaluation and Feedback

As part of the scoping research for the school cluster proposal, the BSG team spoke with staff from special schools, mainstream schools and representatives from disability organisations in the region. The key topic of discussion was partnerships, with two specific questions addressed. First, how can schools partner with other education providers and second, how can schools strengthen partnerships with their local communities?

All participants agreed strongly that education partnerships are a critical component of the drive to make learning more meaningful and relevant. When asked to consider what support schools need to form effective partnerships, the consultation participants immediately and strongly identified the need for a partnership facilitator – someone whose role it is to initiate, facilitate, drive and maintain partnerships. If the partnership facilitators are school staff members, it was agreed, then they need to be allocated time to carry out the role. In order for this to happen, the importance of partnerships would need to be recognised across the school. As one school staff member noted, successful partnerships require a whole school approach. The role of BSG as an external partnership facilitator was recognised as an effective and successful alternative to an in-school facilitator.

The BSG team asked the consultation participants to examine the issues that can arise as schools and external organisations attempt, with the best of good will on both sides, to form partnerships. Communication difficulties took centre stage as the issue requiring greatest attention. It was generally agreed that it can be difficult for external organisations to communicate with schools, with disability organisation members pointing out they don't know who to ask for to discuss partnership work. Ideally, there would be someone within the school whose role it is to communicate with external organisations (even if only in the first instance), and whose contact details are easily available, perhaps on the school's website. School staff participants noted that it can be difficult for schools to know who to approach externally for partnership opportunities.

When considering how schools can strengthen partnerships with their local communities, the discussion once again focused on the need to have someone whose role it is to take responsibility for maintaining partnerships. A disability organisation participant noted that before this step even happens, schools need to recognise that the existing arrangements they may have with external organisations are, in fact, partnerships. By naming them as such, these often long-standing, informal relationships can be nurtured as partnerships. School staff noted that training that focused on how to initiate and maintain partnerships

would be useful. Many of the school staff involved in the conversations knew of relationships with local community organisations that had failed to thrive through lack of care and maintenance.

Partnering with other education providers was seen as very valuable by school staff, though once again lack of time to reach out to others schools was noted as a barrier. The general agreement was that most contact between schools happened on an ad hoc basis when individual staff contacted other school staff, whereas ideally partnering with other education providers should be strategically planned, tracked and monitored. Once again, the role of BSG as a facilitator and driver of school networks was highlighted as an example of how to overcome the issue of patchy relationships cobbled together by individual school staff on an as-needs basis.

## 12.2 BSG Response

In response to feedback regarding the need for a network driver and facilitator, and in order to address the identified significant gaps in transition and pathways opportunities for students with disabilities, BSG created and convened a *Schools Connect – Disability Pathways Group* in late 2015 to promote the sharing of expertise and resources between mainstream and special schools in the region. The Schools Connect network is designed to be the engine room that drives and informs program and initiatives planning. It provides members with the opportunity to discuss local issues around gaps in opportunities for students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability and to explore possible collaborations. BSG has convened one school cluster to begin with, with the potential to divide into two or more clusters along geographical or shared interest lines if this model becomes unwieldy. The membership of the school cluster is comprised of school staff from special, SDS and mainstream schools, including: principals; Wellbeing Coordinators; Careers Coordinators; Integrations Coordinators; Integration Aides; and any interested staff who work with students with disability.

The *Schools Connect – Disability Pathways Group* will give staff from special and mainstream schools the chance to:

- Meet and network with cross-sectoral peers
- Share experiences and expertise
- Share resources and tools
- Work together to identify gaps in pathways opportunities for students with disabilities
- Work together to identify solutions to addressing these gaps
- Explore possibilities for collaboration
- Share existing and future pathways opportunities for students with disabilities

BSG was able to leverage off the positive relationships developed during its previous four years of operations with mainstream schools (government, Catholic and independent), special and SDS schools to create an initial school cluster list of 29 schools within the Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston and Port Philip regions.

## 12.3 Evaluation

After six months of operation, three levels of activity have emerged within the school cluster:

- Level 1: Attend meetings, actively collaborate, set up joint activities - 6 schools, approximately 15 members
- Level 2: Members who are unable to attend regularly, but who have agreed to share contact details and actively participate in sharing via email – 6 schools, approximately 10 members
- Level 3: Members who do not attend or actively share, but remain on distribution list to ensure they receive updates – 17 schools, approximately 35 members

# A STRONG CASE FOR TRANSFER & SCALE-UP



13. Australian Young People with Disability and their Transitions
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23. Beyond the School Gates Outcomes
24. Proposed Beyond the School Gates Regions
25. Summary

This section provides youth disability and social capital literature and data, information which not only led to the initial development of Beyond the School Gates (BSG) but also highlights the importance of its continuance. The strong relationship between BSG and the Victorian Department of Education's (DET) recently launched 'Strategic Intent' and 'The Education State' policy agenda is discussed, highlighting that BSG has been contributing to the delivery of elements of these policies for years prior to (and since) the 2015 release of these. It also identifies Victorian regions where implementation of the BSG model could affect positive outcomes for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in those locales. Further, it provides additional information and data which validates why BSG should continue to be delivered in the region where it was first established.

## 13. Australian Young People with Disability and their Transitions

Australian young people with disability are a substantial, and seemingly increasing, cohort. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) identified that 7.8 per cent of all 15 – 24 year olds in Australia had a disability in 2011; increasing from 6.6 per cent in 2009. The total population size of all young Australians aged 15 – 24 years was 2,866,471 at the last census in 2011; which means that 223,584 of these are living with disability.<sup>31</sup> The ABS '2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers' actually reveals a slight rise in the number of young Australians aged 15 – 24 years since the most recent Census, with the estimate being 245,300 in 2012.<sup>32</sup> Put another way, the population size of young people with disability in Australia is just over the total population of Hobart or just under the population size of Wollongong.

The ABS identified that only 38 per cent of these young people had completed Year 12 or its equivalent and that 62 per cent were not fully engaged in work or study. Only half of all students with severe disability progress past Year 10 at school, compared with 80 per cent in the general population.<sup>33</sup> In a 2001 report by Lamb and McKenzie, 17 per cent of young people with a disability do not enter employment over the seven year period after leaving school, compared to five per cent of counterparts without a disability.<sup>34</sup> This data alone infers that, for the vast majority, a successful completion of school followed by a positive transition from school and into employment or further training is not achieved or not a likely outcome. When one considers other data and information regarding the status of persons with disability in Australia, we see a

<sup>31</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2012), 'Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2012'

<sup>32</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2012), 'Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2012 - Data Cubes'

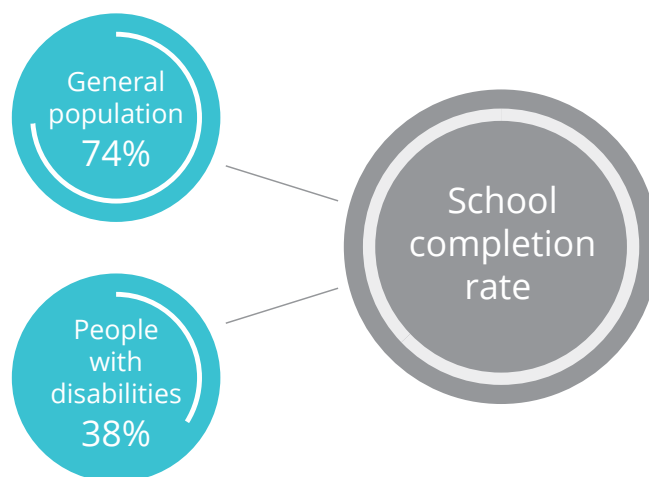
<sup>33</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2012), 'Disability and Work Report 2012'

<sup>34</sup> Lamb, S. and McKenzie, P., (2001), 'Patterns of Success and Failure in the Transition from School to Work in Australia (Report No. 18)'



very worrying picture of what may lie ahead for these (and future) young people with disability.

Australia compares poorly on the international stage when it comes to labour force participation, poverty and social exclusion rates experienced by Australians with disability. The 2011 PricewaterhouseCoopers report 'Disability expectations: Investing in a better life, a stronger Australia' highlights the poor employment access and relative poverty statistics for Australians with a disability: only 50 per cent of Australians with a disability are likely to be employed, compared to 60 per cent for the OECD, and 70 per cent for the top eight OECD countries; and, 45 per cent of Australians with a disability live in/near poverty, more than double the OECD average.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, "young people are particularly at risk of being caught in a welfare dependency trap. In 2010, close to 87,000 recipients of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) – over 10 per cent – were under the age of 30".<sup>36</sup>



The 2009 KPMG report 'The Contemporary Disability Service System' identified that the numbers of people with disabilities in Australia is expected to continue to grow over the coming decades, while the working age population will fall. This same report also acknowledged that the critical transition points that a person with a disability experiences are: beginning school; leaving school and entering employment; beginning work; and, retiring and ageing. In light of this, a particular focus on the transition from school to work is recommended through "increasing participation for people with a disability in employment ... with a particular focus on improving transitions from school to employment ... and partnerships with the private and not-for-profit sectors". It was further recommended that social inclusion and transitions can be enhanced through the education of young people with a disability and fostering partnerships between education, community services and employment agencies to support the young person's school to work transition.<sup>37</sup>

Overall, the importance of supporting young people with disabilities to engage with schooling and successfully transition to post-school destinations such as further training and/or employment is critical. Partnerships between education, employment and not-for profit sectors are also seen as a mechanism for supporting positive transitions. This is not only of benefit to the individual but also to their care givers and the wider community.

It was with respect to the aforementioned data and commentary that BSG was built upon. BSG was designed to address the poor transitions and social inclusion outcomes experienced by young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability by building cross-sectoral partnerships to deliver place-based community programs and opportunities designed to mitigate these poor outcomes. Furthermore, BSG was also designed to ameliorate the fears that parents hold about a child with disability leaving the safety of the school environment by providing a holistic range of programs and supports to facilitate the transition process.

45 per cent of Australians with a disability live in/near poverty, more than double the OECD average.

<sup>35</sup> PriceWaterhouseCoopers, (2011), 'Disability expectations: Investing in a better life, a stronger Australia' (p.9)

<sup>36</sup> Deloitte Access Economics, (2011), 'The economic benefits of increasing employment for people with disability' (p.5)

<sup>37</sup> KPMG, (2009), 'The Contemporary Disability Service System. Final Report'

## 14. Disability Definitions and School Participation Rates

The definitions and rates of disability for the Beyond the School Gates cohort of participants are drawn from the key federal government sources collected and interpreted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics



**One in twelve school aged children has a disability**

(ABS) and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The ABS describes disability by levels of severity, rather than specific types of disability, which is categorised according to limitations that a person has in one or more of the everyday core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication or that they had a schooling or employment restriction. A school restriction is determined on the basis of whether a child or young person is: not attending school/further study due to condition; need time off school/study; attend special classes/school; and/or, other related difficulties. An employment restriction relates to persons aged 15 years and over and is determined on the basis of whether a person has had any difficulties in: the type of job they could do; finding suitable work; needing time off work; and/or, permanently unable to work.

The four levels of limitation are defined by the ABS as:

*Profound* - the person is unable to do, or always needs help with, a core activity task.

*Severe* - the person sometimes needs help with a core activity task, has difficulty understanding or being understood by family or friends, and can communicate more easily using sign language or other non-spoken forms of communication.

*Moderate* - the person needs no help, but has difficulty with a core activity task.

*Mild* - the person needs no help and has no difficulty with any of the core activity tasks, but: uses aids and



**Number of young people with an intellectual disability by gender**

equipment; cannot easily walk 200 metres; cannot walk up and down stairs without a handrail; cannot easily bend to pick up an object from the floor; cannot use public transport; can use public transport, but needs help or supervision; and, needs no help or supervision, but has difficulty using public transport. <sup>38</sup>

Each young person who participates in BSG programs is deemed to have a disability, and identified as so because of their attendance at a special school or recognised as a student with disability attending a mainstream school. While all participating BSG students have an intellectual disability and/or learning disability some also have co-morbidities such as a physical disability and/or a chronic health condition. All young people who participate in BSG programs and activities have disabilities that, according to the ABS definition, would be considered mild to moderate.

In 2013 the ABS released information specifically related to children and young people with disability in Australia, including particular details regarding types of disability and education matters, garnered from 2009 data. It was revealed that 292,600, or one in twelve children, attending schools in Australia have a

<sup>38</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2012), 'Profile of Disability, Australia, 2009'

disability, and nearly 40 per cent of these (192,800) had a profound or severe limitation which meant that they always or sometimes require help with core activities such as self-care, mobility or communication. Most children with a disability attended regular classes in mainstream schools (65.9%), rather than special classes within mainstream schools (24.3%) or special schools (9.9%).<sup>39</sup>

Sue Phillips, ABS Director of Disability and Mental Health Statistics, said that “around half of all children with a disability attending regular classes in mainstream schools reported experiencing difficulties at school. However, children with a disability attending special classes within mainstream schools, or special schools, were more likely to report experiencing difficulties. The most commonly reported problems were learning, communicating and fitting in socially.”<sup>40</sup>

Other key ABS findings regarding children and young people with disability were that:

- Most children with disability attend school, and stay at school for longer than children without disability
- One in ten boys at school has a disability compared with one in sixteen girls
- Half of all children with disability at school have a profound or severe limitation with a core activity
- Around 60 per cent of children with a disability at school had an intellectual disability.<sup>41</sup>

## 15. Youth Disability Status and Population – Australia and Victoria

Providing specific breakdowns of youth disability population age ranges are somewhat limited due to the way in which the ABS presents such data. As ages are provided in ranges, rather than per year, data pertains to 5 – 14 year olds and 15 – 24 year olds. In addition, the types of disability status means that individuals may be captured in more than one category. However, this data does provide a sound picture of the Australian and Victorian disability population between the 5 – 24 year old age ranges.

It is important to remember that the two sets of age ranges presented below do not directly correspond with the BSG cohort range (Year 7 – Year 12, generally 12 years of age to 19 years of age); rather, the BSG cohort sits within these.

**Table 1: Youth Disability Population (Australia)**

Youth Disability Rates - Australia (2012)									
Age Group	Profound core activity limitation	Severe core activity limitation	Moderate core activity limitation	Mild core activity limitation	Schooling or employment limitation	All with specific restrictions or limitations	All with disability	No reported disability	Total
5 - 14 years	68,400	65,400	7,700	47,300	177,300	216,000	244,400	2,548,200	2,792,900
15 - 24 years	34,500	33,400	18,600	66,700	163,900	202,000	245,300	2,879,800	3,125,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>102,900</b>	<b>98,800</b>	<b>26,300</b>	<b>114,000</b>	<b>341,200</b>	<b>418,000</b>	<b>489,700</b>	<b>5,428,000</b>	<b>5,918,700</b>

Source: ABS, 2012 (4430.0 - Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2012)

Whilst the above ABS reporting does not allow for the separation of types of disability, it does reveal that the number of children and young people aged 5 – 24 years with a disability are a substantial proportion of the Australian population. In 2012, the ABS calculated that 8.3 per cent of Australians aged between 5 – 24 years have a reported disability.

<sup>39</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2013), ‘Most school children with a disability attend regular classes’

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

**Table 2: Youth Disability Population (Victoria)**

Youth Disability Rates - Victoria (2012)							
Age Group	Profound or severe core activity limitation	Moderate or mild core activity limitation	Schooling or employment limitation	All with specific restrictions or limitations	All with disability	No reported disability	Total
5 - 14 years	34,600	10,600	41,900	49,200	56,500	628,100	682,500
15 - 24 years	17,000	16,800	46,000	52,300	67,500	715,600	784,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,600</b>	<b>27,400</b>	<b>87,900</b>	<b>101,500</b>	<b>124,000</b>	<b>1,343,700</b>	<b>1,467,000</b>

Source: ABS, 2012 (4430.0 - Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2012)

It is notable that of the Victorian population of children and young people aged 5 – 24 years of age a substantial 8.5 per cent have a reported disability. It is also significant that six per cent of children and young people in this age range report having schooling or employment limitations as a direct result of their disability.

Although this statistical reporting does not allow for the separation of types of disabilities, it is important to reflect on previously discussed ABS research which revealed that 60 per cent of students with disability attending school are reported as having an intellectual disability.<sup>42</sup>

## 16. Disability and Early School Leaving

A student with disability is less likely than their non-disabled peers to complete their secondary education. As noted earlier, 2012 ABS data revealed that only 36 per cent of all Australians with disability aged 15 to 64 years had completed secondary school (Year 12 or equivalent) which was nearly half that of their non-disabled peers. That same data showed that the figure is not much greater (38 per cent) for those in the 18 – 25 years of age category, despite the fact that this cohort is part of the generation of youth who have experienced increased rates of school completion and post-school education overall.

The 2014 Brotherhood of St Laurence 'Investing in our Future' report<sup>43</sup>, which provided recommendations for boosting youth employment in Australia, singled out school completion as the critical factor associated with improving life chances. This report noted that around one in five young people leave school before completing Year 12 and almost half of those find themselves on the margins of the labour force, either in part-time employment or out of work. Furthermore, this report also noted that early school leavers are two and a half times more likely to experience deep social exclusion than those who complete Year 12.

This same report stated that "While schooling is often understood as an area of responsibility for state and territory governments, the consequences of limited school attainment are felt nationally through lower productivity, lower tax revenues, higher unemployment and higher demand for social services".

The specific effects of early school leaving on young Australians with disability is unavailable due to lack of data however we can surmise these young people would experience the same, or likely worse, levels of disadvantage as their non-disabled peers that leave school early.

<sup>42</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2013), 'Most school children with a disability attend regular classes'

<sup>43</sup> Brotherhood of St Laurence (2014), 'Investing in our future Opportunities for the Australian Government to boost Youth Employment'

## 17. Beyond the School Gates Students with Disability

BSG was established to support students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. It is this cohort of young people with disabilities who are at risk of poor post-school transitions and may experience lifelong psycho-social and economic difficulties that BSG was established to support. To further understand the descriptions, prevalence and impact of these disabilities, details about each are provided below.

### 17.1 Intellectual Disability Definition

According to the Monash University Centre for Developmental Disability Health (CDDH)<sup>44</sup> a person has an intellectual disability if, before the age of 18 years, they have an IQ below 70 (the average IQ being 100) and also have significant difficulty with daily living skills including looking after themselves, communicating and taking part in activities with others. The CDDH estimates that around two to three per cent of the Australian population have an intellectual disability.

Of concern, CDDH research has shown that “people with an intellectual disability have significant health disadvantage with a life expectancy up to twenty years less than the general population, and many health conditions not identified or inadequately managed”.

Intellectual disability can be mild, moderate or severe and factors such as personality, coping strategies and the presence of other disabilities (motor, social or sensory). The CDDH has described the general features of those with differing levels of intellectual disability.

“A mild intellectual disability is defined as an IQ between 50 and 70. Generally speaking, a person with a mild intellectual disability:

- participates in and contributes to their families and their communities
- has important relationships in his/her life
- works in either open or supported employment
- may live and travel independently but will need support and help to handle money and to plan and organise their daily life
- may marry and raise children with the support of family, friends and the service system
- may learn to read and write.”

“A moderate intellectual disability is defined as an IQ between 35 and 50. Generally speaking, a person with a moderate intellectual disability:

- has important relationships in his/her life
- enjoys a range of activities with their families, friends and acquaintances
- understands daily schedules or future events if provided with pictorial visual prompts such as daily timetables and pictures
- makes choices about what s/he would like to do, eat, drink etc
- may learn to recognise some words in context, such as common signs including ‘Ladies’, ‘Gents’ and ‘Exit’
- may develop independence in personal care
- will need lifelong support in the planning and organisation of their lives and activities”.

“A severe or profound intellectual disability is defined as an IQ below 35. Generally speaking, a person with a severe or profound intellectual disability:

- recognises familiar people and may have strong relationships with key people in their lives
- has little or no speech and relies on gestures, facial expression and body language to communicate
- requires lifelong help with personal care tasks, communication and accessing and participating in community facilities, services and activities”.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Tracy, J., ‘Intellectual Disability Fact Sheet’, Monash University Centre for Developmental Disability Health, <[www.cddh.monash.org/assets/documents/intellectual-disability-1.pdf](http://www.cddh.monash.org/assets/documents/intellectual-disability-1.pdf)>, accessed April 2016

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

Young people who take part in BSG generally sit within the definition of mild or moderate intellectual disability.

## 17.2 Learning Difficulties and Learning Disability Definitions

The terms 'learning differences' or 'learning difficulties' are broad ones and generally refer to persons experiencing difficulties in reading, writing and comprehension across the spectrums of literacy and numeracy. According to Learning Difficulties Australia (LDA) "Learning difficulties can be caused by internal factors (inherent, medical, physical, neurological), and/or, external factors, (family, communities, opportunities, experiences). Internal factors are intrinsic to the individual, can cause a person to learn differently, are usually life-long, and are usually considered a learning disability – also referred to as a specific or significant learning difficulty."<sup>46</sup>

LDA reference Australian studies which estimate that 10 to 16 per cent of students are perceived by their teachers as having learning difficulties. However, within that population of students with learning difficulties there is a "smaller sub-set of students who show persistent and long lasting learning impairments and these are identified as students with a learning disability. It is estimated that approximately four per cent of Australian students have a learning disability."<sup>47</sup>



**10-16% of students are perceived by their teachers as having learning difficulties**

The psycho-social and economic impact of a learning disability is such that these individuals "may have difficulty maintaining friendships, relationships or employment, as they may find organisation, impulse control, planning and reading social cues to be a challenge".<sup>48</sup>

A learning disability is an accepted disability under the Australian Disability Discrimination Act.<sup>49</sup>

## 17.3 Autism Spectrum Disorder Definition

People with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may be considered as having an intellectual disability and/or learning disability. However, some people living with ASD may not be considered to have either of these disabilities. In the 2009 Victorian Autism State Plan it was estimated that "approximately 80 per cent having an associated intellectual disability and 20 per cent with intelligence within the normal range".<sup>50</sup> Over the course of the delivery of BSG many participating students have been diagnosed with ASD and attend either a special or mainstream school. Within the Beyond the School Gates model, ASD is considered to fall under the "learning differences" spectrum, in recognition of the fact that ASD is not considered a cognitive disorder.

"Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) include autism, Asperger disorder and pervasive developmental disorder – not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) and are characterised by severe impairment in communication, behaviour and social interaction."<sup>51</sup> It is the above description that most people associate with ASD, however in 2013 the diagnosis of autism changed with the release of the latest version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSMV). The key change to the new manual for autism is that there is now a single diagnosis of autism, replacing the previous sub-divisions of autism, Asperger's Syndrome and pervasive developmental disorder - not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS). Asperger's syndrome is now considered to be part of the autism spectrum, rather than having its own separate diagnosis.<sup>52</sup>

Autism Spectrum Australia describe the characteristics of people living with autism by marked difficulties in behaviour, social interaction, communication and sensory sensitivities.

"People on the spectrum may exhibit unusual behaviour due to the difficulties they have responding to

<sup>46</sup> Learning Difficulties Australia, <[www.ldaustralia.org/disabilities-and-dyslexia.html](http://www.ldaustralia.org/disabilities-and-dyslexia.html)>, accessed April 2016.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Learning Difficulties Association of Ottawa-Carleton, <[www.ldaottawa.com/impact-of-learning-disabilities/](http://www.ldaottawa.com/impact-of-learning-disabilities/)>, accessed April 2016.

<sup>49</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, (1992), 'Australian Disability Discrimination Act 1992'

<sup>50</sup> Department of Human Resources (Victoria), (2009), 'Autism State Plan 2009' (p. 11)

<sup>51</sup> Williams, K. et. al, (2008), 'The prevalence of autism in Australia. Can it be established from existing data?', *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health*

<sup>52</sup> Autism Spectrum Australia, 'About The Autism Spectrum' <[www.autismspectrum.org.au/content/aspergers-or-autism-what-are-different-types-1](http://www.autismspectrum.org.au/content/aspergers-or-autism-what-are-different-types-1)> accessed May 2016

their environment. Their behaviour is generally an attempt by them to communicate their feelings or to cope with a situation. Behaviour problems may occur as the result of their heightened sensitivity to a sound or something they may have seen or felt. For people on the spectrum, rigidly sticking to routines and spending their time in repetitive behaviours are ways for them to reduce uncertainty and maintain the predictability of their environment.”

“People with autism have difficulty establishing and maintaining relationships. They do not respond to many of the non-verbal forms of communication that many of us take for granted like facial expressions, physical gestures and eye contact. They are often unable to understand and express their needs just as they are unable to interpret and understand the needs of others. This impairs their ability to share interests and activities with other people. For this reason they may appear distant and aloof. Because they are often delayed in their speech and struggle to make sense of other non-verbal forms of communication, they may withdraw into repetitive play and behaviour and avoid interaction.”

“People with autism often have communication difficulties in one form or another. There are some people with autism who speak fluently, others who are speech impaired to varying degrees and others still, who are unable to speak at all. Of those who can speak, they will often use language in a very limited or unusual way. Their line of conversation may involve repeating your phrases or words back to you or asking the same questions over and over. People with autism will usually only talk about topics that are of interest to them which makes the give and take in communication difficult. They have difficulty interpreting non-verbal forms of communication like facial expressions, hand gestures and other body language.”<sup>53</sup>

A recent article in *The Age*, ‘How autism can make the teenage years even tougher’<sup>54</sup>, shared the experiences of teenagers living with ASD and discussed current research into the happiness and wellbeing of young people with this type of disability. One young person with ASD quoted in this article noted that forming friendships and reading sarcasm and humour are tough as “I just wasn’t born with the appropriate social skills. I can take things very literally”. In this article Professor Rinehart from Deakin University said “it was well established that having good relationships, a circle of friends and a sense of purpose and achievement were important to people’s satisfaction with their lives, but these things were often difficult for people with ASD. If you don’t have a developmental challenge you can take these things for granted. These kids that we’re looking at, they’re faced with many challenges, friendships are not easy, belonging to a social group isn’t easy, obtaining work isn’t easy”. Professor Rinehart noted that “getting a first part-time job is a big rite of passage for many adolescents ... but this was often difficult for kids with ASD and was one area where support could make a big difference”.

In 2012, the Australian Bureau of Statistics estimated that the labour force participation rate for people with autism was a mere 42 per cent. This was less than the 53 per cent participation rate for all people with disabilities and 83 per cent for all people without disabilities.<sup>55</sup> The need for improving the transition to employment outcomes for people with autism is thus important from both an economic and social participation perspective.

The review of intellectual and learning disabilities (including ASD) prevalence, literature, government plans and lived experience insights highlight that this cohort of young people requires additional community support in order to fulfil their social and economic potential. The successful delivery of community-driven BSG programs to young people living with such disabilities is evidence of its capacity to play the role in assisting with improved transition and community participation outcomes.

## 18. Social Inclusion and Social Capital

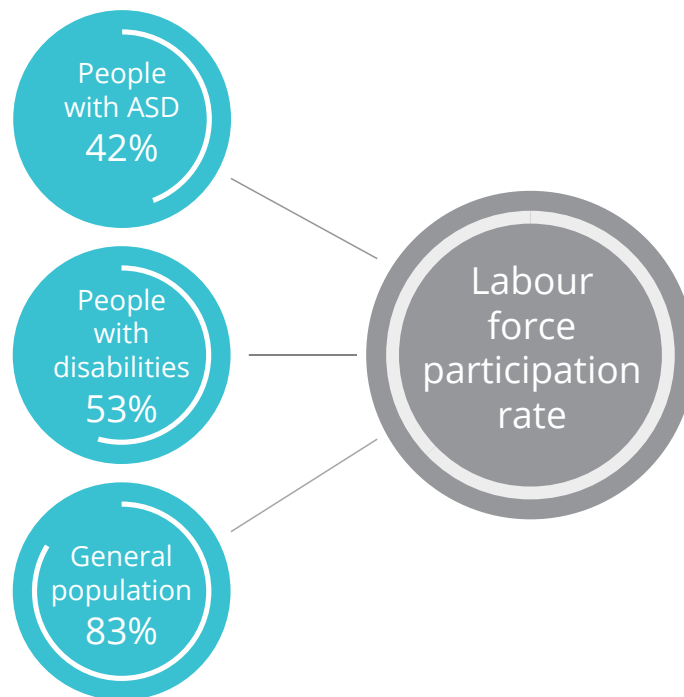
When reviewing research and policy in relation to people with disability, as well as the organisations that work with people with disabilities, the terms of social inclusion and social capital are often used interchangeably. BSG is demonstrative of incorporating both social inclusion and social capital in its mission, deliverables and outcomes. BSG has been designed to offer social inclusion opportunities for young people with disability. BSG has a particular focus on the development of relationships between like young people, paid staff from disability and mainstream services and in integrated community settings. In addition, the BSG model, which brings together community networks to support these young people, is a source of positive social capital in that it facilitates coordination and cooperation between organisations for mutual benefit.

<sup>53</sup> Autism Spectrum Australia, ‘Characteristics’, <[www.autismspectrum.org.au/content/characteristics](http://www.autismspectrum.org.au/content/characteristics)>, accessed May 2016

<sup>54</sup> Kermond, C., (2016), ‘How autism can make the teenage years even tougher’, *The Age*, 8/5/2016

<sup>55</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2012), ‘4428.0 - Autism in Australia, 2012’ <[www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/4428.0Main%20Features12012?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=4428.0&issue=2012&num=&view](http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/4428.0Main%20Features12012?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=4428.0&issue=2012&num=&view)>, accessed May 2016

The 2009 Australian Government National Disability Strategy Consultation Report 'Shut Out'<sup>56</sup> and the 2014 'Victorian Government Inquiry into Disability and Social Inclusion' explores these matters in more detail, at both a systemic level and drawn from the lived experiences of people with disabilities and all those who support them making these important pieces of Australian research and policy worth special attention.



## 18.1 Social Inclusion

Numerous definitions of social inclusion specifically related to disability, since the concept was first coined in the 1970s, exist. One particular piece of research, which referenced much literature, by Simplican et al.<sup>57</sup> has brought together all elements to provide an ecological model of social inclusion. Their definition focuses on the two domains of interpersonal relationships and community participation and, within these, incorporates the critical categories that capture the structural and functional components behind social inclusion.

Interpersonal Relationships is divided into three kinds of characteristics – category, structure and function. Category refers to the kinds of people in the social network including family members, staff, friends, acquaintances, and intimate partners (either with or without a disability). People with intellectual and developmental disabilities have reported valuing relationships with staff and other people with disabilities, and feeling a sense of belonging to a network when they have different people fulfilling different needs. It is connected to social capital in that interpersonal relationships facilitate bonding, whereby people share a common bond or identity which facilitate trust, and bridging, whereby contact with diverse people is made and may be especially important for employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Structural components of specific interpersonal relationships include the length of the relationship, the origin of the relationship, frequency of contact, and who initiates contact. A further structural dimension is the location of social interaction, whether it occurs in the home, the community, or online. Relationships are considered functional and provide multiple kinds of social support which are divided into emotional, instrumental, and informational areas. Emotional support includes love, care, and trust. Instrumental support involves tangible aid and services, and informational support includes advice, suggestions, and information'.

Community Participation is divided into three kinds of characteristics - category, structure, and the degree of involvement. Community activities include leisure activities (such as hobbies, arts and sports), political and civic activities or organisations, productive activities (such as employment or education), consumption, or access to goods and services, and religious and cultural activities and groups. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities take part in activities in many settings, which are classified according to three different structural categories - segregated, semi-segregated, and integrated settings. Segregated settings

<sup>56</sup> National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, (2009), *Shut Out*, Commonwealth of Australia

<sup>57</sup> Simplican, S et. Al., (2015), 'Defining social inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities: An ecological model of social networks and community participation', *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, Volume 38, March 2015 (pp. 18–29)

are considered those ones involving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and paid staff (which take place in segregated facilities) as well as activities involving only the person with an intellectual or developmental disability and members of their immediate family. Semi-segregated activities are ones that involve paid staff and/or family members and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities only (taking place in community settings), those taking place in segregated facilities but include community members such as volunteers, and/or cyber activities. It is considered that semi-segregated activities may offer people opportunities for developing a sense of belonging, confidence, and group identity, which may bolster a person's ability to transition to and participate in integrated settings. Integrated settings are defined as mainstream settings in the community where people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have the greatest opportunity to promote positive awareness about disability and inclusion, however it is noted that these types of settings are the ones where social exclusion is more likely to occur. The research indicates that people have presence, encounter and participation levels of community involvement. Community presence is physically being in a community with little to no contact with other people and often a precursor to participation. Community encounters are meetings between strangers in the community setting that can be fleeting or more sustained, whereas community participation is involvement in community activities that promote the development of interpersonal relationships.

## 18.2 Social Capital

Social capital refers to the idea that social networks are a potential resource for individuals, communities and society as a whole. Social capital has been defined as “features of social organisation such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit”.<sup>58</sup> The Australian Bureau of Statistics notes that social capital is produced by societal investments of time and effort and is the result of historical, cultural and social factors which give rise to norms, values and social relations that bring people together in networks or associations which result in collective action.<sup>59</sup>

In reviewing considerable social capital literature and theory Gotto et al<sup>60</sup> identified three key elements in the development of social capital:

1. Family / parent participation and advocacy in the lives of people who are just developing their own social capital repertoires are vitally important. Research shows that like other forms of capital, social capital is often transmitted from parent to child.
2. Social capital involves developing and sustaining as many peripheral social ties as possible. Peripheral ties of this nature are often the most important when accessing opportunities outside one's bonded or primary social network.
3. Connecting to and/or joining important social structures (i.e., volunteer organisations, churches, advocacy associations, work related groups, etc.) is of critical importance in accessing friendships and different social support networks. Individuals not only gain personal social capital in this process but also accrue the benefits of these groups' larger pools of social capital. A preeminent need for people with developmental disabilities in particular is to achieve a higher quality of life; a life that includes family, friends, associates and community engagement.

Furthermore, Gotto et al argued that a special emphasis should be placed on assisting people with disabilities to develop social capital. In addition, it was noted that “social networks are not a natural given; they require effort and must be constructed through multiple investment strategies”.

Put simply, social capital is the developing and maintaining of relationships that allow people to work together and the sharing of resources to address opportunities and issues. Within the context of BSG, social capital can be built by both participating young people and the organisations delivering programs and opportunities to this cohort. It could also be argued that parents and carers are also enabled to develop social capital, through either direct engagement in BSG programs or establishing connections with participating partner organisations.

## 18.3 Increasing Social Inclusion and Social Capital for People with Disabilities

In a 2013 Victorian Department of Health and Human Services report it was noted that “Social capital can be both beneficial and harmful as it can function in a socially exclusive manner, having positive effects for some and negative effects for others. Negative effects can include the exclusion of outsiders, excessive claims on group members, restrictions on the freedom of individuals, and the downward levelling of

<sup>58</sup> Putnam, R., (1995), 'Bowling alone: America's declining social capital', *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1), (pp. 65-78).

<sup>59</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2002), *Social Capital and Social Wellbeing*, Canberra, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

<sup>60</sup> Gotto et al., (2010), 'Accessing Social Capital Implications for Persons with Disabilities', *A National Gateway to Self-Determination*, US Department of Health and Human Services - Administration on Developmental Disabilities

social norms".<sup>61</sup>

The 2014 'Victorian Government Inquiry into Disability and Social Inclusion' noted that in order to understand what social inclusion means for people with disability a key starting point is to consider their life aspirations and how these relate to inclusion. The resulting report of this Inquiry noted that the dreams and goals of people with disability is no different from other people in the community. It was also said that "negative experiences can reduce the aspirations of people with disability and decrease their opportunities for social inclusion. In addition, many people with disability report that the activities they engage in are limited and not what they would choose to do if barriers to their participation were removed". The Inquiry identified that people with disability "need access to communities and, for some, support to pursue their hopes and goals".

The Inquiry identified that a number of factors influence the aspirations of people with disability, including:

- individual factors - such as, health status, personal characteristics, diversity, capacity and capability
- life transitions - such as starting and changing schools, leaving school, getting a job, starting a family, moving into later life, or acquiring a disability
- family and friends - such as expectations and level of supports
- society - such as accessible environments and the extent to which communities welcome people with disability.<sup>62</sup>



Indeed, the Committee who oversaw this Inquiry made "recommendations to provide greater opportunities

<sup>61</sup> Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, (2013), 'Victorian population health survey of people with an intellectual disability 2013'

<sup>62</sup> Victorian Government, (2014), 'Victorian Government Inquiry into Disability and Social Inclusion'

for people to meaningfully participate and contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of Victoria". Furthermore, this Inquiry stated that "Non-government organisations have considerable potential to make an effective difference in building the social capital of people with disability through innovative initiatives".

Beyond the School Gates is a unique and aspiration raising model delivering programs which facilitate connectedness, prepare students for transition from school, support employment preparation, and enable relationships with community and business mentors and thus is already addressing recommendations presented in this Inquiry.

## 18.4 Shut Out: The Experiences of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia

The 2009 Australian Government National Disability Strategy Consultation Report 'Shut Out'<sup>63</sup> outlines the lived experiences of many adults living with disability. Through surveys with many Australians living with disabilities, their families, friends and carers, a number of issues were identified as barriers to full participation in social and economic life.

More than half of the respondents cited social exclusion, discrimination and lack of services and support as the most critical issues facing those with disability. Many experience segregation and marginalisation on a daily bases through misconceptions, outdated stereotypes, attitudes and behaviour within the community. Many argued that discrimination is entrenched in the everyday practices of individuals, community groups, businesses and government. Adults with disability commonly feel voiceless with few meaningful opportunities to participate in political change that would help to reduce systemic discrimination. Disability services were characterised by many respondents as under-funded, under-resourced utilising an inflexible one-size-fits-all approach that is unable to meet a basic quality of life. For most, disability services are a barrier to participation rather a facilitator.

"More often than not, people with disabilities are seen as recipients of services and a burden rather than equal members of the community."<sup>64</sup>

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There is a lack of opportunity for people with disabilities to obtain meaningful employment due to misconceptions and negative attitudes with even greater stigma existing for those with an intellectual disability. Many respondents cited clear examples of discrimination in the workforce leading to a vicious cycle of reliance on government support, along with the attached social stigma, and little opportunity to access support required to become independently employed.

Many submissions cited difficulties in accessing buildings and services as another barrier to full participation in the community leading to social isolation. Considerable frustration was levelled at the difficulties in accessing public transport and lack of accessible design principles included in new property developments. However, for those with intellectual disabilities access to information is problematic due to a lack of assistive technologies.

"There is much talk of community involvement and participation, but when individuals don't have access to the necessary mobility and communication tools to partake, then it is not possible."<sup>65</sup> The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that 15% of people with disabilities live alone, more than 50% greater than the rate for the rest of society.<sup>66</sup> Social isolation can be explained through social exclusion. Although people with disability may appear to be active in accessing services and community resources, opportunities for meaningful engagement with new networks outside of the disability service system are very limited.<sup>67</sup>

BSG is a model designed to mitigate some of the barriers to full participation in social and economic life identified by contributors to the 'Shut Out' research, by providing students with access to services and programs that not only build skill but also increase social participation. Furthermore, participation in these programs are a means of increasing student and parental awareness of services in their local community, while simultaneously assisting organisations to better understand the developmental and accessibility needs of students with disability.

63 National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, (2009), *Shut Out*, Commonwealth of Australia.

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid.

66 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003, *Disability, Ageing and Carers: summary of findings*, cat. no. 4430.0, ABS, Canberra, p. 20.

67 Craig, D. & Bigby, C., (2010), *Building relationships between people with and without intellectual disability: Insights for contact theory*, Paper presented at the Australian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability (ASSID) Conference, September 2010, Brisbane.

## 19. Parental Transition Concerns

Parents and guardians of children with disability are approximately 20 per cent less likely to be engaged in full time employment.

Parents of children with disability are fearful of the lack of future prospects and support for their children. According to the 2009 Shut Out report the worries of parents of school age children centre around their child's transition out of education and loss of the supportive environment of school. Many parent respondents highlighted a lack of comprehensive individualised planning to allow young people to adequately understand and make decisions regarding their future. Parents also cited the lack of post-school activities, especially for those young people with complex needs. For parents of young people with moderate to complex disabilities, they may be not be able to be left alone, leading to parental concerns about their own employment options. It is more likely that parents and guardians of children with disability are approximately 20 per cent less likely to be engaged in full time employment.<sup>68</sup> Australian Disability Enterprise day services are available but not always appropriate, leaving the parents to cobble together solutions with little support.

Strnadova, I., and Cumming, T. insist that, to achieve greater post-school participation for young people with disability, systemic change needs to occur in areas such as: strong home-school collaboration; comprehensive transition programs; exploration of and student immersion within the post-school settings; and, follow up within the new setting.<sup>69</sup>

Through the provision of a range of programs during the schooling years aimed at increasing self-determination skills and successful transitions for students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability, BSG aims to reduce parental fears about their child's post-school lives.

## 20. An Intermediary Partnership Model

BSG is predicated on the notion of collaborative and community-wide partnerships and planning, and sees itself as an intermediary body that brings together all of these partners in a coordinated fashion. BSG recognises that to improve outcomes for young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability a partnership-driven, multi-sectoral approach is required. BSG believes and has evidence that partnerships comprised of schools, community organisations, employers, disability agencies and youth services do create more opportunities for skills acquisition and post-school pathways for young people collectively than they do if working individually or discretely. This is a model recognised by Australian researchers as ideal to improving the post-school outcomes of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

In his review of the post-school transitions of Australian students with a disability Meadows<sup>70</sup> stated that "The setting and achievement of goals for post-school life pre-supposes a collaborative relationship between the school and post-school service providers, educational institutions, training agencies, workplaces, and businesses with which students will eventually engage. Unfortunately, the human rights and equal opportunity commission study noted poor links between schools and post-school systems. Interagency collaboration is viewed as a key component in any transition process for without it the preparation of students for the post-school world becomes problematic".

BSG is built around a holistic partnership approach, which draws together key agencies via it acting as a coordinating 'Lead Agent'. It is also built around drawing together key local agencies that share a common desire to improve the post-school (and indeed lifelong) outcomes of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. Collaboration between all partners is necessary to make BSG successful and each partner plays a critical role in this.

BSG encourages partners to work beyond 'just' what they are funded for and step outside of the sector that they represent to look at the issue of youth disability and transition needs in a cross-sectoral manner. In doing so, these partners can innovatively explore what is needed in the local community and how they can combine their skills, knowledge and resources to offer programs and opportunities that will enhance young people's transition through and beyond school.

<sup>68</sup> Qu, L., Edwards, B., & Gray, M., (2012), *Aging parent carers of people with a disability*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Victoria.

<sup>69</sup> Strnadova, I. & Cumming, T., (2014), *Transitions of Students with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorders: Fostering School-Home Partnerships*, Paper presented at the University of New South Wales Transition Symposium, November 2013, Sydney.

<sup>70</sup> Meadows, D., (2012), *'Post School Transition for Students with a Disability'*, The Association for Childhood Language and Related Disorders.

As the earlier data attests, young people with disability, particularly intellectual disability and/or learning disability, are unlikely to have a smooth transition from school to employment or further education. This equates to greater risk of dropping out of school, unemployment or underemployment, social isolation, dependence on others or even involvement in the criminal justice system.

BSG was established to address this by acting as an intermediary bringing together many like-minded partners for the specific delivery of services that address needs or gaps and ensure that young people's aspirations and goals are met. BSG recognises that no one organisation can deliver all the programs, services or opportunities needed by young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability to successfully transition through and from school; making a partnership approach comprised of different partners with differing expertise and resources critical to the model's success.

The importance of ensuring that that organisations acting as agents and/or program deliverers are culturally competent is also critical, particularly if BSG is rolled out into other more ethnically diverse regions. This is not only for the purpose of engaging with diverse communities but it is a reflection that within some communities, disability is seen as shameful, and results in young people with disability missing out on targeted programs and opportunities designed to enhance their skills and social inclusion. While organisations engaged in BSG are generally well versed with the needs of young people with disability, some may not be as culturally competent as may be required; making culturally competent awareness and practices important with BSG moving forward.

## 20.1 The Importance of Cultural Competence

"Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enable that system, agency or those professions to work effectively in cross-cultural situations" (Cross et al. 1989).

Culturally competent practices are aimed at building understanding between people, being respectful and open to different cultural perspectives and working towards equality in opportunity. Building quality relationships is key to cultural competence and should be founded on a deep understanding of our and others expectations and attitudes, thus building on shared knowledge toward meaningful engagement.

For organisations to achieve cultural competence, principles of equity and access must underpin the overall strategy and influence all activities throughout the entire organisation.

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"For families from different ethnic backgrounds, the issues are compounded. Many people from different ethnic backgrounds are not aware of their rights to benefits, supports or respite. Due to isolation felt by

many carers and people with a disability, language barriers or low levels of English proficiency mean that these families do not access information and are unaware of what is available" (Shut Out, 2009).

### 20.1.1 Tips for Engaging with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities

The Queensland Government<sup>72</sup> presents key tips that organisations working in diverse communities should consider employing. It is indeed something that BSG staff and intermediary organisations should ensure are part of their inherent approach when working with diverse communities.

- a. Engage communities as early in the process as possible. Input in the planning phase will promote effective engagement and can save you from heading in a direction that will not work for ethnic communities.
- d. Build trust. Seek to understand at what stage people are in the settlement process and engage accordingly. Initially involve sector representatives and other trusted support people. Be clear about expectations and roles. Avoid tokenism and build relationships.
- e. Recognise diversity within communities. Differences exist between culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and also within groups. Take time to understand communities and offer a range of targeted engagement strategies.
- f. Allow time. Sector representatives and community leaders need time to encourage the participation of community members, for trusting relationships to build, and for information to circulate.
- g. Build capacity. Support public sector staff and community members to undertake research, liaise with key knowledge holders, and undertake formal training and identification of champions.
- h. Avoid over-consultation. Plan well and liaise with others who might also engage the community of interest. Seek advice from the sector.
- i. Address language issues. Consider the need to have written, electronic and verbal information translated or made available in plain English, and to employ bicultural workers or interpreters at face-to-face consultations.
- j. Ensure engagement is adequately resourced. Make sure resources are available to support translating and interpreting, to hire appropriate venues, and for catering, child care, transport support and capacity building. Consider partnerships with multicultural organisations and build engagement into work practices.
- k. Demonstrate respect. Understand at what stage people are in the settlement process and engage accordingly. Acknowledge community protocols, beliefs and practices. Avoid stereotypes. Be honest. Promote engagement rights and responsibilities. Respond effectively to community-initiated engagement.
- l. Provide feedback on the outcomes of engagement. Ensure participants are aware of responses by noting feedback in the notes of meetings and making such notes available. In the longer term, the department's response or actions undertaken in light of engagement can be communicated, and communities invited to provide information on the outcomes they themselves have achieved.

## 21. Department of Education – Strategic Intent and The Education State

In late 2015 the Victorian Department of Education (DET) released its ten year 'Strategic Intent'<sup>73</sup>, setting out the Department's vision as being *"Together we give every Victorian the best learning and development experience, making our state a smarter, fairer and more prosperous place"*.

Coupled with this is 'The Education State'<sup>74</sup> policy, which outlines the targets, deliverables and funding associated with the Strategic Intent. The overarching Victorian Government commitment made via The Education State is that *"We're making Victoria the Education State by building an education system that produces excellence and reduces the impact of disadvantage"*.

This Strategic Intent and The Education State agenda commits to the provision of quality education opportunities for Victorians of all ages and a promise that the DET will support this at a systemic level. Elements of the Strategic Intent and The Education State agenda align closely with, and indeed mirror, the

<sup>72</sup> Queensland Government, 2011, *Top 10 tips for engaging with culturally and linguistically diverse communities*, < [www.qld.gov.au/web/community-engagement/guides-factsheets/cald-communities/introduction/top10.html](http://www.qld.gov.au/web/community-engagement/guides-factsheets/cald-communities/introduction/top10.html) >, accessed May 2016

<sup>73</sup> Department of Education (Vic.), (2015), *Strategic Intent*, <[www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/stratplan.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/stratplan.aspx)>, accessed July 2016.

<sup>74</sup> Department of Education (Vic.), (2015), *The Education State*, <[www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/default.aspx)>, accessed July 2016.

objectives of BSG and its achievements to-date. Indeed, BSG can confidently highlight and demonstrate that it has, in fact, been contributing to the delivery of elements of The Strategic Intent and The Education State Agenda for years prior to (and since) these policy launches in late 2015. In light of this, as the policy is rolled-out, BSG is well positioned to assist DET in the achievement of some of the desired strategic objectives, offer a state-wide community partnership model for the purpose of improving the post-school outcomes of vulnerable young people with disabilities, and potentially provide scope to receive DET funding for the ongoing delivery of the model and/or targeted programs.

## 21.1 Strategic Intent

The vision of the DET's Strategic Intent<sup>75</sup> is that:

- Children and young people are confident, optimistic, healthy and resilient
- Students reach their potential, regardless of background, place, circumstance or abilities
- Victorians develop knowledge, skills and attributes needed now and for the jobs of the future
- The Department's workforce is high performing, empowered, valued and supported.

The objectives of this are:

- To ensure Victorians have equitable access to quality education and training
- To work with providers and partners to build an integrated birth to adulthood education and development system
- To support children, young people and adults with well-coordinated universal and targeted services close to where they live
- To activate excellence, innovation and economic growth.

The Strategic Intent will guide future strategic plans, business plans and a new direction for DET including:

- Greater focus on the individual child or learner with targeted support close to where they live
- Stronger connection between wellbeing and learning
- Renewed approach to partnerships, which are critical to providing local, place-based support and addressing vulnerability
- Commitment to excellence, underpinned by stronger implementation, use of evidence, evaluation, knowledge sharing and a workforce empowered to perform at a high level
- System-wide emphasis on integrity and accountability.

Within the Strategic Intent four key approaches are identified – 'Workforce Strategies and Practices'; 'Partnership and Innovation'; 'Organisational Reform'; and, 'Service and Funding Reform'. Within each of these are a number of key outcomes and promises. BSG aligns strongly with the 'Partnership and Innovation' approach, and may also be able to assist DET in delivering on elements which comprise part of the 'Service and Funding Reform' area.

BSG already delivers some of the five elements outlined as being critical to the 'Partnership and Innovation' approach. In particular, BSG is already aligned with four out of the five elements which comprise part of this approach:

- *Work with providers, employers, not for profits, families, children and young people to develop new approaches and share best practice.* BSG already works in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner in order to deliver programs and engage in advocacy designed to improve the post-school social and economic outcomes of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. In addition, as a unique model that is the only one of its kind, it is an established best practice model already being shared with schools and community.
- *Strengthen learning, health and wellbeing through stronger place-based partnerships.* BSG's success lies in it being delivered in a defined geographic region with partner schools, education providers and community organisations at the core of its model. It has, for many years, delivered specific programs and services to young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in its current region. These programs, delivered in partnership with local schools and organisations, have

<sup>75</sup> Department of Education (Vic.), (2015), *Strategic Intent Diagram*, < [www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/departments/strategicintent.pdf](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/departments/strategicintent.pdf)>, accessed July 2016.

strengthened the learning, health and wellbeing of student participants.

- *Strengthen career pathways for learners while meeting the needs of business and industry.* Many BSG programs offered to young people have had work experience, volunteering, career exploration and vocational learning at their core. Developed in concert with partners, the purpose of these have been to expose young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability to career opportunities and enable them to develop employability skills for their future. Furthermore, in recent years a greater emphasis has been placed on the delivery of career pathways related programs in response to research and anecdotal advice from partners.
- *Partner with other agencies, Departments and levels of government to deliver outcomes.* BSG has, since its establishment in 2012, worked in partnership with DET, cross-sectoral schools, local government, industry and community organisations. This partnership approach has been shown to assist these organisations achieve their goals while simultaneously providing opportunities for local young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability to participate in programs specifically designed to improve their social and economic inclusion in the future and contribute to a successful transition from school.

Within the 'Service and Funding Reform' approach, DET identified six key elements where it intends providing targeted funding and support. It is possible that, in the future, BSG could assist DET in some of these areas and/or potentially attract funding. While most of the six elements are related to the redistribution of funding within DET, some may require the provision of funding externally to deliver the desired policy outcomes. Two elements stand out as ones where BSG may be able to contribute:

- Connect settings and sectors to improve transitions and ensure continuity of learning.
- Focus on mental and physical health and wellbeing as an integral part of learning and development.

## 21.2 The Education State

As part of the development of The Education State, consultations with members of the education system and wider community were held during 2015<sup>76</sup>. The 17 themes explored via these surveys, forums and face-to-face meetings were diverse and played a contributive role in the final development of The Education State policy.

Six of the 17 themes, which formed part of the formal consultations, specifically relate to BSG objectives and achievements – 'Transitions'; 'Pathways'; 'Parent Engagement'; 'Role of Business and Industry'; and, 'Role of the Broader Community'.

- *Transitions: Stronger links between all types of educational settings and life stages are necessary to provide continuity in the curriculum and learning experience.* The consultation identified that the transition from school to employment is a challenge for students, schools and employers due to varying skills, levels of expectations and understanding. Already BSG delivers programs, particularly in the career pathways and employability skills areas, designed to assist young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability to prepare for a transition from school and into further training and/or employment.
- *Pathways: Improvement is required to increase continuity and integration across learning and career pathways.* The consultation identified that pathways are important for vulnerable communities to continue their education and transition into new social, educational and employment environments. BSG already works with a particularly vulnerable student cohort, those with intellectual disability and/or learning disability, to explore pathways and provide exposure to non-school organisations so as to minimise concerns associated with student transitions to new learning and employment environments.
- *Parent Engagement: Closer connections between the school and the local community create opportunities for all parents to be engaged in their child's education journey.* The consultation identified that if children need support, often the family needs support too and that the current system lacks a structured approach for providing targeted support to vulnerable families. BSG already engages parents and carers in programs delivered to their child and/or through the provision of programs specifically for parents and carers themselves. Furthermore, parents and carers have always been included in formal and informal BSG research and evaluations so as to ensure their voices, ideas and assessments are captured and used as part of ongoing BSG strategic planning.
- *Role of Business and Industry: Businesses need to work together with the education system to promote pathways and to ensure that education delivers appropriate skill sets for industry.* BSG has engaged the

<sup>76</sup> Capire Consulting Group, 2015, 'Report: Stakeholder and community engagement on The Education State', Melbourne.

business sector in the delivery of programs for students, particularly in those focused on the development of employability skills, work experience and volunteering. In doing so, BSG has also been able to assist schools to develop relationships with local businesses.

- *Role of the Broader Community: The broader community is an important partner in the delivery of education in Victoria to enhance a student's real-life experience beyond the walls of the school.* It is particularly interesting that the terminology 'beyond the walls of the school' was used here and can be read as a slight adaptation of BSG ('Beyond the School Gates'). It is this theme that particularly aligns with BSG, as it recognises the 'role of community', 'community engagement' and 'community hubs' in assisting school communities to deliver opportunities to students. This theme recognises that schools cannot, nor should be, solely responsible for the delivery of well-rounded student education and pathways. This theme identified that geographic hubs built around community partnerships not only support students and schools but also strengthen society as a whole. BSG, as an already existing local partnership model that works closely with schools and the wider community, has highlighted the value of this ideology and can attest to demonstrated student and community achievements over many years.

## 22. Beyond the School Gates Programs

While the majority of programs were offered to student participants, a number of programs were delivered specifically for the benefit of parents of children with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. Since 2012, 68 programs have been delivered, utilising the skills and resources of 28 community partner organisations with expertise in the specific program elements. Many of these programs were delivered over an entire school term or semester, or during specific periods such as school holiday times.

Each of the programs have delivered benefits in one or more of the following areas: employability skills and work experience, career exploration, friendship, fun, health, sport and recreation, social skills, vocational skills and parents/carers needs. The following table details each program, participating partner organisations and benefits provided to participants.





**Table 3: Beyond the School Gates - Programs, Partners, Acquisition Benefits**

Program	Partner/s	Program skill and benefit acquisition areas								
		Employability Skills & Work Experience	Career Exploration	Friendship	Fun	Health	Parents & Carers Needs	Sport and Recreation	Social Skills	Vocational Skills
Advanced Coffee Making Coffee Art	Berendale School & Elanora Aged Care									
All Abilities Australian Rules Football	Access for All Abilities – Bayside, Glen Eira & Kingston Councils									
April Holiday Program	Bayside Council & Kingston Council									
Art Classes and Exhibition	Berendale School									
Bayside Council Work Experience	Bayside Council									
Body Image and Self- Esteem	Butterfly Foundation									
Beyond the School Gates Social Club	Donna Gabriel Consulting									
BSG Social Club (Social Coaching)	Donna Gabriel Consulting									
Cafe Skills 2012	Berendale School & Elanora Aged Care									
Cafe Skills 2013	Berendale School & Elanora Aged Care									
Cafe Skills 2014	Berendale School & Elanora Aged Care									
Cafe Skills 2015	Berendale School & Elanora Aged Care									
Cafe Skills Extension Program	Berendale School & Elanora Aged Care									
Career Fit 2014	Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre									
Career Fit 2015	Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre									
Career Fit 2016	Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre									
Career Journeys - from a Learning Difference perspective	Parents of Kids with Learning Differences (Support Group)									
Dance Party 2012	Beyond the School Gates									
Dance Party 2013	Beyond the School Gates									

Dance Party 2014	Beyond the School Gates									
Dance Party 2015	Beyond the School Gates									
Dance Lessons	Sandringham College									
Exploring TAFE 2013	Holmesglen TAFE									
Exploring TAFE 2014	Holmesglen TAFE									
Exploring TAFE 2015	Holmesglen TAFE									
Exploring TAFE 2016	Holmesglen TAFE									
Fun, Fitness and Self-defence	All Stars Self-defence									
Grooming and Presentation Workshop	Wheelz in Motion									
Hands Up Bayside Council 2015	Bayside Council									
Hands Up Bayside Council Car Detailing 2016	Bayside Council									
Hands Up Beach Patrol 2015	Hampton Beach Patrol									
Hands Up Bentleigh Bayside Community Health 2016	Bentleigh Bayside Community Health									
Hands Up Bentleigh Girl Guides 2015	Bentleigh Girl Guides									
Hands Up Bentleigh Girl Guides 2016	Bentleigh Girl Guides									
Hands Up City Wide 2015	City Wide									
Hands Up Clean Up Australia 2015	Clean Up Australia									
Hands Up Glen Waverley Toy Library 2015	Glen Waverley Toy Library									
Hands Up Kingston Toy Library 2015	Kingston Toy Library									
Hands Up Legacy Committee 2015	Legacy									
Health and Happiness 1	MOIRA									
Health and Happiness 2	MOIRA									
Health and Happiness 3	MOIRA									
Healthy Teens School Holiday Program	Bayside Council & Kingston Council									
Industry Xplorer 2012	Youth Connect									
Industry Xplorer 2013	Youth Connect									
Introduction to Work 1	Family Life									
Introduction to Work 2	Family Life									
Introduction to Work 3	Family Life									
Introduction to Auto (car and small engines)	Berendale School									
Introduction to Sailing	Blackrock Sailing Club									
July Holiday Program 2014	Bayside Council & Kingston Council									
July Holiday Program 2015	Bayside Council & Kingston Council									
Marriott Supported Work Experience	Marriott Support Services									

Media Program 1	Disability Media Australia									
Media Program 2	Disability Media Australia									
Media Program 3	Disability Media Australia									
Mind your Manners	Youth Connect									
Mindfulness 1	Meditation Capsules									
Mindfulness 2	Meditation Capsules									
Mindfulness 3	Meditation Capsules									
Mindfulness for Parents	Meditation Capsules									
Step by Step	Family Life									
TAFE Taster (Hair/Beauty, Hospitality)	Holmesglen TAFE									
Transition 2 TAFE	Holmesglen TAFE									
Vocational Preparation	Family Life									
Yoga and Gentle Exercise for Carers	MOIRA									

## 22.1 Beyond the School Gates Benefits

In essence, BSG is transformative for many in the areas of positive psycho-social, physical and economic outcomes. Beneficiaries include not only the individual student participants but also their family, educators, service providers and wider society. BSG delivers many acquisition benefits to student participants, primarily in the areas of employability skills and work experience, career exploration, friendship development, fun, health, sport and recreation, social skills, and vocational skills. Much literature attests to the importance of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability acquiring such benefits and skills as means of improving lifelong outcomes.

Research has identified the following as the three proponents of a good quality of life for a person with disability (regardless of the disability type):

- 1** Being engaged in employment, ongoing learning and/or training
- 2** Living in and participating in the local community in a way *similar* to same age peers
- 3** Having active social networks with family and friends

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BSG programs deliver a range of programs across the three proponents of a good quality life, as outlined above. Some of these proponents are delivered during the course of program delivery and all aim to result in participants developing skills, engaging in the community and establishing social friendships that outlive the actual program.

It is valuable to explore the research and literature which attest to the importance of exposing young people with disabilities to career exploration, employability skills/work experience/vocational skills, friendship and fun, and social skills prior to leaving the school environment, thus validating why BSG has offered programs in these specific areas.

## 22.2 Career Exploration

The 'Guidelines for Facilitating the Career Development of Young People with Disability' report, prepared

77 Halpern, A., (1985), 'Transition: A look at the foundations', *Exceptional Children*, 51, 479-486.

by Miles Morgan and on behalf of the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) said that “Every young person needs the opportunity to transition successfully from school to ongoing learning, work and community life. To do this successfully, young people and particularly those with disability, need information, support and guidance from an array of people that may directly or indirectly influence their career development and pathways planning”.<sup>78</sup>

“Young people with disability face the same barriers and challenges as all young people entering the workforce. Many of these can be exacerbated by their disability and they may also face a number of additional barriers, such as negative misconceptions about their ability, a lack of easily accessible information, and limited workplace experience”.<sup>79</sup>

In some areas of the education and transition system there is still a prevailing culture that these individuals ‘know best’ and are best placed to determine post-school options for young people with disability. In maintaining this approach, young people are missing out on moderating and engaging in self-determination when it comes to career development and workplace exploration.

“Making the initial transition from secondary schooling into further education and training or work can be particularly difficult and challenging for young people with disability who often have not had access to services and experiences designed to facilitate their career development”.<sup>80</sup>

In the 2012 presentation ‘Post School Transition for Students with a Disability’<sup>81</sup>, Meadows said that “For students with additional educational needs planning for post-school life should begin at around 14 years of age as early planning allows students to familiarise themselves with the post-school environment, set goals for the future, learn the skills that will assist towards meeting those goals, and make adjustments if goals or desires change. It’s a self-determined process where students, supported by their parents and family make choices about what they wish to do and achieve when they leave school”.

Put simply, experience must precede choice, something often not made available to young people with disability preparing to transition from school and into a life beyond school. In these instances, the young people have not had opportunity to experience authentic employment or career development activities to ensure they make informed decisions about their post-school pathways.

## 22.3 Employability Skills, Work Experience and Vocational Skills

For decades, research has shown the strong relationship between the experience of work during secondary school and higher post-school employment for youth with disabilities.<sup>82</sup> “Consistently, the most prominent factors shown to be associated with successful post-school employment outcomes are paid and unpaid work experiences during the last years of secondary school and the completion of a high school diploma”.<sup>83</sup>

However, as the continuing disappointing post-school employment rates for young people with disabilities suggest, there remains a critical need to expand quality work-based learning opportunities for these young people and to integrate these experiences into secondary education. Indeed, Luecking states that “while work experiences are beneficial to all youth, it has been found they are particularly valuable for young people with disabilities”.<sup>84</sup>

## 22.4 Friendship and Fun

Put simply, friendships and fun matter for all young people. The development of friendships and having enjoyable experiences is particularly important for young people with disabilities as, unfortunately, often these young people experience social exclusion. This is particularly the case after leaving secondary school; secondary school being the environment where connections with peers are more easily established and fostered.

Carter et al note that friendships matter for young people with disabilities as “friendships these young people develop can help support participation in a range of school and community activities, enhance school satisfaction, improve overall well-being, help them learn important norms and values, and

<sup>78</sup> Miles Morgan, (2012) ‘Guidelines for Facilitating the Career Development of Young People with Disability - Research Paper for the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA)’.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Meadows, D., (2012), ‘Post School Transition for Students with a Disability’, *The Association for Childhood Language and Related Disorders*.

<sup>82</sup> Colley, D and Jamison, D., (1998), ‘Post School Results for Youth with Disabilities: Key Indicators and Policy Implications’, *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Fall 1998): 145-160.

<sup>83</sup> Luecking, R., (2009). ‘The way to work: How to facilitate work experiences for youth in transition’. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.

<sup>84</sup> Luecking, R., (2010), ‘The art of possibility: seamless transition from school to work and adult life’, *Voice*, Vol. 1, Issue 3, September 2010.

contribute to improved outcomes in the early years after leaving high school. And like any other high school student, youth with disabilities deeply desire such relationships. The critical difference for young people with developmental disabilities is that friendships remain especially elusive during and after high school.”<sup>85</sup>

In the United States ‘National Longitudinal Transition Study-2’ a nationally representative sample of parents was asked about the relationships and social participation of their children with disabilities during secondary school. Half of young people with autism and nearly one quarter of those with an intellectual disability had never been invited by other students to social events during the prior twelve months. Nearly 85 per cent of students with autism or just over 40 per cent with intellectual disability were reported to never or rarely receive telephone calls from friends. And nearly half of young people with autism and almost one-sixth of students with intellectual disability reported never spending time together with friends outside of school during the past year.<sup>86</sup>

Researchers suggest that extra-curricular activities, after-school activities and other non-school settings can provide students with rich opportunities to deepen existing peer relationships as well as establish new ones.<sup>87</sup>

## 22.5 Social Skills

The development of social skills lays a critical foundation for young people’s achievements in school, community, peer and employment settings. Young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability may require additional assistance, be that in the family, school or community environments, to develop social competence.

Social skills have been defined as those “behaviours that promote positive interaction with others and the environment. Some of these skills include showing empathy, participation in group activities, generosity, helpfulness, communicating with others, negotiating, and problem solving”.<sup>88</sup>

Research exploring social interaction deficits experienced by children and young people with ASD identified that these young people desire more peer social interaction, experience poorer social support and more loneliness than peers, contribute to academic and occupational underachievement, and that social skill deficits may presage mood and anxiety problems later in development.<sup>89</sup>

Researchers have noted that in community life, appropriate social behaviour may be even more important than academic or job skills in determining whether one is perceived as a competent individual. Holmes and Fillary<sup>90</sup> investigated the ability of adults with mild intellectual disabilities to appropriately engage in the ‘small talk’ that is part of any workplace and noted that workers with intellectual disabilities who demonstrate competence in social skills are generally perceived more positively than those who lack such skills, regardless of task-related skill level.

The most significant social competency training of young people with disability takes place in the family home, at school and with peers. Provision of dedicated social skills training by external community organisations is another mechanism by which young people with disabilities can be provided with opportunities to develop positive social competency. Engaging with external training necessarily exposes young people to a different setting, different training facilitators and, if offered to multiple schools, new peers.

As noted earlier, BSG has provided many opportunities for students to partake in career exploration, employability skills/work experience/vocational skills, friendship and fun, social skills related programs and opportunities with various partner organisations over many years. The offering of these was grounded on needs and gaps analysis, research investigation and through requests made by educators and community agencies who recognised the need for young people’s acquisition of relevant skills and opportunities.

<sup>85</sup> Carter et.al., (2013), ‘Fostering Friendships: Supporting Relationships Among Youth With and Without Developmental Disabilities’, *The Prevention Researcher*, Volume 20 (2), April 2013 (pp. 14 – 17).

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Kleinert et al., (2007), ‘Including students with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities in school extracurricular and community recreation activities’, *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, Volume 45 (pp. 46–55).

<sup>88</sup> Lynch, S. & Simpson, C., (2010), ‘Social Skills: Laying the foundation for success’, *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, Volume 38(2), Spring/Summer 2010 (pp. 3 – 12).

<sup>89</sup> White, S et al., (2007), ‘Social Skills Development in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Review of the Intervention Research’, *Autism Developmental Disorders*, Volume 37 (pp. 1858-1868).

<sup>90</sup> Holmes, J., & Fillary, R., (2000), ‘Handling small talk at work: Challenges for workers with intellectual disabilities’, *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 47(3), (pp. 273-291).

## 23. Beyond the School Gates Outcomes

Outcomes of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability participating in BSG facilitated programs are innumerable and evidenced through anecdotal feedback and independent research conducted in 2014. It is further evidenced by program participation levels and numbers of students who have undertaken more than one program.

An evaluation of programs and the depth and breadth of organisations that have delivered BSG facilitated programs also evidences community commitment to the model. That many of these organisations have been involved for multiple years is also indicative of the BSG model and management approach being appealing and worth ongoing investment of their organisational time and resources.

### 23.1 Student Participation

More than 350 individual students participated in 62 BSG facilitated programs between 2012 and mid-2016. Some students participated in more than one program, totalling more than 900 program participations.

Almost 48 per cent of students participated in just one program, 28.6 per cent participated in two – three programs, 12.6 per cent participated in four – five programs, 9.1 per cent participated in six to eight programs, and the remaining 1.7 per cent participated in nine – fourteen programs.

Put another way, around 48 Per cent participated in one program and the remaining 52 per cent participated in two or more programs.

**Table 4: Student Program Participation Rates**

Students	No.	Per cent
Participated in 1 program	169	47.9
Participated in 2 programs	64	18.1
Participated in 3 programs	37	10.5
Participated in 4 programs	22	6.2
Participated in 5 programs	23	6.5
Participated in 6 programs	14	4.0
Participated in 7 programs	6	1.7
Participated in 8 programs	12	3.4
Participated in 9 programs	3	0.8
Participated in 10 programs	1	0.3
Participated in 12 programs	1	0.3
Participated in 14 programs	1	0.3
Total number of student participants	353	100.0
<b>Total program participation</b>	<b>896</b>	

### 23.2 Parent / Carer Participation

While the emphasis of BSG has been primarily around the provision of programs to young people, a small number of programs were provided specifically for the parents/carers of students with disability. Out of the 71 parents / carers that took part in six programs, 68 (95.7 per cent) participated in one program and three (4.3 per cent) took part in two programs.

Out of the 71 parents / carers that took part in six programs, 68 (95.7 per cent) participated in one program and three (4.3 per cent) took part in two programs.

**Table 5: Parent / Carer Program Participation Rates**

Parents / Carers	No.	Per cent
Participated in 1 program	68	95.7
Participated in 2 programs	3	4.3
<b>Total number of participant parents/carers</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 23.3 Organisation Participation

BSG utilises community organisations, with expertise in specific areas, to deliver programs to students and parent/carers. Of the 68 programs delivered, almost 46 per cent were provided by organisations that offered more than one program. Some organisations provided iterations of the same program but delivered over the course of a number of years, whereas other organisations delivered different programs over multiple periods.

Of the 68 programs delivered, almost 46 per cent were provided by organisations that offered more than one program.

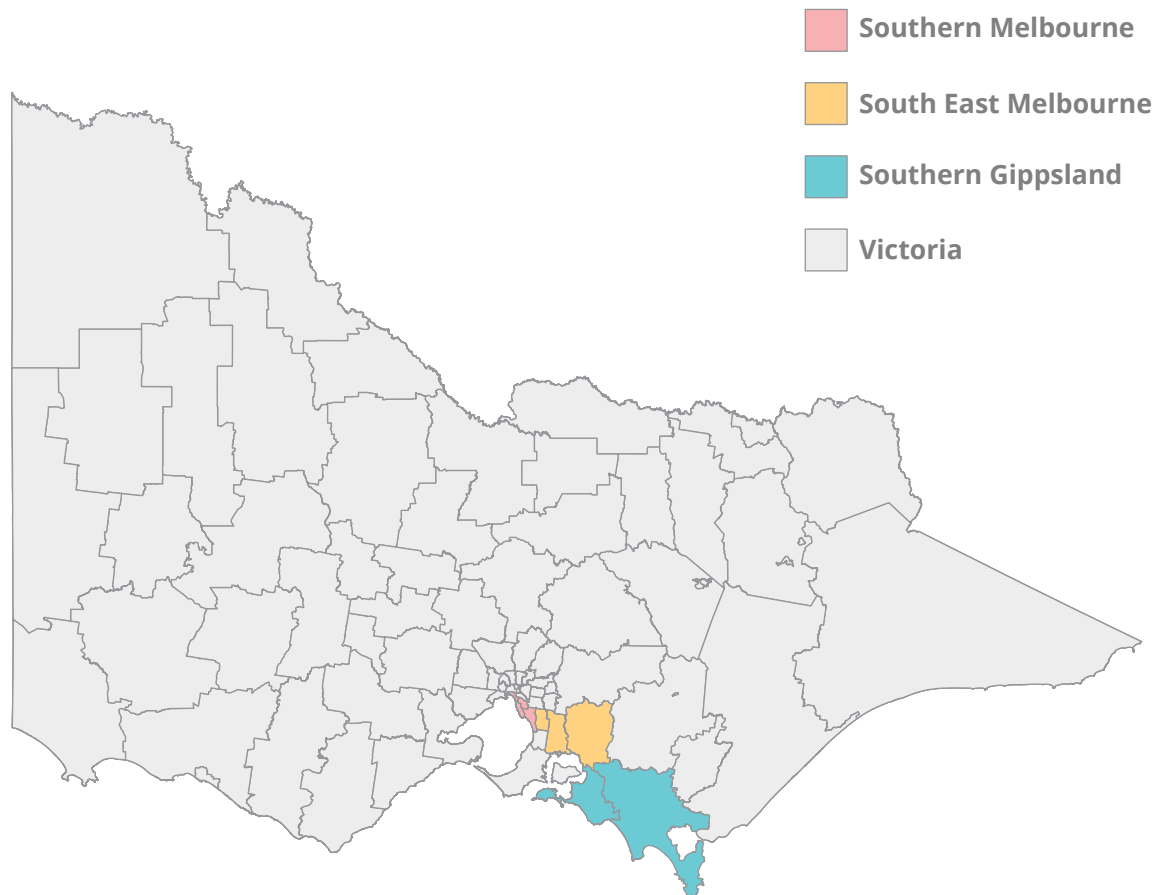
A total of 53.6 per cent of partner organisations offered one program, 17.8 per cent offered two – three programs, 17.8 per cent offered four – five programs, and 14.2 per cent offered six – eight programs.

**Table 6: Partner Organisation Participation Rates**

Organisation	No.	Per Cent
Offered 1 program	15	53.6
Offered 2 programs	2	7.1
Offered 3 programs	3	10.7
Offered 4 programs	3	10.7
Offered 5 programs	2	7.1
Offered 6 programs	2	7.1
Offered 8 programs	2	7.1
<b>Total number of participant organisations</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100.0</b>



## 24. Proposed Beyond the School Gates Regions



The success of BSG points to a need for its introduction in other geographical regions. Indeed, in light of the data regarding the increasing population of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability, BSG could provide positive outcomes for this cohort in many regions Australia wide.

However, in considering an initial scaling-up and transfer of the model only three Victorian regions have been closely examined. It is felt that with further funding investment from the government, philanthropic and/or corporate sectors, the BSG model could be successfully transferred into two new regions as well as maintain an ongoing presence in its current region. The ability to do this is contingent on BSG establishing itself as a stand-alone not-for-profit entity capable of financially sustaining itself and funding the delivery of place-based BSG activities via contracted partners in Victorian communities.

A mix of research and liaison with organisations has led to a recommendation that BSG should be introduced into the South East Melbourne (City of Greater Dandenong, City of Casey and Cardinia Shire) and South Gippsland (Bass Coast Shire and South Gippsland Shire) Victoria regions. It should also continue to service the region where BSG was first initiated (Bayside City Council, City of Kingston, Glen Eira City Council and City of Port Phillip). The Inner Northern Melbourne region was also explored but information shows that, at present, it is not a viable area in which to launch BSG.

An overview of each of these regions, which highlight why the BSG model would benefit these areas are outlined below.

## 24.1 South East Melbourne

The South East Melbourne region is comprised of three local government areas - Cardinia Shire, City of Casey and the City of Greater Dandenong. This region has and is continuing to experience significant population growth, is marked by a diverse population in terms of ethnicity, has a significant number of young people living with disability, has a large number of special and cross-sectoral mainstream secondary schools, is serviced by a wide range of community and disability-specific organisations, and is a region with a significant number of businesses covering an array of industry areas.



### 24.1.1 Population

The Cardinia Shire is growing at four times the Victorian municipal average<sup>91</sup>, and in 2015 had a total population of 90,844<sup>92</sup>. The City of Casey is recognised as the eighth fastest growing municipalities in Australia and the third-fastest growing municipality in Victoria<sup>93</sup>, and in 2015 had a total population of 292,211<sup>94</sup>. The City of Greater Dandenong is a more mature region, and in 2015 had a population of 150,097<sup>95</sup>. The combined population of these three local government areas in 2015 was estimated to be 533,152. All three areas are fast-growing regions with significant increases in population forecasted in the next decade. The City of Casey population is expected to reach 376,441 by 2026<sup>96</sup>, Cardinia Shire population is expected to reach 138,084 by 2026<sup>97</sup>, and the City of Greater Dandenong is expected to reach 183,305 by 2026<sup>98</sup>; bringing the combined forecasted population in this region to 697,830 within ten years.

### 24.1.2 Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Level of Disadvantage

The municipality of Greater Dandenong has a SEIFA index of 895, which ranks it at number one in level of disadvantage among all 80 Victorian municipalities, placing it among the most disadvantaged 2 per cent of municipalities in the state. The City of Casey has a SEIFA index of 1,006.5 and is ranked at number 51 in level of disadvantage among Victorian municipalities, placing it among the least disadvantaged 37 per cent municipalities and just below the Victorian SEIFA average. The Cardinia Shire has a SEIFA index

91 South East LLEN, (2015), *Environmental Scan*

92 Profile.id, 'Cardinia Shire', <<http://profile.id.com.au/cardinia/population-estimate>>, accessed May 2016.

93 City of Casey, 'Demographics', <[www.casey.vic.gov.au/council/about-casey/demographics](http://www.casey.vic.gov.au/council/about-casey/demographics)>, accessed May 2016

94 Profile.id, 'City of Casey', <<http://profile.id.com.au/casey/population-estimate>>, accessed May 2016.

95 City of Greater Dandenong, 'Summaries of Social Information', <[www.greaterdandenong.com/document/10768/summaries-of-social-information-cgd](http://www.greaterdandenong.com/document/10768/summaries-of-social-information-cgd)>, accessed May 2016.

96 Profile.id, 'City of Casey – Population Forecast', <<http://forecast.id.com.au/casey>>, accessed May 2016.

97 Profile.id, 'Cardinia Shire – Population Forecast', <<http://forecast.id.com.au/cardinia>>, accessed May 2016.

98. City of Greater Dandenong, 'Summaries of Social Information', <[www.greaterdandenong.com/document/10768/summaries-of-social-information-cgd](http://www.greaterdandenong.com/document/10768/summaries-of-social-information-cgd)>, accessed May 2016.

of 1,024.3, which ranks at number 60 in level of disadvantage among Victorian municipalities, placing it among the least disadvantaged 25 per cent municipalities and just above the Victorian SEIFA average.

In terms of SEIFA index ranking, the disparity of disadvantage between the City of Greater Dandenong and more advantaged adjoining local government areas are apparent.

**Table 7: SEIFA Level of Disadvantage (South East Melbourne)**

Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Level of Disadvantage 2011 (South East Melbourne)	
Victoria	1,010.0
Cardinia Shire	1,024.3
City of Casey	1,006.5
City of Greater Dandenong	895.0

Source: ABS 2011 Census

NB. A higher score on the index means a lower level of disadvantage. A lower score on the index means a higher level of disadvantage

### 24.1.3 Ethnicity and Indigenous Population

The South East Melbourne region is one of the most ethnically diverse areas in Victoria. At the 2011 Census across the three local government areas that comprise this region just over 40 per cent were born outside of Australia, which is almost 10 per cent higher than the Victorian average. Indeed, the City of Greater Dandenong has over 60 per cent of its population born overseas.

Some notable ethnic populations can be found in this region. Those born in Oceania make up 2.6 per cent of the population, nearly a third more than the state average. Those born in South East Asia make up 6.9 per cent of the population, almost double the state average, and notably the City of Greater Dandenong recorded a 16.6 per cent proportion of their population being from this part of Asia. Those born in Southern and Central Asia make up 5 per cent of the population, just over double the state average. Those born in Sub-Saharan Africa comprise 1.9 per cent of the population, almost double the Victorian average.

**Table 8: Ethnic Diversity by Birthplace (South East Melbourne)**

Ethnic Diversity by Birthplace (South East Melbourne)					
Birthplace	Cardinia Shire (per cent)	City of Casey (per cent)	City of Greater Dandenong (per cent)	South East Melbourne (per cent)	Victoria (per cent)
Australia	79.1	61.4	38.2	59.6	68.6
Americas	0.6	1.4	1.5	1.2	0.9
North Africa and Middle East	0.2	1.7	3.9	1.9	1.6
North East Asia	0.1	1.0	2.8	1.3	2.0
North West Europe	9.3	7.4	4.6	7.1	6.2
Oceania	1.5	3.3	3.0	2.6	1.8
South East Asia	0.5	3.5	16.6	6.9	3.6
Southern and Central Asia	0.5	5.9	8.7	5.0	2.2
Southern And Eastern Europe	1.8	5.7	12.3	6.6	6.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.6	2.4	2.6	1.9	1.0
Not Stated	5.8	6.3	5.8	6.0	5.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS Census, 2011

With respect to the ethnicity of young people in the South East Melbourne region, the South East LLEN notes some interesting population features. Non-English speaking backgrounds prevail in migrant youth in both the City of Casey and the City of Greater Dandenong. While Sudanese and Afghanis do not feature in the top 10 immigrant groups in general population data they both feature in youth populations born

overseas within the region. Within the Afghan migrant population particularly, around 40 per cent are under 25 years of age. Afghanistan, above all other countries, is the birthplace of more overseas-born adolescents in the City of Greater Dandenong, in part reflecting the settlement of Afghani Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors (UHMs) in that part of the region. Adolescents born in Vietnam and Cambodia are also prominent in the City of Greater Dandenong. Sri Lankan and Indian youth numbers are on the rise in both the City of Greater Dandenong and the City of Casey, and likely to be a mix of international students and the children of skilled migrants. Thailand also features in the top 10 birthplaces for City of Greater Dandenong adolescents, however these youth are likely to be refugees from Burma, born in Thai refugee camps after fleeing the conflict in Burma. New Zealand, more than any other country, was the birthplace of more overseas-born adolescents across the entire South East Melbourne and, in part, reflects the large number of young people of Maori and Pacific Island heritage who reside in the region and come to Australia either directly or via New Zealand. The number of refugee families being re-settled in South East Melbourne under Australia's Humanitarian Settlement Program have reduced in recent years due to exportation to Nauru or Manus Island however, as noted above, the region remains home to many young people who came here as humanitarian refugees.<sup>99</sup>

**Table 9: Secondary School Indigenous Population (South East Melbourne)**

Secondary school Indigenous enrolments 2014, Years 7 - 12 (South East Melbourne)							
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
City of Cardinia	14	9	6	5	3	0	37
Casey Shire	32	22	28	30	15	11	138
City of Greater Dandenong	10	11	14	16	10	11	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>247</b>

Source: DEET, LLEN Data Disk 2016

Within the South East Melbourne region, in 2014, there were 247 Indigenous students enrolled in schools between Years 7 to Year 12. This is a not insignificant number. Whilst it is impossible to identify how many Indigenous students have intellectual disability and/or learning disability, it is likely that some Indigenous students within the South East Melbourne region do live with these disabilities.

It is evident that general population and youth population is a culturally diverse one across South East Melbourne, with particular pockets of high-level non-English speaking ethnicity and refugee composition in parts. A not insignificant number of Indigenous students attend local secondary schools also. In light of the diversity in this region it is important that ethnic and Indigenous organisations and elders are made aware of BSG should it be introduced in the region. Involving culturally diverse leaders in discussions will help to ensure that minority groups are part of the discussion, have an opportunity to influence the development of culturally sensitive programs and to assist in breaking down the 'disability taboos' that exist in some cultures. The importance of all BSG partners in a region such as South East Melbourne being culturally competent, as discussed earlier, is therefore important and critical for the model's success there.

#### 24.1.4 Youth Population

The population of young people aged between 15 and 19 years in the South East Melbourne region has continued to show growth between the three Census periods of 2001, 2006 and 2011<sup>100</sup>. While all three regions experienced population growth in this age range between the 2006 and 2011 Census, the City of Cardinia and Casey Shire experienced the highest at 5 per cent and 3.8 per cent annual growth respectively. When compared against the 0.6 per cent Victorian average annual population growth for young people aged between 15 and 19 years for the same period, the youth population increases in these two local government regions are quite significant.

99 South East LLEN, (2015), '2015 Environmental Scan

100 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing (2001 – 2011), <[www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/Census?opendocument&ref=topBar](http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/Census?opendocument&ref=topBar)>, accessed May 2016.

**Table 10: Youth Population 2001 - 2011 - South East Melbourne (Number)**

Population of children aged 15 - 19 years (South East Melbourne)					
Persons (15 - 19 Years)				Average Annual Growth (per cent)	
	2001	2006	2011	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2011
City of Cardinia	3,430	4,275	5,348	4.9	5.0
Casey Shire	13,187	16,221	19,326	4.6	3.8
City of Greater Dandenong	9,265	8,337	8,675	-2.0	0.8
South East Melbourne Total	25,882	28,833	33,349	2.3	3.1
Victoria	321,749	335,180	345,341	0.8	0.6

Source: ABS Census, 2001 - 2011

**Table 11: Youth Population 2001 - 2011 - South East Melbourne (per cent)**

Per cent of total population aged 15 - 19 years (South East Melbourne)					
Persons (15 - 19 Years)				Average Annual Growth (per cent)	
	2001	2006	2011	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2011
City of Cardinia	7.4	7.5	7.2	0.3	-0.8
Casey Shire	7.4	7.5	7.7	0.3	0.5
City of Greater Dandenong	7.4	6.6	6.4	-2.2	-0.6
Victoria	6.9	6.8	6.4	-0.3	-1.2

Source: ABS Census, 2001 - 2011

#### 24.1.5 Secondary Schools

Across the South East Melbourne region there are 57 cross-sectoral secondary schools, with 51 of these being mainstream ones and six special schools that cater specifically to the needs of students with disability.

**Table 12: Secondary Schools (South East Melbourne)**

Secondary Schools (South East Melbourne)				
Sector	Cardinia Shire	City of Casey	City of Greater Dandenong	Total
Special School	1	2	3	6
Government	2	12	6	20
Catholic	2	3	3	8
Independent	7	8	8	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>57</b>

Source: DEET, LLEN Data Disk 2016

It is these schools that would be targeted, in order to offer BSG programs and opportunities to their student cohorts with intellectual disability and/or learning disability, if the BSG model was offered in the region.

#### 24.1.6 Student School Enrolment Population

The numbers of students enrolled in all secondary schools in the South East Melbourne region is drawn from Victorian Department of Education and Training data for 2014 (this being the most current data available). For the purpose of this report only enrolments in Years 7 to Year 12 are captured, as it is this cohort that are participants in BSG programs. In 2014, a total of 36,431 students were enrolled in secondary schools across the South East Melbourne region.

**Table 13: Secondary school enrolments (Years 7 - 12) 2014 - South East Melbourne**

Secondary school enrolments 2014, Years 7 - 12 (South East Melbourne)							
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
City of Cardinia	1356	1292	1,347	1,200	1,038	954	<b>7,187</b>
Casey Shire	2829	3011	3,052	3,148	2,699	2,378	<b>17,117</b>
City of Greater Dandenong	1952	2035	2,038	2,058	2,208	1,836	<b>12,127</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6137</b>	<b>6338</b>	<b>6,437</b>	<b>6,405</b>	<b>5,945</b>	<b>5,169</b>	<b>36,431</b>

Source: DEET, LLEN Data Disk 2016

### 24.1.7 Disability Population

Calculating the population of young people aged 15 – 19 years in the South East Melbourne region is a difficult task. The capture of region-specific data pertaining to disability occurs during the Census collection whereby respondents are asked 'Does the person ever need someone to help with, or be with them for, self-care activities?', 'Does the person ever need someone to help with, or be with them for, body movement activities?', 'Does the person ever need someone to help with, or be with them for, communication activities?'. This data identifies people who report a need for assistance due to a 'profound or severe core activity limitation'. This question relies on people evaluating themselves and thus is highly subjective and resulting data must be treated with caution. Because of this, and because BSG supports young people with mild to moderate disabilities, the Census data is not useful as a regional estimation of the youth disability population.

Unfortunately, there is no data available that provides an accurate number of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in Years 7 to Years 12 in the South East Melbourne region.

For the purpose of this report however, using 2014 student enrolment in Years 7 – 12 data and the estimates of intellectual disability rates in Australian schools is one way of trying to calculate the approximate number of students living with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in the South East Melbourne region. As noted earlier, research conducted by the ABS determined that one in 12 Australian students have a disability (8.3 per cent) and of those 60 per cent had an intellectual disability.<sup>101</sup> Using this modelling, as utilised in the table below, it is conservatively estimated that in 2014 1,841 students in Years 7 to 12 in South East Melbourne have an intellectual disability. This equates to 4.9 per cent of the total student population.

**Table 14: Estimated Students with Disability (South East Melbourne)**

Estimated students with disability 2014, Years 9 - 12 (South East Melbourne)									
Student enrolments	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total student enrolments	Estimated students with disability	Estimated students with intellectual disability
City of Cardinia	1,356	1,292	1,347	1,200	1,038	954	7,187	597	358
Casey Shire	2,829	3,011	3,052	3,148	2,699	2,378	17,117	1,421	852
City of Greater Dandenong	1,952	2,035	2,038	2,058	2,208	1,836	12,127	1,007	604
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,137</b>	<b>6,338</b>	<b>6,437</b>	<b>6,405</b>	<b>5,945</b>	<b>5,169</b>	<b>36,431</b>	<b>3,024</b>	<b>1,814</b>

It is important to acknowledge that the number of students in the South East Melbourne with an intellectual disability identified above is a conservative estimate as it does not include students who may have a learning disability and or an ASD diagnosis without also having an intellectual disability. As noted earlier in the report Learning Difference Australia estimate that approximately four per cent of Australian students have a learning disability. While some of the population of students with intellectual disability estimated to be within the South East Melbourne catchment area would include some who also have a learning disability, there would be other students who only have a learning disability. As such, the number of students who would be suitable candidates for BSG support in that region would likely swell to over 3,000.

It is from within this high population of students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability that

<sup>101</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2013), 'Most school children with a disability attend regular classes'

BSG programs and opportunities could be offered, should a BSG Provider be developed in the South East Melbourne region.

#### 24.1.8 Community Organisations and Service Providers

Within the South East Melbourne region there are over 300 organisations that provide services and support to members of that community. Providers offer support to youth, people with disability, people from ethnic or refugee backgrounds and people who are Indigenous. In addition, disability employment support, health and wellbeing assistance, registered training and sport / recreation are also made available to members of the South East Melbourne community. These figures were drawn from community directories available on the Cardinia Shire, City of Casey and City of Greater Dandenong websites, and where an organisation services more than one local council region it has only been counted once.

**Table 15: Community Organisations (South East Melbourne)**

Community Organisations (South East Melbourne)	
Youth Services	21
Disability Services	15
Disability Employment Services	29
Community and Health Support	87
Registered Training Providers	26
Ethnic / Refugee Services	7
Indigenous Services	3
Sport and Recreation	136

It is within this range of organisations and services that a BSG Provider in that region could source members of their Local Network as well as seek support for the provision of place-based BSG related programs. Indeed, given the sheer number of providers in this region it is highly likely that a BSG Local Network could easily source both potential members and the support of community organisations who would be interested in providing programs to students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

#### 24.1.9 Industry Profile

The South East Melbourne region is home to tens of thousands of businesses, ranging from small to large size enterprises, employing 127,921 people.

Within the Cardinia Shire area, Retail Trade, Construction, Education and Training, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Manufacturing are the five highest employing industry areas.

**Table 16: Industry Profile (Cardinia Shire)**

Employment and Industry Profile 2014/2015 (South East Melbourne)		
	Cardinia Shire	
	Number	Per cent
Retail Trade	3,773	14.7
Construction	3,664	14.3
Education and Training	2,843	11.1
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,565	10.0
Manufacturing	2,160	8.4
Accommodation and Food Services	1,698	6.6
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1,260	4.9
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1,088	4.2
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	1,081	4.2
Other Services	1,015	4.0
Wholesale Trade	900	3.5
Administrative and Support Services	804	3.1
Public Administration and Safety	782	3.1
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	551	2.1
Arts and Recreation Services	411	1.6
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	325	1.3
Information Media and Telecommunications	325	1.3
Financial and Insurance Services	313	1.2
Mining	66	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,624</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR), 2016

Within the City of Casey area Retail Trade, Health Care and Social Assistance, Education and Training, Construction, and Manufacturing are the five highest employing industry areas.

**Table 17: Industry Profile (City of Casey)**

Employment and Industry Profile 2011 (South East Melbourne)		
	City of Casey	
	Number	Per cent
Retail Trade	7,755	16.1
Health Care and Social Assistance	6,067	12.6
Education and Training	5,751	11.9
Construction	4,784	9.9
Manufacturing	4,580	9.5
Accommodation and Food Services	3,269	6.8
Wholesale Trade	2,550	5.3
Other Services	2,133	4.4
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	2,045	4.4
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1,887	3.9
Public Administration and Safety	1,789	3.7
Administrative and Support Services	1,170	2.4
Arts and Recreation Services	851	1.8
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	781	1.6
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	720	1.5

Financial and Insurance Services	694	1.4
Inadequately described	569	1.2
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	401	0.8
Information Media and Telecommunications	368	0.7
Mining	57	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>48,221</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census

Within the City of Greater Dandenong area, Retail Trade, Health Care and Social Assistance, Education and Training, Construction, and Manufacturing are the five highest employing industry areas. This council area mirrors the City of Casey in this regard.

**Table 18: Industry Profile (City of Greater Dandenong)**

Employment and Industry Profile 2014/2015 (South East Melbourne)		
	City of Greater Dandenong	
	Number	Per cent
Retail Trade	5,720	10.6
Health Care and Social Assistance	5,225	9.7
Education and Training	2,349	4.3
Construction	3,460	6.4
Manufacturing	12,345	22.8
Accommodation and Food Services	3,352	6.2
Wholesale Trade	3,172	5.9
Other Services	2,096	3.9
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	3,051	5.6
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	2,378	4.4
Public Administration and Safety	1,739	3.2
Administrative and Support Services	2,121	3.9
Arts and Recreation Services	495	0.9
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	520	1.0
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	509	0.9
Financial and Insurance Services	1,830	3.4
Inadequately described	2,372	4.4
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	441	0.8
Information Media and Telecommunications	852	1.6
Mining	49	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>54,076</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census

It is valuable to be aware of the vast array of industry areas which employ people in the South East Melbourne region as it is indicative of significant potential industry opportunities for BSG related partnerships, and student mentoring and work experience; should the model be implemented in the region.

## 24.2 Southern Gippsland

The Southern Gippsland region is comprised of two local government areas - Bass Coast Shire and South Gippsland Shire that are both rural, residential and holiday areas. This region has only experienced moderate population growth, is home to mostly Australian born residents but is beginning to see growth from non-English speaking countries, has a reasonable number of young people living with disability, has predominately government secondary schools including two special schools, is serviced by a wide range of community and disability-specific organisations, and has a wide range of businesses covering an array of industry areas.



### 24.2.1 Population

Bass Coast Shire is a peri-urban municipality, located south-east of Melbourne. It is a rural, residential and holiday area and in 2015 recorded a population of 32,033.<sup>102</sup> The major towns are Wonthaggi, Cowes, Inverloch, San Remo and Grantville. The South Gippsland Shire is also a rural, residential and holiday area and in 2015 recorded a population of 27,706.<sup>103</sup> The major towns are Leongatha, Korumburra, Mirboo North and Foster, with smaller townships at Dumbalk, Fish Creek, Loch, Meeniyan, Nyora, Poowong, Port Welshpool, Sandy Point, Tarwin Lower, Toora, Venus Bay and Welshpool. The combined population of these two local government areas in 2015 was estimated to be 57,739. Only moderate increases in population are forecasted in the next decade, with the Bass Coast Shire population expected to grow to 38,646<sup>104</sup> by 2026 and South Gippsland Shire expected to grow to 31,719<sup>105</sup> for the same period. Thus, the expected combined population anticipated by 2026 is 70,365 or a 21 per cent growth.

### 24.2.2 Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Level of Disadvantage

The municipalities within Southern Gippsland are considered to be disadvantaged ones in terms of SEIFA ranking. The municipality of Bass Coast has an index of 978, which ranks it at number 27 in level of disadvantage among the 80 municipalities of Victoria and placing it among the most disadvantaged 34 per cent of municipalities in the state. The municipality of Southern Gippsland has a slightly higher SEIFA index of 1000, which ranks it at number 48 in level of disadvantage among the Victorian municipalities and placing it among the least disadvantaged 40 per cent of municipalities in the state. Both regions fall below the Victorian SEIFA index average.

<sup>102</sup> Profile.id, 'Bass Coast Shire', <<http://profile.id.com.au/bass-coast/population-estimate>>, accessed May 2016.

<sup>103</sup> Profile.id, 'South Gippsland Shire', <<http://profile.id.com.au/south-gippsland>>, accessed May 2016.

<sup>104</sup> Profile.id, 'Bass Coast Shire', <<http://forecast.id.com.au/bass-coast/population-age-structure>>, accessed May 2016.

<sup>105</sup> Profile.id, 'South Gippsland Shire', <<http://forecast.id.com.au/south-gippsland/population-age-structure>>, accessed May 2016.

**Table 19: SEIFA Level of Disadvantage (Southern Gippsland)**

Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Level of Disadvantage 2011 (Southern Gippsland)	
Victoria	1,010.0
Bass Coast Shire	978.0
South Gippsland Shire	1,000.0

Source: ABS 2011 Census

NB. A higher score on the index means a lower level of disadvantage. A lower score on the index means a higher level of disadvantage

### 24.2.3 Ethnicity and Indigenous Population

The Southern Gippsland region is not a particularly diverse area, with over 80 per cent of the population born in Australia; 12 per cent higher than the Victorian average. Of the migrant population, there is a strong United Kingdom and European flavour predominately due to immigration in the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

More recently there has been an increase in immigrants from the Asian regions, and even more recently the region has begun to see refugees re-settled in the region.

**Table 20: Ethnic Diversity (Southern Gippsland)**

Ethnic Diversity by Birthplace (Southern Gippsland)				
Birthplace	Bass Coast Shire (per cent)	South Gippsland Shire (per cent)	Southern Gippsland (per cent)	Victoria (per cent)
Australia	79.2	84.3	81.8	68.6
Americas	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.9
North Africa and Middle East	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6
North East Asia	0.3	0.2	0.3	2.0
North West Europe	8.7	6.8	7.8	6.2
Oceania	1.8	1.3	1.6	1.8
South East Asia	0.8	0.5	0.7	3.6
Southern and Central Asia	0.7	0.5	0.6	2.2
Southern And Eastern Europe	1.7	1.3	1.5	6.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.5	0.2	0.4	1.0
Not Stated	5.9	4.6	5.3	5.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS Census, 2011

Within the Southern Gippsland region, in 2014, there were 57 Indigenous students enrolled in schools between Years 7 to Year 12. For a small region in terms of population, this is not an insignificant number. Whilst it is impossible to identify how many Indigenous students have intellectual disability and/or learning disability, it is likely that some Indigenous students within this region do live with these disabilities.

**Table 21: Secondary School Indigenous Population (Southern Gippsland)**

Secondary school Indigenous enrolments 2014, Years 7 - 12 (Southern Gippsland)							
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
Bass Coast Shire	4	4	6	10	5	4	33
South Gippsland Shire	4	5	4	3	4	4	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>57</b>

Source: DEET, LLEN Data Disk 2016

Whilst not an ethnically diverse region at present, its positioning as a region beside South East Melbourne

is likely to result in some population migration from that area to the Southern Gippsland region over time. It is notable that, for a small population, a not insignificant number of Indigenous students are enrolled in local secondary schools. Should BSG be introduced into this region, involving leaders and elders from emerging minority groups and the Indigenous community in discussion is highly recommend to ensure awareness of the program and gain their expertise to ensure programmatic cultural sensitivity.

#### 24.2.4 Youth Population

The population of young people aged between 15 and 19 years in the Southern Gippsland region has fluctuated between the three Census periods of 2001, 2006 and 2011<sup>106</sup>. The Bass Coast Shire has seen steady increases in its youth population over this period and in 2011 was just slightly below the Victorian average annual population rate for young people between 15 and 19 years. South Gippsland Shire's youth population has fluctuated over this period, witnessing a slight increase between 2001 and 2006 and a slight decrease between 2006 and 2011. Collectively, the Southern Gippsland region's youth population has decreased by 0.6 per cent per annum between 2006 and 2011.

**Table 22: Youth Population 2001 - 2011 - Southern Gippsland (Number)**

Estimated resident population of children aged 15 - 19 years (Southern Gippsland)					
Persons (15 - 19 Years)				Average Annual Growth (per cent)	
	2001	2006	2011	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2011
Bass Coast Shire	1,398	1,495	1,525	1.4	0.4
South Gippsland Shire	1,790	1,799	1,673	0.1	-1.4
Southern Gippsland Total	3,188	3,294	3,198	0.7	-0.6
Victoria Total	321,749	335,180	345,341	0.8	0.6

Source: ABS Census, 2001 - 2011

**Table 23: Youth Population 2001 - 2011 - Southern Gippsland (per cent)**

Per cent of total population aged 15 - 19 years (Southern Gippsland)					
Persons (15 - 19 Years)				Average Annual Growth (per cent)	
	2001	2006	2011	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2011
Bass Coast Shire	5.6	5.6	5.1	0.0	-1.8
South Gippsland Shire	7.1	7.0	6.1	-0.3	-2.6
Victoria	6.9	6.8	6.4	-0.3	-1.2

Source: ABS Census, 2001 - 2011

#### 24.2.5 Secondary Schools

Across the Southern Gippsland region there are 10 cross-sectoral secondary schools, with eight of these being mainstream ones and two special schools that cater specifically to the needs of students with disability.

**Table 24: Secondary Schools (Southern Gippsland)**

Secondary Schools (Southern Gippsland)			
Sector	Bass Coast Shire	South Gippsland Shire	Total
Special School	1	1	2
Government	2	4	6
Catholic	0	1	1
Independent	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: DEET, LLEN Data Disk 2016

<sup>106</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing (2001 - 2011), <[www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/Census?opendocument&ref=topBar](http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/Census?opendocument&ref=topBar)>, accessed May 2016.

It is these schools that would be targeted, in order to offer BSG programs and opportunities to their student cohorts with intellectual disability and/or learning disability, if the BSG model was offered in the region.

#### 24.2.6 Student School Enrolment Population

The numbers of students enrolled in all secondary schools in the Southern Gippsland region is drawn from Victorian Department of Education and Training data for 2014 (this being the most current data available). For the purpose of this report only enrolments in Years 7 to Year 12 are captured, as it is this cohort that are participants in BSG programs. In 2014, a total of 3,833 students were enrolled in secondary schools across the Southern Gippsland region.

**Table 25: Secondary school enrolments (Years 7 - 12) 2014 - Southern Gippsland**

Secondary school enrolments 2014, Years 7 - 12 (Southern Gippsland)							
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
Bass Coast Shire	320	301	292	358	257	215	<b>1,743</b>
South Gippsland Shire	329	383	382	382	359	255	<b>2,090</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>3,833</b>

Source: DEET, LLEN Data Disk 2016

#### 24.2.7 Disability Population

As noted in the earlier section about the South East Melbourne region, calculating the population of young people aged 15 – 19 years in the Southern Gippsland region is also a difficult task. Unfortunately there is no data available that provides an accurate number of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in Years 7 to 12 in the Southern Gippsland region.

For the purpose of this report however, using 2014 student enrolment in Years 7 – 12 data and the estimates of intellectual disability rates in Australian schools is one way of trying to calculate the approximate number of students living with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in the Southern Gippsland region. As noted earlier, research conducted by the ABS determined that one in 12 Australian students have a disability (8.3 per cent) and of those 60 per cent had an intellectual disability.<sup>107</sup> Using this modelling, as utilised in the table below, it is conservatively estimated that in 2014 there were 191 students with an intellectual disability in Years 7 to 12 in Southern Gippsland. This equates to 4.9 per cent of the total student population.

**Table 26: Estimated Students with Disability (Southern Gippsland)**

Estimated students with disability 2014, Years 9 - 12 (Southern Gippsland)									
Student enrolments	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total student enrolments	Estimated students with disability	Estimated students with intellectual disability
Bass Coast Shire	320	301	292	358	257	215	1,743	145	87
South Gippsland Shire	329	383	382	382	359	255	2,090	173	104
<b>Total</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>3,833</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>191</b>

It is important to acknowledge that the number of students in Southern Gippsland with an intellectual disability identified above is a conservative estimate as it does not include students who may have a learning disability and or an ASD diagnosis without also having an intellectual disability. As noted earlier in the report Learning Difference Australia estimate that approximately four per cent of Australian students have a learning disability. While some of the population of students with intellectual disability estimated to be within the Southern Gippsland catchment area would include some who also have a learning disability, there would be other students who only have a learning disability. As such, the number of students who would be suitable candidates for BSG support in that region would likely grow to close to 300.

While the number of students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in this region seems

<sup>107</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2013), 'Most school children with a disability attend regular classes'

relatively low, when compared against more highly populated regions in Victoria, it is within a discreet regional area that BSG programs could effect significant positive outcomes for these young people. Being a small cohort, it also presents BSG with an ideal environment in which to pilot the delivery of programs suited to regional students and stakeholders, before expanding into other regional/remote areas in the future.

## 24.2.8 Community Organisations and Service Providers

Within the Southern Gippsland region there are 104 organisations that provide services and support to members of that community. Providers offer support to youth, people with disability, people from ethnic or refugee backgrounds and people who are Indigenous. In addition, disability employment support, health and wellbeing assistance, registered training and sport / recreation are also made available to members of the Southern Gippsland community. These figures were drawn from community directories available on the Bass Coast Shire and South Gippsland Shire websites, and where an organisation services more than one local council region it has only been counted once.

**Table 27: Community Organisations (Southern Gippsland)**

Community Organisations (Southern Gippsland)	
Youth Services	5
Disability Services	6
Disability Employment Services	10
Community and Health Support	21
Registered Training Providers	6
Ethnic / Refugee Services	1
Indigenous Services	2
Sport and Recreation	53

It is within this range of organisations and services that a BSG Provider in that region could source members of their Local Network as well as seek support for the provision of place-based BSG related programs. Indeed, given the number of providers in this region it is highly likely that a BSG Local Network could easily source both potential members and the support of community organisations who would be interested in providing programs to students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

## 24.2.9 Industry Profile

The Southern Gippsland region is home to many hundreds of businesses, ranging from small to large size enterprises, employing 11,238 people.

Within the Bass Coast Shire area, Construction, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Education and Training are the five highest employing industry areas.

**Table 28: Industry Profile (Bass Coast Shire)**

Employment and Industry Profile 2011 (Southern Gippsland)		
	Bass Coast Shire	
	Number	Per cent
Construction	2,527	22.2
Retail Trade	1,289	11.4
Accommodation and Food Services	1,249	10.9
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,238	10.8
Education and Training	655	5.8
Manufacturing	642	5.6
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	579	5.1
Public Administration and Safety	435	3.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	423	3.7
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	371	3.2

Arts and Recreation Services	346	3.0
Wholesale Trade	332	2.9
Other Services	323	2.8
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	250	2.2
Administrative and Support Services	220	1.9
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	183	1.6
Financial and Insurance Services	119	1.0
Inadequately described	111	1.0
Information Media and Telecommunications	79	0.7
Mining	50	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,421</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census

Within the South Gippsland Shire area, Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Retail Trade, Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Education and Training are the five highest employing industry areas.

**Table 29: Industry Profile (South Gippsland Shire)**

Employment and Industry Profile 2011 (Southern Gippsland)		
	South Gippsland Shire	
	Number	Per cent
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1,960	19.4
Retail Trade	1,110	11.0
Manufacturing	1,082	10.8
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,052	10.4
Education and Training	767	7.6
Construction	623	6.2
Accommodation and Food Services	629	6.2
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	404	4.0
Wholesale Trade	386	3.8
Other Services	366	3.6
Public Administration and Safety	355	3.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	350	3.5
Administrative and Support Services	200	2.0
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	144	1.4
Arts and Recreation Services	144	1.4
Financial and Insurance Services	162	1.6
Mining	97	1.0
Inadequately described	101	1.0
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	95	0.9
Information Media and Telecommunications	69	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,096</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census

It is valuable to be aware of the vast array of industry areas which employ people in the Southern Gippsland region as it is indicative of potential industry opportunities for BSG related partnerships, and student mentoring and work experience; should the model be implemented in the region.

## 24.3 Southern Melbourne

The Southern Melbourne region is comprised of four local government areas – Bayside City Council, City of Glen Eira, City of Kingston and the City of Port Phillip. It is this region where BSG was launched and established in since 2012 and is a metropolitan region of Melbourne. Collectively, this region has only experienced moderate population growth, has over 40 per cent of its residents born overseas and is seeing growth in non-English speaking and some refugee cohorts. The region has a significant number of young people living with disability, has an almost equal mix of government to non-government secondary schools including five special schools, is serviced by a wide range of community and disability-specific organisations, and is home to many thousands of businesses covering an array of industry areas.



### 24.3.1 Population

In 2015, the Bayside City Council region had a total population of 101,321; with steady increases each year and particularly in the babies to primary-school ages<sup>108</sup>. In 2015 the Glen Eira City Council region had a total population of 146,303; with steady increases each year and particularly in the babies to primary-school ages<sup>109</sup>. In 2015, the City of Kingston region had a total population of 154,477; with steady increases each year and particularly in the primary-school ages<sup>110</sup>. In 2015, the City of Port Phillip region had a population of 107,127; with steady increases each year but particularly in the 'parents and homebuilders group (35 – 49 years)'<sup>111</sup>. The combined population of these three local government areas in 2015 was estimated to be 509,288. These areas, which are all seeing growth in housing and apartment development, are forecasted to have steady increases in population in the next decade. By 2026 the Bayside City Council population is expected to reach 112,968<sup>112</sup>, Glen Eira City Council population is expected to reach 156,714<sup>113</sup>, the City of Kingston population is expected to reach 173,315<sup>114</sup>, and the City of Port Phillip population is expected to reach 117,006<sup>115</sup>; bringing the combined forecasted population in this region to 560,003 within ten years.

### 24.3.2 Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Level of Disadvantage

The four municipalities that comprise the Southern Melbourne region are considered advantaged areas and rate higher than the Victorian average. The municipality of Bayside has an index of 1092 and is

108 Profile.id, 'Bayside City Council', <<http://profile.id.com.au/bayside/>>, accessed May 2016.

109 Profile.id, 'City of Glen Eira', <<http://profile.id.com.au/glen-eira/>>, accessed May 2016.

110 Profile.id, 'City of Kingston', <<http://profile.id.com.au/kingston/>>, accessed May 2016.

111 Profile.id, 'City of Port Phillip', <<http://profile.id.com.au/port-phillip/>>, accessed May 2016.

112 Profile.id, 'Bayside City Council – Population Forecast', <<http://forecast.id.com.au/bayside/population-summary/>>, accessed May 2016.

113 Profile.id, 'Glen Eira City Council – Population Forecast', <<http://forecast.id.com.au/glen-eira/population-summary/>>, accessed May 2016.

114 Profile.id, 'City of Kingston – Population Forecast', <<http://forecast.id.com.au/kingston/population-summary/>>, accessed May 2016.

115 Profile.id, 'City of Port Phillip – Population Forecast', <<http://forecast.id.com.au/port-phillip/population-summary/>>, accessed May 2016.

ranked at number 78 in level of disadvantage among the 80 Victorian municipalities, placing it among the least disadvantaged 3 per cent of municipalities in the state. The municipality of Glen Eira has an index of 1070 and is ranked at number 75 in level of disadvantage among Victorian municipalities, placing it among the least disadvantaged 7 per cent municipalities in the state. The municipality of Kingston has an index of 1038 and is ranked at number 65 in level of disadvantage among Victorian municipalities, placing it among the least disadvantaged 19 per cent of municipalities in the state. The municipality of Port Phillip has an index of 1066 and is ranked at number 73 in level of disadvantage among Victorian municipalities, placing it among the least disadvantaged 9 per cent of municipalities in the state.

Whilst the Southern Melbourne region is considered advantaged when compared to other areas in Victoria, it is important to note that there are pockets of disadvantage within the area; particularly in areas which are home to higher levels of public and social housing.

**Table 30: SEIFA Level of Disadvantage (Southern Melbourne)**

Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Level of Disadvantage 2011 (Southern Melbourne)	
Victoria	1,010.0
Bayside City Council	1,092.0
Glen Eira City Council	1,070.0
City of Kingston	1,038.0
City of Port Phillip	1,066.0

Source: ABS 2011 Census

*NB. A higher score on the index means a lower level of disadvantage. A lower score on the index means a higher level of disadvantage*

### 24.3.3 Ethnicity and Indigenous Population

The Southern Melbourne region is a somewhat ethnically diverse area, with particular pockets of ethnicity that is higher than state averages for those. At the 2011 Census across the three local government areas that comprise this region just over 36 per cent were born outside of Australia, which is almost four per cent higher than the Victorian average.

Some notable ethnic populations can be found in this region. The greatest number of people born overseas are those that come from North West Europe, at 8.7 per cent, and are largely due to earlier 20<sup>th</sup> Century migration from this part of Europe. Those born in North East Asia make up 4.6 per cent of the population, more than double the Victorian average, and can be in part attributed to skilled migration and migration for the purpose of further education. Those born in Oceania make up 2.4 per cent of the population, nearly a third more than the state average. It is interesting to note that migration from the Sub-Saharan and North Africa / Middle East is beginning to increase across the region.

**Table 31: Ethnic Diversity by Birthplace (Southern Melbourne)**

Ethnic Diversity by Birthplace (Southern Melbourne)						
Birthplace	Bayside City Council (per cent)	Glen Eira City Council (per cent)	City of Kingston (per cent)	City of Port Phillip (per cent)	Southern Melbourne (per cent)	Victoria (per cent)
Australia	70.8	60.2	65.1	60.5	64.2	68.6
Americas	1.1	0.9	0.8	2.3	1.3	0.9
North Africa and Middle East	0.6	1.9	0.7	0.9	1.0	1.6
North East Asia	1.9	7.9	5.6	2.9	4.6	2.0
North West Europe	9.9	8.7	6.6	9.7	8.7	6.2
Oceania	2.1	1.4	2.2	3.7	2.4	1.8
South East Asia	1.4	2.3	4	2.9	2.7	3.6
Southern and Central Asia	1.7	1.4	3.2	2.9	2.3	2.2
Southern And Eastern Europe	4.3	7.8	6.2	4.9	5.8	6.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	1.3	2.4	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.0
Not Stated	4.9	5.1	4.8	8.5	5.8	5.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS Census, 2011

**Table 32: Secondary School Indigenous Population (Southern Melbourne)**

Secondary school Indigenous enrolments 2014, Years 7 - 12 (Southern Melbourne)							
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
Bayside City Council	1	1	2	1	1	0	6
Glen Eira City Council	4	3	5	1	5	3	21
City of Kingston	5	4	6	3	4	2	24
City of Port Phillip	4	4	4	1	1	0	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>65</b>

Source: DEET, LLEN Data Disk 2016

Within the Southern Melbourne region, in 2014, there were 65 Indigenous students enrolled in schools between Years 7 to Year 12; which is not a significant number given the school population size of this region. Whilst it is impossible to identify how many Indigenous students have intellectual disability and/or learning disability, it is likely that some Indigenous students within the Southern Melbourne region do live with disabilities.

Whilst not an ethnically diverse region at present, its positioning as a region beside South East Melbourne is likely to result in some population migration from that area to the Southern Melbourne region over time. Should BSG continue to be delivered in this region involving leaders and elders from emerging minority groups and the Indigenous community in discussion is highly recommend to continue to raise awareness of the program and gain their expertise to ensure programmatic cultural sensitivity.

#### 24.3.4 Youth Population

The population of young people aged between 15 and 19 years in three of the four municipalities that make up the Southern Melbourne region has continued to show small growth between the three Census periods of 2001, 2006 and 2011<sup>116</sup>; the difference being the City of Port Phillip region which has witnessed slight reduction in this population group over this period.

<sup>116</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing (2001 – 2011), <[www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/Census?opendocument&ref=topBar](http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/Census?opendocument&ref=topBar)>, accessed May 2016.



**Table 33: Youth Population 2001 - 2011 - Southern Melbourne (Number)**

Estimated resident population of children aged 15 - 19 years (Southern Melbourne)					
Persons (15 - 19 Years)				Average Annual Growth (per cent)	
	2001	2006	2011	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2011
Bayside City Council	5,330	5,728	5,807	1.5	0.3
Glen Eira City Council	6,815	6,978	7,077	0.5	0.3
City of Kingston	7,938	8,152	8,293	0.5	0.3
City of Port Phillip	2,960	2,579	2,442	-2.6	-1.1
Southern Melbourne Total	23,043	23,437	23,619	0.3	0.2
Victoria	321,749	335,180	345,341	0.8	0.6

Source: ABS Census, 2001 - 2011

**Table 34: Youth Population 2001 - 2011 - Southern Melbourne (per cent)**

Per cent of total population aged 15 - 19 years (Southern Melbourne)					
Persons (15 - 19 Years)				Average Annual Growth (per cent)	
	2001	2006	2011	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2011
Bayside City Council	6.3	6.5	7.2	0.6	2.2
Glen Eira City Council	5.7	5.6	5.4	-0.4	-0.7
City of Kingston	6.1	6.1	5.8	0.0	-1.0
City of Port Phillip	3.3	3.0	2.7	-1.8	-2.0
Victoria	6.9	6.8	6.4	-0.3	-1.2

Source: ABS Census, 2001 - 2011

### 24.3.5 Secondary Schools

Across the Southern Melbourne region there are 47 cross-sectoral secondary schools, with 52 of these being mainstream ones and five special schools that cater specifically to the needs of students with disability. It is notable that, of the mainstream schools, this region is home to 22 Catholic and Independent schools, making the ratio of government to non-government schools almost on par.

**Table 35: Secondary Schools (South East Melbourne)**

Secondary Schools (Southern Melbourne)					
Sector	Bayside City Council (per cent)	Glen Eira City Council (per cent)	City of Kingston (per cent)	City of Port Phillip (per cent)	Total
Special School	1	0	3	1	5
Government	2	4	8	6	20
Catholic	1	2	2	2	7
Independent	3	7	3	2	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>47</b>

As BSG has already been operating within this region, it is already well known to many schools in the area. If BSG continues to be offered in this region, ongoing partnerships with schools already participating is expected to continue while a simultaneous effort to expand into schools not already participating is proposed.

### 24.3.6 Student School Enrolment Population

The numbers of students enrolled in all secondary schools in the Southern Melbourne region is drawn from Victorian Department of Education and Training data for 2014 (this being the most current data available). For the purpose of this report only enrolments in Years 7 to Year 12 are captured, as it is this cohort that are participants in BSG programs. In 2014, a total of 26,400 students were enrolled in

secondary schools across the Southern Melbourne region.

**Table 36: Secondary school enrolments (Years 7 - 12) 2014 - Southern Melbourne**

Secondary school enrolments 2014, Years 7 - 12 (Southern Melbourne)							
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
Bayside City Council	918	944	884	962	1,064	928	<b>5,700</b>
Glen Eira City Council	1,469	1,497	1,587	1,530	1,334	1,288	<b>8,705</b>
City of Kingston	1,455	1,488	1,461	1,420	1,410	1,218	<b>8,452</b>
City of Port Phillip	539	482	626	764	584	548	<b>3,543</b>
<b>Southern Melbourne Total</b>	<b>4381</b>	<b>4411</b>	<b>4,558</b>	<b>4,676</b>	<b>4,392</b>	<b>3,982</b>	<b>26,400</b>

Source: DEET, LLEN Data Disk 2016

### 24.3.7 Disability Population

As noted in the earlier section about the South East Melbourne region, calculating the population of young people aged 15 – 19 years in the Southern Melbourne region is also a difficult task. Unfortunately, there is no data available that provides an accurate number of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in Years 7 to Years 12 in this region.

For the purpose of this report however, using 2014 student enrolment in Years 7 – 12 data and the estimates of intellectual disability rates in Australian schools is one way of trying to calculate the approximate number of students living with intellectual disability and/or learning disability in the Southern Melbourne region. As noted earlier, research conducted by the ABS determined that one in 12 Australian students have a disability (8.3 per cent) and of those 60 per cent had an intellectual disability.<sup>117</sup> Using this modelling, as utilised in the table below, it is conservatively estimated that in 2014 there were 1,315 students with an intellectual disability in Years 7 to 12 in Southern Melbourne. This equates to 4.9 per cent of the total student population.

**Table 37: Estimated Students with Disability (Southern Melbourne)**

Estimated students with disability 2014, Years 9 - 12 (Southern Melbourne)									
Student enrolments	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total student enrolments	Estimated students with disability	Estimated students with intellectual disability
Bayside City Council	918	944	884	962	1,064	928	5,700	473	284
Glen Eira City Council	1,469	1,497	1,587	1,530	1,334	1,288	8,705	722	433
City of Kingston	1,455	1,488	1,461	1,420	1,410	1,218	8,452	702	421
City of Port Phillip	539	482	626	764	584	548	3,543	294	176
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,381</b>	<b>4,411</b>	<b>4,558</b>	<b>4,676</b>	<b>4,392</b>	<b>3,982</b>	<b>26,400</b>	<b>2,191</b>	<b>1,315</b>

It is important to acknowledge that the number of students in the Southern Melbourne region with an intellectual disability identified above is a conservative estimate as it does not include students who may have a learning disability and or an ASD diagnosis without also having an intellectual disability. As noted earlier in the report Learning Difference Australia estimate that approximately four per cent of Australian students have a learning disability. While some of the population of students with intellectual disability estimated to be within the Southern Melbourne catchment area would include some who also have a learning disability, there would be other students who only have a learning disability. As such, the number of students who would be suitable candidates for BSG support in that region would likely swell to around 2,000.

It is from within this high population of students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability that BSG programs and opportunities have already been offered across the region since 2012. It is worth recalling that BSG has had participation from 353 individual students during this time and if compared to the above estimate of students with intellectual disability in the region it has serviced a very significant 28 per cent of this cohort.

<sup>117</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2013), 'Most school children with a disability attend regular classes'

### 24.3.8 Community Organisations and Service Providers

Within the Southern Melbourne region there are over 268 organisations that provide services and support to members of that community. Providers offer support to youth, people with disability, people from ethnic or refugee backgrounds and people who are Indigenous. In addition, disability employment support, health and wellbeing assistance, registered training and sport / recreation are also made available to members of the Southern Melbourne community. These figures were drawn from community directories available on the four municipality websites, and where an organisation services more than one local council region it has only been counted once.

**Table 38: Community Organisations (Southern Melbourne)**

Community Organisations (Southern Melbourne)	
Youth Services	12
Disability Services	11
Disability Employment Services	23
Community and Health Support	68
Registered Training Providers	24
Ethnic / Refugee Services	6
Indigenous Services	3
Sport and Recreation	121

Given that BSG has been operating within this region since 2012, strong partnerships with a range of community organisations have already been established. Whilst many of these partnerships would likely continue if BSG continues to be offered across the Southern Melbourne region, the above table highlights that there is scope for even more future potential partnerships with the many hundreds of diverse organisations operating there.

### 24.3.9 Industry Profile

The Southern Melbourne region is home to tens of thousands of businesses, ranging from small to large size enterprises, employing 187,747 people.

Within the Bayside City Council area, Health Care and Social Assistance, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Education and Training, Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food are the five highest employing industry areas.

**Table 39: Industry Profile (Bayside City Council)**

Employment and Industry Profile 2011 (Southern Melbourne)		
	Bayside City Council	
	Number	Per cent
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,311	17.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	2,945	11.9
Education and Training	2,860	11.6
Retail Trade	2,691	10.9
Accommodation and Food Services	1,985	8.0
Construction	1,739	7.0
Manufacturing	1,656	6.7
Other Services	1,023	4.1
Wholesale Trade	991	4.0
Financial and Insurance Services	724	2.9
Public Administration and Safety	719	2.9
Administrative and Support Services	642	2.6
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	582	2.4
Arts and Recreation Services	517	2.1

Transport, Postal and Warehousing	510	2.1
Inadequately described	306	1.2
Information Media and Telecommunications	272	1.2
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	92	0.4
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	62	0.3
Mining	22	0.1
Not stated	22	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,671</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census

Within the Glen Eira City Council area, Health Care and Social Assistance, Education and Training, Retail Trade, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services and Construction are the five highest employing industry areas.

**Table 40: Industry Profile (Glen Eira City Council)**

Employment and Industry Profile 2011 (Southern Melbourne)		
	Glen Eira City Council	
	Number	Per cent
Health Care and Social Assistance	6,264	19.2
Education and Training	4,842	14.8
Retail Trade	3,792	11.6
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	3,145	9.6
Construction	1,908	6.7
Accommodation and Food Services	1,995	6.1
Manufacturing	1,519	4.6
Other Services	1,454	4.2
Wholesale Trade	1,157	3.4
Public Administration and Safety	1,103	3.3
Financial and Insurance Services	1,055	3.1
Administrative and Support Services	1,012	3.1
Information Media and Telecommunications	837	2.5
Arts and Recreation Services	807	2.4
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	654	2.0
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	653	2.0
Inadequately described	330	1.0
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	89	0.2
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	29	0.1
Not stated	19	0.1
Mining	5	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,669</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census

Within the City of Kingston area, Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Wholesale Trade, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Construction are the five highest employing industry areas.

**Table 41: Industry Profile (City of Kingston)**

Employment and Industry Profile 2011 (Southern Melbourne)		
	City of Kingston	
	Number	Per cent
Manufacturing	17,300	23.1
Retail Trade	8,427	12.8
Wholesale Trade	7,000	10.6
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,851	7.7
Construction	4,552	6.9
Education and Training	3,623	5.7
Accommodation and Food Services	3,076	4.7
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	2,910	4.5
Other Services	2,795	4.4
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	2,675	4.3
Public Administration and Safety	1,962	3.2
Administrative and Support Services	1,568	2.6
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	1,380	2.3
Financial and Insurance Services	1,025	1.7
Inadequately described	914	1.5
Arts and Recreation Services	794	1.3
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	791	1.3
Information Media and Telecommunications	607	0.9
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	175	0.4
Mining	41	0.1
Not stated	23	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>66,489</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census

Within the City of Port Phillip area, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Financial and Insurance Services, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Construction are the five highest employing industry areas.

**Table 42: Industry Profile (City of Port Phillip)**

Employment and Industry Profile 2011 (Southern Melbourne)		
	City of Port Phillip	
	Number	Per cent
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	13,958	21.8
Financial and Insurance Services	5,248	8.2
Retail Trade	4,544	7.1
Accommodation and Food Services	4,286	6.7
Construction	4,252	6.7
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,014	6.3
Wholesale Trade	3,463	5.4
Administrative and Support Services	3,383	5.3
Manufacturing	3,149	4.9
Other Services	2,668	4.2
Information Media and Telecommunications	2,566	4.0
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	2,396	3.7

Education and Training	2,390	3.7
Arts and Recreation Services	2,169	3.4
Public Administration and Safety	2,111	3.3
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	1,644	2.6
Inadequately described	992	1.6
Mining	333	0.5
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	242	0.4
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	110	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>63,918</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census

It is valuable to be aware of the vast array of industry areas which employ people in the Southern Melbourne region as it is indicative of ongoing potential industry opportunities for BSG related partnerships, and student mentoring and work experience; should the model be continued in the region.

## 24.4 Inner Northern Melbourne

The Inner Northern Melbourne region was examined as a potential area of implementation of the BSG model. Whilst this region would benefit from its introduction, presently an alternative community partnership model (funded by the Victorian Department of Human Services until approx. 2018) aimed at improving the transition outcomes of young people with disability operates in that area.

The program, known as 'North West Community Transition Support Program (CTS Program)', is an initiative involving only special schools and a range of community organisations with the aim of building the capacity of special schools to deliver effective transition planning and support. Liaison with the CTS Program Manager identified that BSG would be a welcomed model in the region, however it was recommended that it would be better to delay introduction in that region until the conclusion of the CTS Program.

Pleasingly the CTS Program Manager felt that BSG could leverage the CTS relationships and partnerships if introduced there in the near future, making its ability to launch and initialise there a reasonably straightforward proposition.

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## 25. Summary

Young people with disabilities have much to offer their local communities. While there is some support for this cohort, much more is needed to be done in order to help people living with disability to achieve their potential and become active participants in society and to avoid the unfortunate outcomes faced by many adults with disability who have experienced social isolation, discrimination and exclusion. The lived experience of many people with disability in Australia is deplorable. We can do better than this.

To improve the situation and future outcomes for young people with disabilities the approach must engage government, businesses, community groups, schools, parents, carers and individuals from the community to work together to enact true change. Through authentic participation, young people with disability can break down stereotypes to change public perception about disability.

As evidenced throughout this report it is clear that the programmatic approach of BSG is achieving large gains by providing opportunities for young people to learn new skills, develop confidence, increase wellbeing and be better able to make decisions regarding their future. In addition, the BSG model makes it easier for service providers to engage with young people who have disabilities, a task that for some would not happen without the facilitation and training provided by BSG. Scaling up the BSG model and introducing it into other Victorian regions will allow true change to happen.

# BEYOND THE SCHOOL GATES & THE NDIS



26. NDIS Overview

27. NDIS Funding and Service Provision

28. Summary

This section provides an overview of the National Disability Health Insurance (NDIS) and explores ways in which Beyond the School Gates (BSG) may interact with it as the scheme rolls out into current and future BSG regions.

## 26. NDIS Overview

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the most significant disability healthcare reform ever experienced in Australia. The NDIS is overseen by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), an independent statutory agency whose role is to implement the NDIS.

Under the NDIS people with disability have the opportunity to decide upon their own best interests, and in doing so can exercise choice and control over their lives and the types of supports they receive. As a single national system people with disability, regardless of the type and where they live, will be able to access services that best meet their goals and aspirations.

NDIS support is available to people between the ages of 0 – 65 years who have a permanent and significant disability that affects their ability to take part in everyday activities.

The NDIS was initialised in a number of trial sites across Australia between 2013 and 2016. A progressive roll-out of the full scheme commenced in July 2016 and is due to be in full operation by 2019. The NDIS received bipartisan political support and is enshrined in legislation with a commitment that this scheme will be in place for many years.

As a new scheme in the early stages of transition, the model is still experiencing changes and it is anticipated that this will continue until the scheme is in full operation in 2019. As such, whilst every effort has been made to provide accurate NDIS information within this report it is important that any future reader confirms the correctness of details at the given time.

### 26.1 NDIS Purpose

The NDIS is designed to look beyond immediate need and focus on what is required across a person's lifetime. It is a new way of providing individualised support to people with permanent and significant disability, their families and carers.

Key elements of the NDIS are:

- *A lifetime approach.* Long-term and sustainable funding, ensuring that the individualised care and support that people with disability receive will change as their needs change.
- *Choice and control.* People with disability can choose how they receive support, control how the support is provided and may be able to self-manage funding.
- *Social and economic participation.* People with disability will be supported to live a meaningful life in



their community in order to reach their full potential.

- *Focus on early intervention.* Investment in remedial and preventative early intervention to improve outcomes.

## 26.2 Services and equipment funded by the NDIS

The NDIS provides ongoing funding for all 'reasonable and necessary' disability equipment, care and support services. Persons supported by the NDIS are referred to as 'Participants'. The NDIS sets out guidelines to assist in determining eligibility and what can be funded.

Generally, the supports and services provided to eligible Participants are designed to assist them to:

- achieve their goals
- become as independent as possible
- develop skills for day-to-day living
- participate in the community
- gain and maintain meaningful employment and incomes.

In practice this means providing support, as and if required, in areas such as:

- mobility
- communication
- self-care and self-management
- social interactions
- learning
- capacity for social and economic participation.

## 26.3 Eligibility for the NDIS

- The person with disability must be aged between 0 - 65 years.
- The person must be assessed as having a permanent disability that significantly affects their communication, mobility, self-care or self-management.
- The person must be a permanent resident of Australia.

## 26.4 NDIS Funding – Choice and Flexibility

A NDIS Participant's funding will be divided into two parts – fixed supports and flexible supports:

- 'Fixed supports' will need to be spent on specified supports such as equipment, home modifications and certain types of early intervention therapy services.
- 'Flexible supports' includes funding for recreational, community access and home-based support activities, enabling participants to switch funding from one item to another, depending on their personal needs.

Commonly available disability supports and services the NDIS cover include: aids and equipment; home and community care; personal care; domestic assistance; respite; home and vehicle modifications; and, community access. However, supports which are already available from other mainstream services (eg. health, education and aged care sectors) are unlikely to be covered by the NDIS and be offered through other federal or state funded services.

## 26.5 NDIS Assessment Process

There are two assessment processes:

- an eligibility assessment to determine whether a person is eligible for funding, and (if deemed eligible)
- a planning assessment to determine a person's goals and aspirations and then design an individual-

ised funding package to help achieve those goals.

A NDIS 'Planner' works with the Participant to determine goals and aspirations and will assist a participant to develop their plan. A Local Area Coordinator (LAC) assesses plans using formal systems and tools designed to ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity. If necessary, there is also scope for Planners or LACs to also call on specialist advice. Applicants who are not deemed eligible can challenge the decision via an appeal.

The Planner and Participants will work together to develop a 'Statement of Participant Supports' which sets out the supports to be provided or funded by the NDIS, based on what is considered 'reasonable and necessary' to enable a personally defined 'good life' (ie. live the life you want). This could involve one-off and/or ongoing funding.

As individual circumstances, condition or needs change, NDIS Participants can request to have their plans reviewed, usually on an annual basis and/or as required. Funding and support requests for Participants are not necessarily the same each year.

## 26.6 NDIS Funding Management

There are four ways a Participant can manage their NDIS supports:

- a. *Self-management.* The NDIS provides the Participant with money to support their plan by paying money into their bank account. Under this arrangement the Participant needs to: find and organise supports; develop a service agreement with each provider; pay providers on time; manage costs; and, keep a record of purchases. Records and receipts must be kept for five years. At present it is estimated that only nine per cent of Participants are self-managing.
- b. *Registered plan management provider.* A registered plan management provider can manage some, or all, of a Participant's funding. They can: find and organise supports; pay providers and process expense claims; complete paperwork and keep records; work with suppliers to decide how and when supports are provided; and, increase a Participant's skills so that he or she can have more control over their plan in the future. Utilising a registered plan management provider must be included as part of a Participant's NDIS Plan. A list of registered plan management providers is available on the NDIS website.
- c. *NDIA (National Disability Insurance Agency) managed.* NDIA can also manage Participant's funding. Under this option Participants will: choose the service providers they want to deliver supports from the registered provider lists on the NDIS website; organise supports to suit their own needs; and, work with the NDIA to be connected to the registered providers that deliver the types of support in the plan. Once a Participant receives supports, NDIA will pay the providers directly.
- d. *A combination of the above.* Participants can ask for a combination of these options by speaking to their Planner to find a solution that best meets their needs.

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## 27. NDIS Funding and Service Provision

As noted earlier, there are frequent changes being made to the NDIS and NDIA during the scheme's current period of transition. BSG may be able to interact with the NDIS in two ways - through connecting young people into activities conducted by an NDIS provider organisation (working in partnership with BSG) and/or as an NDIS provider in its own right. In addition, BSG may be eligible to apply to become an Information, Linkages and Capacity (ILC) Building Provider.

Critically, for young people involved in BSG and seeking to be funded to participate in NDIS funded activities they will be required to have the need for support in related areas noted in their approved Participant Plan; whether that is partaking in an activity with an NDIS provider working with BSG or an activity delivered by BSG (if approved as an NDIS provider).

### 27.1 Participant Plan

Any young person with a permanent and significant disability that affects their ability to take part in everyday activities, is likely to be deemed an eligible NDIS Participant. As such, and with a carefully crafted Participant Plan, such young people can seek funding for any 'reasonable and necessary' support. A wide array of supports may be available to such young people including areas in 'community participation' and 'life skills development'.

While for some young people with disability it will be quite clear what supports are necessary, particularly if the disability is a physical one, those with less defined disabilities (such as intellectual disability) may not be able to identify a specific activity at the time of developing their individualised Participant Plan. For example, a young person may note that a reasonable and necessary support will be participation in activities that will increase his or her 'social interactions', 'capacity for economic inclusion' and/or 'self-care' but at the time of developing the Participant Plan may not have yet identified or decided upon the type of program/s or name of NDIS provider/s that can offer these supports. Similarly, some young people may not yet know whether individualised support (such as one-on-one support from a Psychologist) or a group activity (such as the ones already offered via BSG) will suit him or her best.

Because of this it will be important that any young people, who have not yet identified a specific support, work collaboratively with their Planner to use wording that is quite broad and generic (eg. say 'will participate in social outings' rather than 'will go to the movies with a group on Fridays'). If a desired support isn't in a young person's plan, then the support won't be funded or further time will be needed to amend their Plan in the future.

Furthermore, it is likely that Participants still attending school will not be funded for group activities delivered during school hours. Rather, the activity would have to be delivered during non-school hours.

## 27.2 NDIA Price Guide

The NDIA is responsible for setting the summary Price Guide for NDIS funded supports. The Price Guide is not designed to list every support a Participant may wish to receive, as Participants will request the supports they need in their NDIS Plan, however most support services will come under broad service/activity description called a 'cluster' and funding for these supports will need to be within the monetary value of that 'cluster group'. Approved NDIS Providers will then invoice the NDIA for services provided to a Participant by selecting an item on the NDIA Price Guide using a 'best fit' cluster approach. As a new scheme, only just commencing on progressive full roll-out, the Price Guide is being regularly amended. Prices currently differ between states and territories.

Examples of some supports noted in the Price Guide can be found in a table following.

## 27.3 Partnerships with NDIS Providers

BSG, as a model already predicated on working in partnerships with external organisations delivering BSG directed programs or activities, is well placed to work in partnership with approved NDIS Providers to deliver activities to young people. BSG could position itself in the NDIS environment by collaborating with approved NDIS Providers to use existing activities, or design new ones, which would benefit the development of BSG young people who are also approved NDIS Participants.

Under such an arrangement, BSG could promote activities being delivered by partner organisations to young people who could then request that their participation be funded as an NDIS support activity. Establishing partnerships with approved NDIS Providers would enable both BSG and the organisation plan for the delivery of appropriate support activities in advance, thus allowing time for Participants to include participation in the specific activity in their NDIS Plan.

Whilst this approach would not result in revenue for BSG, as payment for such activities would be coming directly from the NDIA to the approved NDIS Provider, it would allow for the advanced scheduling of activities for young people. It would also assist BSG to conduct further due diligence on partner organisations, in terms of working with organisations who have gone through the considerable and thorough process of applying for approval as an NDIS Provider with the NDIA.

## 27.4 BSG as an NDIS Provider

BSG could, if a legal entity, apply to become an NDIA approved NDIS Provider. As an approved NDIS Provider, BSG could deliver relevant supports to young people deemed an NDIS Participant. Naturally, as a NDIS Provider BSG would be required to meet requirements set by the NDIA in terms of initial approval and then ongoing delivery of services.

Put simply, as a NDIS Provider BSG would need to:

- a. Apply to become a registered NDIS Provider, identifying which NDIS Support Cluster/s BSG wants to deliver service in and provide relevant accreditation documentation.
- b. Receive the NDIA Accreditation Certificate to provide service in the approved NDIS Cluster/s.

- c. Prepare for rolling out as a NDIS Provider (staff, systems, processes).
- d. Begin using the NDIA Provider Portal to invoice for the delivery of services to Participants.

While the approval to deliver within NDIS Support Cluster/s can be modified over time, at least one Cluster would need to be identified as part of the application. It is also important to note that Clusters have changed as the NDIS has been further developed and rolled out, and it is highly likely that further changes to Clusters may occur in time.

It is also important to note that the NDIS encourages small numbers of Participants in groups for community participation that delivers on the objectives of independence and community inclusion. As such this is reflected in the 1:2 and 1:3 staff to participant ratios set by the NDIA for specific group activities. The NDIA also expects NDIS Providers running any larger groups to demonstrate how they are delivering outcomes and value for Participants.

It is anticipated that the NDIS marketplace will be a very competitive one, comprised of individuals, for-profit and not-for-profit providers. If BSG was to consider entering the marketplace it would benefit from specialising in one or more particular areas, and potentially ones where it already has a sound track record in delivering (eg. social skills, volunteering). It may also want to consider entering into new areas of service where, post an audit of other organisations, there may be a gap in servicing (eg. youth-to-youth peer support or mentoring).

Like anything new or emerging, should BSG become a legal entity and consider becoming an approved NDIS Provider, the Board of Management should carefully investigate whether the organisation is well positioned and ready to take on this service role. Evaluation in terms of staffing, finances, management and financial systems and marketing are but a few considerations that should be taken into account.

In examining current Clusters there is a possibility that BSG could apply to become an approved NDIS Provider in the following ones (however some further investigation into whether all of these could be delivered as 'group activities' is required):

NDIS Support Category	NDIS Support Cluster	NDIS Cluster	Price Ranges (per hour)
Assistance with daily life at home, in the community, education and at work (0001)	Participate Community	Group based community, social and recreational activities	\$13.73 - \$94.01
Improved daily living skills (0004)	Development-Life Skills	Training for carers/parents	\$53.99
Increased social and community participation (0009)	Development-Life Skills	Skills development in a group	\$17.99
	Participate Community	Community participation activities	Varies
	Innovative Community Participation	Innovative Community Participation	Varies
	Assist-Life Stage, Transition	Life transition planning including mentoring and peer support, focussing on individual skill development	\$55.00
Finding and keeping a job (0010)	Assist Access/Maintain Employ	Employment preparation and support in a group	\$18.16
Improved health and wellbeing (0012)	Physical Wellbeing	Exercise physiology (group)	\$46.69
	Physical Wellbeing	Dietitian group session	\$57.38

Source: <https://myplace.ndis.gov.au/ndisstorefront/2015-price-guide-vic-nsw-tas.html#5>

## 27.5 BSG as an Information, Linkages and Capacity (ILC) Building Provider

In July 2015, all governments across Australia agreed to the ILC Policy Framework, for which there are two broad aims:

- a. To provide information, referral and capacity building supports for people with disability, their

families, and carers that are not directly tied to a person through an individually funded NDIS package

- b. To partner with local communities, mainstream and universal services to improve access and inclusion for people with disability

The ILC Policy Framework identifies five activity streams, which are deemed the most effective way of increasing the social and economic participation of people with disability:

- a. Information, linkages and referrals
- b. Capacity building for mainstream services
- c. Community awareness and capacity building
- d. Individual capacity building
- e. Local Area Coordination (LAC)

The five priority investment areas for ILC, which are designed to complement and not duplicate the role of LACs, are:

- a. Specialist or expert delivery of activities that individual LACs could not be expected to provide (eg. diagnostic specific expertise or experience in particular models of support or capacity building)
- b. Cohort-focused delivery for specific groups of people, or people with specific types of disability, that require cultural or other knowledge to be effective (eg. peer support).
- c. Multi-regional delivery of activities that would be inefficient if delivered separately in different local areas (eg. advice on services and needs that are not based on location and could be relevant anywhere)
- d. Remote/rural delivery that will provide extra or innovative activities to help when demand is thinly or widely spread and there are supply limitations that LACs cannot resolve.
- e. Delivery by people with disability for people with disability in one of the four ILC activity streams (not including LACs)

Applications for ILC provision will include a full description of planned activities, intended outcomes, complete delivery plans, budget and demonstrated organisational capacity. ILC funding will be allocated on a competitive basis through one main round of grant funding each year. It is anticipated that grants for ILC provision funding will be launched in each state and territory in mid-2017 following approval from the Disability Reform Council scheduled for 1 September 2016. Funds allocated per state and territory will be relevant to the population of NDIS Participant's in each state and territory.

At the time of writing the detailed ILC Program Guidelines, which were due for release in mid-2016, have not yet been published. Thus, the potential for BSG to apply for ILC funding is based on the broad ILC Policy Framework, rather than specific guidelines. In reviewing the policy, the BSG model may relate to two ILC investment areas – a) 'Cohort-focused delivery' and b) 'Delivery by people with disability, for people with disability'. However, in order to make an application BSG would need to be a legal entity with the capacity to enter into contracts in its own right and/or partner with another organisation and deliver ILC related services under a shared agreement arrangement.

It is anticipated that applications for funding under this NDIS stream will be highly competitive.

## 27.6 BSG's Employment and Economic Reform Role

It has been suggested that only a mere 10 per cent of NDIS Participant Plans (to-date) have an employment focus. However, a key purpose of the NDIS is to enable people with disability and their families to engage or re-engage with the economy and ensure that the NDIS is making a significant contribution to economic reform in Australia. If the NDIS is to succeed, it will need greater numbers of participants to become members of the workforce, so as to meet the economic reform required to meet the future costings of the NDIS.

BSG has been committed to the preparation of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability for employment since its establishment; highlighted by the array of career planning, work experience, career planning and volunteering programs it has offered. BSG also recognises that the opportunity for meaningful economic participation should be offered to all young people with varying

disabilities, and that successful and sustainable employment often requires support for both the young person and their employer.

Given this philosophy and experience, BSG is well placed to advance the employment aspirations and capacities of young NDIS Participants with intellectual disability and/or learning disability. Whether this is as a NDIS Provider, as an intermediary connecting young people to employment-focused services offered by NDIS Provider partners or in an advocacy role as an ILC is yet to be seen.

However, as the NDIS rolls-out, BSG is in a strong and unique position to not only support young people to prepare for transition to work but to also support the efforts of the NDIA in ensuring that NDIS Participants become working members of our economy contributing to the scheme through taxation contributions.

## 27.7 NDIS Roll-Out

As the NDIS is being progressively rolled-out, the determination as to whether BSG young people can apply to become a NDIS Participant will be driven by where they live. Furthermore, the NDIA suggests that it may take Participants up to 12 months to enter into the scheme once introduced in their household region. Until then, young people already receiving existing state or federal disability supports will continue to receive those while transitioned into the NDIS.

Similarly, NDIS Providers will only be able to offer services in NDIS regions.

NDIS roll-out, with respect to the three proposed BSG regions, will occur from the following dates:

- *Southern Gippsland.* This region will fall within the 'NDIS Inner Gippsland Area' and become available from 1 October 2017.
- *Southern Melbourne.* This region will fall within the 'NDIS Bayside Peninsula Area' and become available from 1 April 2018.
- *South-East Melbourne Region.* This region will fall within the 'NDIS Southern Melbourne Area' and become available from 1 September 2018.

## 28. Summary

The NDIS is intended to provide all eligible people living with disability an opportunity to live the life they want, through the provision of supports related to mobility, communication, self-care and self-management, social interactions, learning, and capacity for social and economic participation.

The vast majority of young people engaging in BSG related programs will be deemed eligible for NDIS support given their disability status.

BSG is currently well positioned to work in partnership with organisations approved to provide NDIS support, using that role to both promote such organisations' existing programs and/or influence the development of new ones designed to improve the lives of young people with intellectual disabilities.

If BSG was to become an independent entity it would hold the adequate legal standing to apply to become a NDIS Provider in its own right, thus delivering approved programs or services directly to young people and/or parents. Furthermore, BSG could then also apply to become the provider of an Information, Linkages and Capacity (ILC) Building service.

If BSG was a legal entity significant considerations would have to be made before pursuing any NDIS provision path and it is unlikely that funding for service provision would, in the early stages, be sufficient to financially sustain the wider organisation. Other revenue streams for BSG would still need to be sourced; whether that was through philanthropic, corporate or other government sources. Furthermore, as the first proposed BSG region would not enter into the NDIS until late 2017 (and even then there would likely be delays until it has settled in that area) service delivery funding could not be anticipated until early/mid 2018. In addition, it is anticipated that funding through the ILC Building stream is expected to be highly competitive and thus BSG cannot plan on securing such a contract.

It is also important to remember that, with regular amendments to the NDIS occurring during its current transitional phase, the environment may look very different by 2018.

The NDIS and BSG relationship is an untested one at this stage. At the time of writing it is very much a 'watch this space' situation contingent on many factors ranging from whether or not BSG will become a legal entity, whether BSG wants to deliver NDIS services or whether BSG is better placed working in partnerships with other approved NDIS Providers.

# SUMMARY & SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS



Beyond the School Gates (BSG) has shown, over five years, to be a model that has successfully provided vulnerable young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability with access to an array of programs designed to improve their social, learning and economic capacities. BSG has acted as an intermediary bringing together various community partners to deliver these programs, allowing vetted partner organisations to design or co-design programs within their own scope of knowledge and expertise, then making these available to young people needing the skills development programs on offer. BSG works alongside schools, recognising that they are experts in the education of young people with disabilities but restricted by a lack of time and resources to actively develop and maintain partnerships with external organisations skilled in the provision of other programs and services that their young students also need in order to transition to a successful life beyond school, however they choose that life to look.

BSG is a unique and vital community partnership model that should, and must, continue. It has been recognised as a successful initiative in its current region, and there is a clear appetite and need for its extension into other Victorian regions. Organisations in other Victorian regions are conscious of the increasing rates of intellectual disability and/or learning disability amongst young people in their geographic areas and recognise there is a need for a disability expert body such as BSG to provide networking and advocacy support in their regions and to facilitate the provision of programs that can mitigate the poor post-school outcomes experienced by this vulnerable youth cohort. Research and evaluation of BSG, as well as years of 'positive chatter' about BSG, has influenced a genuine desire for the implementation of BSG in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

It has been shown that there is a strong case for scalability and transfer of BSG provided it is established as a legal entity. BSG initially requires a small investment during the phase where it will seek to establish itself as a not-for-profit entity and be implemented in two additional regions. However, after this time, it is in a strong position to sustain itself through a number of diversified revenue streams such as NDIS service provision, fee-for-service provision, other government funding contracts (such as ones that may be released as part of the 'The Education State' agenda in Victoria) and philanthropic / corporate grants.

There is inequity in access to educational, training and community participation opportunities between young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability and their non-disabled peers, which adversely affects their chances of successfully transitioning into a post-school life that includes: being engaged in employment, ongoing learning and/or training; living and participating actively in their community; and having active social networks with family and friends. The BSG model has, since its



inception in 2012 and throughout its many points of change, never wavered in its intention to address this inequity and to break down the barriers to social inclusion.

The strength of the BSG model, both then and today, is the multiple and varied strands of operations and advocacy. BSG provides the methods and opportunities to facilitate collaboration and improve community engagement, as well as pooling resources for greater efficiencies than if programs ran in isolation. The work that BSG undertakes to customise and coordinate the delivery of programs for students with intellectual disability and/or learning disability is regionally strategic and driven by the needs of its stakeholders. As well as the practical and tangible outputs of programs and events, BSG has contributed implicitly to the shifting mores of the disability sector by working to dismantle misconceptions about the capabilities and aspirations of young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability.

- To lose BSG would mean a loss of the best-practice intellectual capital and momentum built over the last five years.
- To lose BSG would stymie and thwart the desire for other already interested regions to implement it as a hub in their areas, as well as prevent the potential for future national expansion.
- To lose BSG would increase pressure on schools to initiate and sustain partnerships with external providers so as to best prepare their students for post-school social and economic participation.
- To lose BSG would mean that families miss out on opportunities to engage with a variety of community organisations and watch their children thrive in non-school settings prior to leaving the security of the school environment.
- To lose BSG would mean loss of a social capital building model which connects often disparate community services in a cross-sectoral partnership manner.
- To lose BSG would mean the loss of a model that is well suited to providing young people with an opportunity to choose to participate in reasonable and necessary NDIS-funded programs aligned to their NDIS Plan.
- To lose BSG would mean that our vulnerable young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability have reduced opportunities to participate in place-based programs which are not only engaging but play a part in preparing them to be active citizens 'beyond the school gates'.

In order to scale-up BSG, establish it as a legal charity entity with the capacity to access funding, deliver programs in three Victorian regions and begin to build revenue streams for BSG sustainability, an investment of **\$288,000** over two years is sought. This amount is broken into **\$135,000 for Year 1** and **\$148,000 for Year 2**.

The Exploration Grant generously provided by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund has allowed BSG to learn all this, with the resulting research report evidencing a need for the continuance of BSG for the benefit of not only young people with intellectual disability and/or learning disability but also for our wider society.



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