

Monday, 16 July 2018

Moreton Bay long-term unemployed youth to benefit from new jobs program

yourtown's new 'your job your way' program launched in Caboolture this Wednesday, 18 July offers intensive job seeker support and a practical solution to long-term youth unemployment nationally.

According to **yourtown** CEO Tracy Adams **your job your way** offers a solution to Australia's long-term youth unemployment by providing much needed intensive support for young people aged 15-21 who have been unemployed for over a year and risk social exclusion and permanent detachment from the workforce.

"**yourtown's your job your way** program will complement the Federal Government's **jobactive** service by bridging the gap to the extra support long-term unemployed young people need," Ms Adams said.

"Current employment policy does not adequately recognise long-term unemployment as a significant barrier to youth employment but with long-term unemployment more than doubling in a decade, Australia urgently needs to find a solution to this issue - young lives depend on it.

"Over 52,000 young people in Australia are experiencing long-term unemployment in that they are aged 15 to 24 and unsuccessful in securing work for more than two weeks for at least a year. Many are dealing with highly complex issues and challenges that can be both practical and personal.¹

"Australia needs an intensive, individually tailored holistic program model if we are to effectively address these challenges, find young people jobs and reconnect them with the community.

"We believe **your job your way** does this and **yourtown** is putting our money where our mouth is by investing \$1.26 million into a 24 month program pilot in two of Australia's top hot spots for youth unemployment - Moreton Bay, Queensland and the outer northern suburbs of Adelaide, South Australia.

The Moreton Bay program will operate from **yourtown's jobactive** site in Caboolture. At 18.7%, Moreton Bay North's youth unemployment rate showed the largest increase in Queensland rising by 6.3% over the year.²

"We focus on a commitment to collaboration - both with the young person and with local employers, offering strength based individualised support for young people, targeted employer engagement strategies and intensive 'in work' mentoring," Ms Adams said.

"A dual support team of a qualified social worker or psychologist and employment mentor will work with each young person to identify personal and practical needs.

"This can include self-confidence and self-esteem building, counselling for mental health or drug and alcohol substance abuse, through to pre-employment training to meet employer needs like drivers' licences and tickets, skills certificates, and interview and resume preparation.

"We will work with local employers to understand what staff they need and train and support young people to match that need and back this up by supporting both the young person and employer post employment."

yourtown's more than 15 years as a youth employment specialist along with specialist research into long-term youth unemployment informed the program model.

"This program will work because it's evidence based and developed using extensive research into how best to tackle long-term youth unemployment. This included what we learnt from 5,600 young people in our own youth employment programs, a literature review and survey responses from close to 300 long-term unemployed young people," Ms Adams said.

“Sustainable employment outcomes resulting from the program are anticipated to be significant. What’s more, this will generate substantial welfare savings by significantly reducing the number of long-term unemployed young people at risk of remaining on welfare benefits for life.”

yourtown has engaged the Centre for Social Impact to provide an independent assessment of the initiative, its outcomes and potential cost-savings to Government. A collaboration of three universities, the Centre has completed over 30 research projects aimed at catalysing positive social change.

“**yourtown** stands for practical positive change – we have invested in this program and its evaluation to back our belief in a more youth focussed, intensive, strengths-based and collaborative approach to working with this vulnerable group,” Ms Adams said.

“We’d like to see the Federal Government invest welfare savings in a national solution to address long-term youth unemployment and believe **your job your way** is this solution.”

Working in partnership with MAX Employment, **yourtown** provides **jobactive** services in 26 sites nationally delivering free recruitment services for young people aged up to 30 years.

For more about **yourtown**’s approach to tackling long-term youth unemployment and **your job your way** program see the **Tackling Long-term Youth Unemployment Position Paper** and research at www.yourtown.com.au/advocacy.

yourtown is a registered charity and public company limited by guarantee providing services young people can access to find jobs, learn skills, become great parents and live safe, happy lives. For over 56 years we’ve been tackling the issues impacting young people in Australia - like youth unemployment and mental health, and we take on issues like family and domestic violence. The community with **yourtown**’s Art Unions funds most of what we do.

-ENDS-

LAUNCH EVENT:

When: 10.30am start to 11.30am, Wednesday, 18 July 2018

Where: Caboolture Hub, 4 Hasking Street, Caboolture (Library Building)

INTERVIEW/FILMING OPPORTUNITIES:

Tracy Adams, CEO **yourtown**

Brendan Bourke, **yourtown** Head of Client Services

John Dalglish, **yourtown** Head of Strategy and Research

Ethan Nash – former long-term unemployed young person talking about his experiences

Special guest speaker: Senator James McGrath, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister

Other guests: Hon Craig Laundry, Minister for Small and Family Business, Workplace and Deregulation and Member for Reid; Trevor Ruthenberg, LNP candidate for Longman; local employers; other Government and agency representatives

MEDIA CONTACT:

Regan Flor **yourtown** rflor@yourtown.com.au 07 3867 1395 / 0423 843 786

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2018). 'Labour Force, Australia, Detailed – Electronic, April 2018', 'Table I. Unemployed persons by age and duration of job search, January 1991 onwards', data cube: Excel spreadsheet, cat. no. 6291.0.55.001, viewed 15 June 2018, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6291.0.55.001Feb%202018?OpenDocument>

2 Qld Govt (2018). 'Regional youth unemployment, May 2018' source: ABS 6291.0.55.001, released 21 June 2018, viewed 11 July 2018, <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/reports/reg-youth-unemployment/reg-youth-unemployment-201805.pdf>