

Hume Global Learning Village Lunch Forum

Decisions, Decisions, Decisions: The Three Stages of Career Development

Summary

On 20th July 2009, the Hume City Council held a Hume Global Learning Village Lunch Forum at the Hume Global Learning Centre. The title of the forum was 'Decisions, Decisions, Decisions: The Three Stages of Career Development' presented by Pater Tatham, Executive Director, Career Industry Council of Australia. As a segment of this forum, the Hume Whittlesea LLEN, Career Connections: Local Community Partnership and the Hume RICA (as part of the Hume Youth Commitment) conducted table workshops on 'Parents Providing Support for their Children's Career Decisions'. The forum was facilitated by Ms. Kimbra White, an experienced and skilled facilitator in community engagement.

Invitations to the forum were sent to Hume Global Learning Village members, Principals, teaching staff, students and parents from secondary schools and TAFE in the Hume region. The response was outstanding with ninety three people attending the forum. Attendees included thirty six teachers, students and parents from schools in Hume as well as VIP guest Honourable John Cain, Chairman of the Hume Global Learning Village Advisory Board.

Where possible, the table participants were a combination of teaching staff, parents and members of the community to be able to give tables a broader variety of ideas and discussion.

The forum evaluation demonstrated that participants felt that the forum was successful and that it generated positive discussion on parent engagement and other areas of a child's school life and future learning. Many affirmed the benefits from networking and exchanging ideas that forums such as this provide; and stated that they would be willing to attend other similar events. Overall, feedback indicated that the 'Decisions, Decisions, Decisions: The Three Stages of Career Development' Forum succeeded in its aim of highlighting the importance of parental engagement in their child's career pathway.

The Hume Global Learning Village Lunch Forum also set the scene the launch of the Hume Youth Commitment's 'Career Information for Parents- Help Your Child Connect to Their Future' poster and flyer. This flyer has been distributed throughout the Hume area to assist parents gain the knowledge to help through the school to employment transition stage of their child's life.

Response to Table Workshop

The focus of the table workshops was to bring principals, teachers, students, parents and members of the community together with other key stakeholders to discuss issues, ideas and strategies to develop and enhance parental engagement in the secondary school area particularly in career pathways. Each table consisted of eight participants from various stakeholder groups and a felicitor/scribe to guide the discussion and record the dialogue taking place.

Discussion questions that were relevant to the theme of the workshop were presented to each table:

1. To think of a time when you made a decision to take a job. How did you make that decision? Did you ask for advice from anyone? Did you seek information?
2. What was useful information/advice about a parent's role? What was not useful?
3. Did your parents have a role? What was useful/not useful about their role?
4. If parents are going to better at providing advice what would they need to do this? Is their a role for schools, community houses and organisations to assist? Ideas?

Question One related to personal experiences of the participants and what they had found assisted them. The participants were able to discuss on their table the positives and negatives in the support they received when deciding on a career pathway. This question was a lead into the next three questions and for the participants to feel more comfortable with others on their table.

Questions Two, Three and Four focused on what was happening or not happening in the now. Table discussions were encouraged for participants to share what they thought was useful or not useful. Each table was asked to share their stories and ideas which were recorded by the table scribe onto a template.

Below is the information and ideas recorded from each table. This information will be evaluated by the Hume Youth Commitment team to identify the best possible ways of assisting parents in their roles in the child's career and pathway decisions.

What was useful information/advice about a parents' role?

- Family, parental values and expectations with support in decisions
- Physical, practical support- helping to make it work providing physical access.
- Parental engagement
- Crucial to latch on to young person's motivational interests.
- Ability to identify strengths within every day life experiences eg. Organising skateboard competition.
- Life skills course at schools
- Commitment, following through
- Pathway flowcharts
- Networking
- Work placement- highly recommended- parents
- Parental involvement- assists parents as well
- Expos- highlights lots of options- interstate, GAP year, etc...
- Career teacher newsletters.
- Suggesting that keeping options open is best
- Encouragement towards education STAY IN SCHOOL
- SWL is very useful
- Parents are an important influence

- Work experience (2 week option)
- School support to source work experience
- School information nights (ensure parents attend is better)
- Could feel they could talk to parents afterwards...
- Job Guide...Schools do go through it with students
- A variety of experiences in or out of school
- Having access to experiences/guest speakers

What was not useful information/advice about a parents' role?

- Parental assumptions/expectations
- Some information is not helpful
- "you can develop that skill later"
- Language
- Pressure from parents to make decision
- Careers advisors not approachable
- Realise as a parent that it's not their choice.
- \$ fee / entry for expos
- Lack of information- ESL support lacking
- Cultural barriers
- Low aspirations
- Pressure to go to university
- Finding that uni wasn't what the person wanted and individuals felt that time was wasted
- Girls are pressured more- where boys are encouraged to do trades
- Not enough encouragement for girls to get into trades
- The idea that there is one career for their child, not allowing/informing the kids that they can be flexible
- Students didn't use websites
- Need of support to source work experience
- Criticism
- Feel parents don't really have a clue ...difficult to speak to them, generation gap
- Lack of knowledge re: some of the community programs... School/students didn't know

Ideas on Engaging parents

- Spending more time working with the parents about careers advice and PACTSW eg. Going to workplaces and community groups.
- Support- showing an interest
 - not pushing your goals
 - valuing child's goal
 - developing child's confidence
 - acknowledge and value their own life experiences
- Encouraging schools to employ translators at career information sessions. (PACTS or others)
- Information sessions for disability, CALD/ESL groups
- Local expos for local students/parents
- Mentors- Young Ambassadors from CALD backgrounds
- Encourage use of web based resources to save time, eg Parent Engagement Network for facilitators
- Access to parents getting easy to read information from local providers of career support
- More forums such as this one today

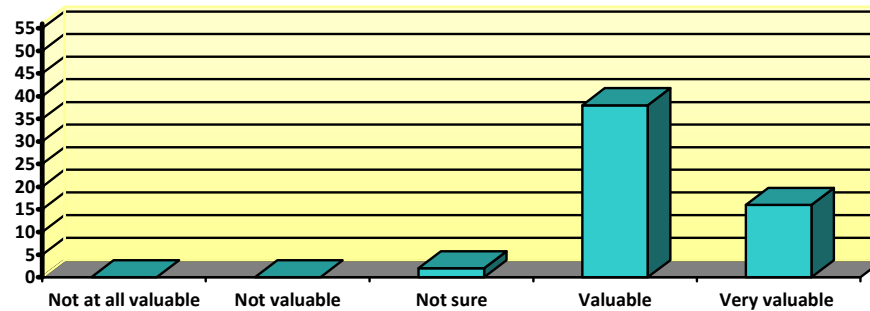
- Wider exposure so we get more parents
- More evening events
- More internet forums
- Expand work experience- more options-happy to work during school holidays
- More VET subjects- hands on practical learning eg carpentry, hairdressing. Etc...
- Parents different generation- difficult for them to understand
- Sometimes will read handouts
- Some schools more focused on information given to students
- More guest speakers... industry focus
- Use service clubs and agencies where parents go outside of school...Rotary, etc
- Where are they getting/sourcing career information from?
 - school classroom session times
 - teachers
 - Home-parents –family members
- Not much via internet- get enough from school
- A lot of new opportunities- too many

Evaluation Questions

Fifty six evaluations were returned with responses coming from thirty one HGLV and Community Members, six Students, sixteen Teachers and 3Parents.

1. How valuable did you find the workshop?

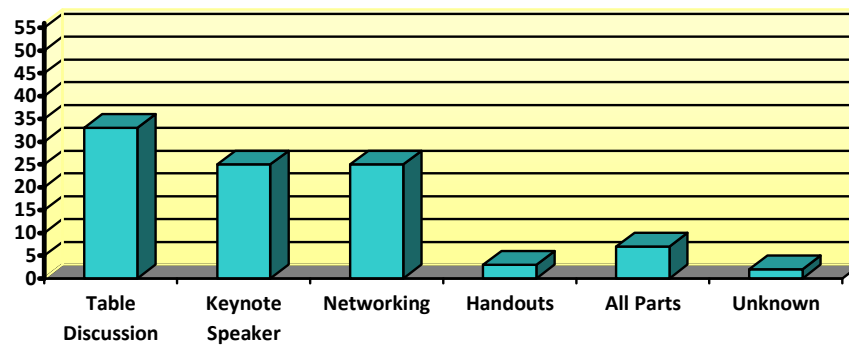
Not at all valuable -0 Not valuable -0 Not sure -2 Valuable -38 Very valuable -16



2. Which part of the workshop was most useful?

(Overview of the responses to the Evaluation Question 2.)

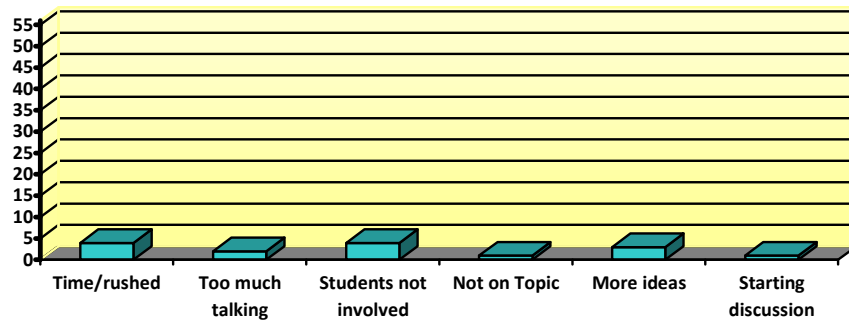
- Table discussions/sharing ideas-33 responses
- Keynote Speaker, Peter Tatham- 25 responses
- Networking- 25 responses
- Handouts/resources-3 responses
- All parts of forum/workshop-7 responses
- Unknown-2 responses



3. Which part of the workshop was least useful?

(Overview of the responses to the Evaluation Question 3.)

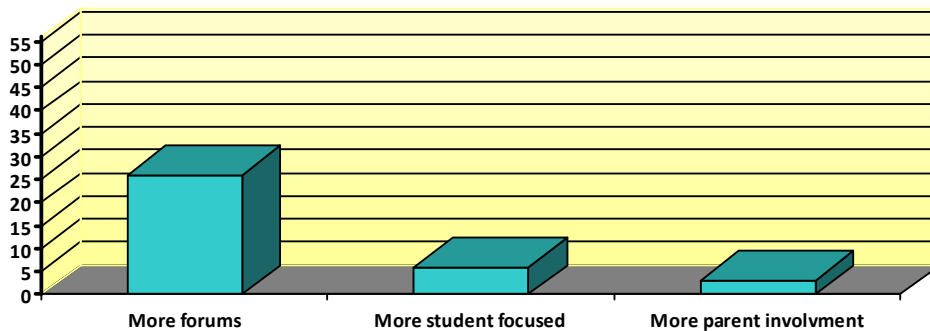
- Not enough time/rushed- 4 responses
- Too much talking- 2 responses
- Students not involved enough -4 responses
- Not on topic- 1 response
- More ideas- 3 responses
- Starting discussion- 1 response



4. Any other comments or ideas for future?

(Overview of the responses to the Evaluation Question 4.)

- More forums- 26 responses
- More student focused- 6 responses
- More parent involvement- 3 responses



1. How valuable did you find the workshop?

Not at all valuable -0 Not valuable -0 Not sure -2 Valuable -38 Very valuable -16

2. Which part of the workshop was most useful?

- Ideas for engagement between schools and parents
- The discussion
- Conversations that we had at our table focused on parental engagement and types of work
- Listening to ideas from around the room
- Possibly more importantly the need for the wider community and educators to look at the need for students to have a life not just a career
- Peter Tatham's speech- highlighting that careers are developed as life journey and that people will have a number of careers/jobs though out their employed lives
- Keynote address
- Peter Tatham
- I was able to sit at a table with a few of my Kangan students and have a great discussion about careers and parents
- The opportunity to talk to people at my table about what does/doesn't work in relation to working with parents
- I enjoyed Peter Tatham's talk even though it was off the topic.
- I liked the idea of career support as directions may not be clear with young students
- Unknown, sorry
- Don't know
- Being able to talk to some young people about their interactions with adults around them
- Table discussions
- Guest speaker excellent in putting a whole range of issues into an 'easy to grasp' outline
- Is it possible to get a copy of the Power Point?
- All, all relevant, thought provoking and useful in obtaining ideas and direction
- All, especially Peter's talk
- Presentation by CICA was informative, very insightful
- Networking opportunity was excellent
- Discussion over issue was beneficial
- Networking- a really good mix of people at Table 7
- Worthwhile discussions
- Overview from Peter
- Delicious food
- Presentation and ability to network
- Also the format of the workshop was good and should provide useful information
- Workshop discussions and listening to peoples' ideas
- Handouts great

- I really enjoyed Peter Tatham's speech and Nicky Leitch's final announcements
- Workshop discussions
- Q & A session
- Speech by Peter Tatham
- Opportunity to discuss issues with people on my table
- Keynote speech by Peter Tatham
- Peter Tatham
- Discussions
- The Keynote speaker
- Discussions in groups
- Networking
- Table interaction
- Communicating with teachers about engaging with parents at their school
- Table discussions
- Keynote speakers
- Sharing ideas, processes and programs
- Excellent pace of workshop
- The various discussions
- Workshop- table discussion about what's useful and what isn't
- Workshop- exchanging ideas
- Allowing the opportunity to discuss needs and options to assist young people and their parents in navigating the careers journey
- Discussion within group-perspective given by various stakeholders
- Pete Tatham's presentation- lots of relevant information and a good overview of the whole area
- The most useful part of the workshop was listening to the guest speaker
- Devising ideas on how to improve the options that are available to students
- It was all useful
- Peter Tatham's presentation was full of useful information that we can use in our future career information servicing
- Networking with other agencies/organisations
- Well introduced- but too much info to work through
- Members conversation valuable
- The discussion session at the very beginning of the session.
- Learning and expressing ideas from different people on the table
- Most of it
- More sessions needed on a broader issues as a parent
- Workshops provided opportunity for ideas to be expressed and explored
- Keynote reinforced ideas around careers development and provided opinions for the delivery of careers advice
- Information packs
- Career information/Parent information
- Nothing has been done about people with disability and/or Koori
- Keynote speaker was very good
- Really liked the workshops
- The opportunity to share and exchange ideas regarding how to best to engage parents in career development/transition
- Workshops and generating ideas as to how best involve parents in their child's career options and pathways
- Assessing the effective ways that parents can help their children (not hinder)

- Mix of ideas- talk to others
- New ways of reaching out to community
- I enjoyed the workshop, discussing ideas and information with other resources and students.
- It was very interesting to talk to students and get their ideas

3. Which part of the workshop was least useful?

- Students who attended were not involved and probably felt their time was wasted
- Travelling here
- All good
- Sometimes we need to think about our pitch- are we speaking to young people or adults
- I felt that Peter did not have enough time to unpack his ideas for us
- Enjoyed the speeches
- It was all very useful and the food was delicious
- Discussions- at the very start
- Looking for more info on established parent engagement programs
- The keynote speaker was too general in his talk.
- None
- Possibly a bit rushed- but this is very minor
- I was hoping for something more targeted at how I can more successfully engage parents
- There was very little discussion on suggestions around the original topic (How to engage parents).
- The students would have found the lack a bit dry. The language would have been too technical for them and we need to get their opinions more
- All sessions very useful
- None
- Nothing, quite interesting
- All good
- It was all useful
- Nil
- That the expectation of careers planning has been left to parents for the majority of guidance
- A bit rushed with the table discussions
- Views of young people/students not well handled- listened to or relevant opportunity to contribute
- All was useful
- Too much talking
- Too much talking information
- Got boring
- Most of it was very useful

- Not the part was unuseful
- Not enough time
- The brainstorming sessions were good but the actual writing and what we were writing exactly. Wasn't sure what they were saying
- More questions needed to be added
- Speaker very interesting and the people have to say
- Workshop segments
- Keynote speaker
- Guest speaker
- Discussions during workshopping
- Guest speaker
- Discussion on table

4. *Any other comments or ideas for future*

- Future industries and sustainable careers
- This has been a great opportunity for the different stakeholders in Hume to discuss what is happening to young people in Hume
- Keep doing this sort of thing
- Would encourage more of these
- Would like some follow up- where to???- what is planned???
- Looking forward in the next 12 months and see what we have learnt today
- Involve any parents and people who can provide support and pathways
- Greater access and involvement of parents in forums like this
- Perhaps an evening session to inform and promote the importance of parents involved in the career decision making
- Do these things more often
- Get more parents and students involved
- Work experience: Best Practice
- Organisations across the Council of Hume
- Support for children without parental support
- Thanks for the opportunity
- These forums are always brilliant
- Keep up the good work
- Lets have lots more
- Flyers need to be more specific on actual agenda items
- Be good to look at more on-line information, looking at how to access
- More frequency of forums
- Increase student/parent ratio
- Excellent Forum- it has given so many different paths to follow, etc.
- Student information is excellent
- More opportunities to connect with people
- ?-main points little less information to take in
- Mainly focused on parents- hardly anything for students

- Need to find a way to get more parents involved in forums such as today's.
- Possibly follow Peter's idea of getting where the people are: i.e. Internet, tv
- Not sure at this stage-be happy to be involved in any further planning
- Well done, I look forward to hearing the outcomes and building on the results
- Maybe need to leave a sheet a blank paper for people to make notes
- More understandable for students
- We wrote lots of ideas in our worksheet
- A great way to build community and network
- It would have been great to hear from a parent and/or a young person
- Organise a section for teenagers to get their opinions
- More young people to give their perspective of what and how they want parents to help them
- Career expo run at HGLV in evening/weekend so parent can attend with children
- More time for Q & A with keynote speaker
- Good –all round
- It was good
- More of this type of community education forums would be great
- Should do it again with more students
- Possible more forums with parent and students
- It was good how students and teachers were supported
- Should hold more forums
- Should hold more forums
- More discussion needed
- More funding needed for these seminars
- Young people's feedback about their views and ideas
- I look forward to receiving more information/ideas from various workshop groups
- Thank you for the opportunity to meet other career services and to discuss ideas regarding this perplexing issue
- More information for parents
- More forums
- More seminars and symposiums of similar topics
- Short, sharp, subject specific
- More of them
- School expos specific to Hume under one umbrella with interpreters
- Parent/agency workshops/forums to keep us informed
- More/another forum