



# About Young Initiators

Run by the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) and funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs, Young Initiators was a community-based project for young people to support awareness of their rights and responsibilities as active citizens. The project was evaluated by Lirata Consulting ([www.lirata.com.au](http://www.lirata.com.au)).

The project aimed to engage and support 450 young Victorians across the state, with different backgrounds and lived experiences. Leadership workshops preceded youth-led projects which were supported by a social media campaign celebrating young people and their contributions to Victoria.

The leadership program was designed around the five Victorian Values Statements (VVS):

- One law for all
- Freedom to be yourself
- Discrimination is never acceptable
- A fair go for all
- It is up to all of us to contribute to a Victoria we can be proud of

The program explored values-based leadership using the VVS as a springboard for discussion and successfully met all of its intended outcomes (p.3). Adapting to COVID-19, it continued to meet these outcomes in 2020.

- Geelong
- Melton
- Ballarat
- Bendigo
- Tarneit
- Werribee
- Wyndham
- Hoppers Crossing
- Hume
- Footscray
- Flemington
- Carlton



## Where did we go?

Our place-based initiatives provided accessible entry points for young people at different stages on their leadership journey

- Yarra
- Casey

# What did it involve?



**20** intensives run over 13 months

**307** participants aged 12-15

**33** languages spoken at home

**60%** of participants were female

**8** projects run over 18 months

Including:  
 SpeakUp Summit  
 Video on youth homelessness  
 Music mentoring  
 Self-love video campaign  
 Photography & art exhibition  
 Lake Wendouree walk

The conference was not able to run as a result of COVID-19.

Resources were directed to an online campaign called Reflect instead (see p.4)

**450** Instagram followers, Nov 2019

**814** Instagram followers, Jun 2020



## Case Study: Lake Wendouree Walk

Three young people from Ballarat developed a youth-led project following an intensive in July 2019. They decided to create a project on youth mental health with a focus on culturally and linguistically diverse young people in a regional community to address high rates of suicide among this group.

They planned a walk around Lake Wendouree where people could come together in a relaxed and informal atmosphere to talk about mental health. This was important as there is stigma in talking about mental health in culturally diverse communities.

The group met weekly from August 2019 to March 2020 with support from CMY Ballarat and the wider community.

While the event was cancelled 5 days prior to the planned date due to COVID-19, the three young people learnt a lot, in particular that the “active” part of citizenship is within their reach and if you are a leader you need to act.

They have all continued to use leadership skills in other areas of life including linking in with the Victorian Multicultural Commission and volunteering in schools.

# What were the intended outcomes?

The Young Initiators program had 9 intended learning outcomes

## Confidence to create change

95%

strongly agree or agree that this has improved

"It's made me realise that I have leadership skills I never knew I had"

## Awareness of personal values

86%

strongly agree or agree that this has improved

"I will regularly take time to reflect on my values"

## Understand freedom to be yourself

85%

strongly agree or agree that this has improved

"Never be afraid to be myself, to always think of others"

## Empathy for others

94%

better awareness & empathy for others

"I got to know everyone's stories and how it impacted their lives"

## Awareness of discrimination

94%

better understanding of discrimination, impacts & responses

"Discrimination is never acceptable"

## Understand active citizenship

93%

better understand opportunities for change

"I learned a lot about how to do more for my community"

## Apply practical leadership tools

86%

increased ability to apply practical tools

"I will use this to pursue my career in community development"

## Understand the 5 VVS

85%

or higher agreement on all 5 statements

"Remembering my values [and] Victorian values to stand up for people"

## Young people and the VVS

85%

increased awareness how young people living the VVS

"I will...work towards what I believe...to raise awareness in many different creative ways with my youth group"



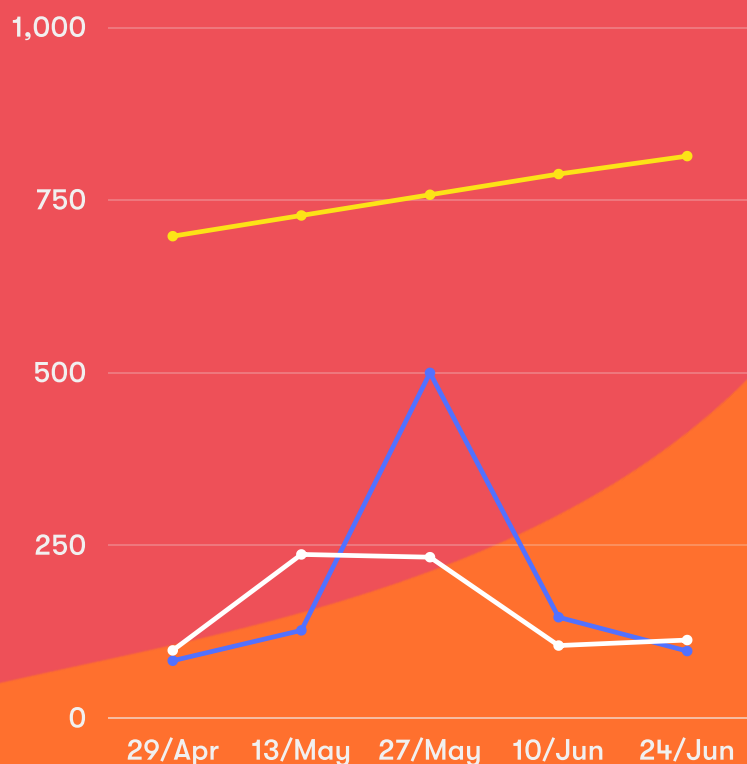




## Case Study: Reflect - by Young Initiators

**Instagram followers**  
**Instagram likes\***  
**Blog views\***

\*within two-week intervals



Seven young people who had attended an intensive in 2019 volunteered to plan the Initiate Youth Conference. However, COVID-19 and social distancing restrictions two weeks prior to the event saw the conference replaced by Reflect - by Young Initiators.

The online campaign provided a platform to show case youth-led projects and for young people to share experiences of isolation. While no target numbers were set, the campaign's intense nature created strong engagement.

Over the 10 weeks of the campaign, there were 13 blogs written and posted by young people that had 1188 unique visitors, an average of 91 visitors per post. The young people contributed 23 Insta posts growing the account's followers by 116 (from 698 to 814) and reached a further 6,537 users.

Overall, the program responded quickly to the demands of COVID-19. Participants felt well supported in the transition of this project. They developed creativity, leadership and communication, and felt acknowledged for their contribution.





# Findings

## The key findings of the Young Initiators evaluation were:

- Exploring leadership from a values-based perspective (using the VVS as a springboard) is an effective way to motivate young people as active citizens and increase their sense of connection to community and the state of Victoria
- Capacity building workshops leading to youth-led initiatives provide opportunities for two way learning between young people and community
- Placed based initiatives which target diverse community stakeholders and provide various entry points for young people on their leadership journey is an effective model for engaging young people in active citizenship

