



True individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence.

Franklin D Roosevelt

It is often said that it takes a village to raise a child. Getting a village engaged doesn't happen by itself which is why we are so excited to be working with United Way. They play a unique role in bringing people together from Government, Business and the Community. Without the support of the broader community we would not be able to create lasting change for our young people.

Eric Jamieson



If you're interested in participating through funding, pro-bono assistance or volunteering, please email us at nsw@unitedway.com.au

Helping today, for tomorrow

Creating financial stability and independence for young people

The Issue

Almost 1/3 of unemployed people are aged between 15 and 24 and of all school leavers aged 15-19 in Sydney, over 34% are not fully engaged in either education or employment. The wealth gap is greater in NSW than any other state and is increasing between high and low income households.

Australia has the fourth highest rate of family joblessness according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. In some communities this has become intergenerational. The key intervention to break this cycle is in the transition from school to work. United Way and its partners are focused on helping young people from our most disadvantaged communities find pathways to learning and earning.

Evidence

Schools are often a central part of the community. And partnerships that enhance the relationships between schools, families and the local business community can really help disengaged young people to flourish. In some of our most disadvantaged communities schools are often the only link that can be created with young people.

Collaboration

By forming partnerships with schools in areas of most need, United Way has shown its commitment to addressing this issue head on. Key players in this coalition will be schools, our corporate partners, industry partnerships and our community partner The Beacon Foundation. The Beacon Foundation provides best practice programs that engage local business to provide more opportunities for volunteer work, site tours and student mentoring – giving students an insight into and inspiration for life after school. We've formed long term partnerships with these schools and in 2011 we are funding The Beacon Foundation's programs working across 4 schools in the Southern, South Western and Western Sydney areas, giving some added guidance to a number of students.

In 2009 the unemployment rate for all 15-19 year olds not in full-time education and looking for full-time work was over 34%. The unemployment rate for school students who are part of the Beacon programs and who left school at year 10 to look for full time work, is under half this at 12%.

Innovation

In government and business there is an increasing focus on the importance of creating employment pathways for young people. Much of this focus is on building the capacity of young people but what are often missing are the valuable connections that can be made with the local and metropolitan business community. Schools more often than not struggle to make these connections themselves which is why we have formed long term partnerships and engaged The Beacon Foundation. It's signature program, 'No-Dole', encourages Year 9 and 10 students to choose a path of further training, education or employment – and not to fall back on welfare. With various programs including mock interviews, mentoring, career workshops and presentation skills, Beacon provides an innovative way for young people to stay involved with the business community as they finish their education and progress into further education or employment.

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