

## VICTORIAN ALCOHOL & DRUG ASSOCIATION

ENEWS – daily electronic news, views and drug information  
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### Federal Budget 2005-2006

The announcement of the 2005-2006 Federal Budget revealed Government spending on new initiatives relating to AOD issues.

Notably, the budget included initiatives to address youth smoking, additional funding towards increasing the capacity of indigenous communities to address AOD issues and a continuation of the grants program towards non-government organisations (NGOs) providing treatment within the AOD sector for a further two years.

The extension of the grants Program for NGOs beyond 2006 sees a continued commitment of \$6.0 million in 2006-07 and again in 2007-08.

Other initiatives include:

- \$25 million over four years in a new anti-smoking campaign targeting young people;
- \$8.0 million over four years for increasing capacity for Indigenous communities to address substance use;
- \$9.6 million over four years to reduce petrol sniffing in indigenous communities; and
- \$1.0 million towards the ANCD over three years.

VAADA also noted the termination of the Retractable Needle and Syringe Initiative. This will save the Federal Government \$55.1 million over four years which, it claims, will contribute to funding the initiatives announced in this year's budget.

Some of the funding towards mental health initiatives announced in the Budget will inadvertently address AOD issues. A component of the \$69 million (over four years) Youth Mental Health Initiative will be allocated towards addressing co morbidity issues.

### VAADA Meets with Bronwyn Pike

The new VAADA Executive Officer, Janine Bush and delegates from the VAADA Board – Neos Zavrou (President) and Sam Biondo – met with the Minister for Health, Bronwyn Pike, following the State Budget.

VAADA informed the Minister of its support for the Government's allocation to assist dual-diagnosis clients – that is, \$6.9 million over four years as a compliment to its injection of funds into mental health. The Minister emphasised the Government's intention to address complex needs faced by clients through such integrated responses.

VAADA highlighted the challenges that many agencies in the AOD sector continue to experience maintaining current levels of service provision in the context of inadequate growth funding.

The meeting also presented an opportunity to discuss VAADA's strategic directions with the Minister – and its plans for increased policy development in consultation with the sector.

VAADA and the Minister committed to ongoing dialogue between the peak and the Minister's office around AOD issues.

### Older, but not forgotten?

VAADA will be hosting a forum on Older People and Drugs called 'Older, but not forgotten?' The forum will be held on Tuesday 21 June 2005 as a part of Drug Action Week® (an initiative of ADCA) at the William Angliss Conference Centre.

The program, including national and state experts, will examine the issues surrounding the misuse of drugs amongst older populations; and the implications for future AOD service delivery.

For further information please contact Chris at VAADA – 9416 0899.

## Month in Review

### Tobacco Amendment Bill

VAADA welcomed the amendments to Victoria's *Tobacco Act*, particularly the smoking bans at workplaces, bars and youth events as these are significant steps in increasing the community's overall health, whilst reducing mortality rates and the associated financial costs due to smoking (\$5 billion annually).

VAADA believes the amendment bill is broad ranging, and in line with the growing community concern regarding new tobacco control initiatives and smoke free settings.

However, it is VAADA's view that there is still room to further the scope of the Bill. In particular, the following issues would benefit from further consideration:

- the exemption of the Casino's high-roller room and prison cells from workplace smoking bans;
- the absence of regulation pertaining to smoking near doorways, entrances to buildings and ventilation inlets;
- the protection of children and young people who are subject to secondary smoke within enclosed spaces (such as family vehicles).

Given the overall positive direction, VAADA supports the Tobacco Amendment Bill. VAADA will continue to address the concerns raised above with the Victorian Government, around the harms caused by tobacco.

### Suspended Sentences

VAADA participated in a round table discussion conducted by the Sentencing Advisory Council. The Sentencing Advisory Council has been requested to advise the Victorian Attorney general on the current use of suspended sentences and whether the operation of suspended sentences can be improved in any way.

The round table attended by VAADA, explored the suitability of suspended sentences for offenders with drug and/or alcohol addiction. Specific issues looked at by the roundtable were the usefulness of suspended sentences (i.e. without conditions) for offenders who have a drug and/or alcohol addiction. Other issues considered by the roundtable were: should a form of conditional suspended sentence be reintroduced for offenders with a drug and/or alcohol addiction; and if conditions were reintroduced, what form should they take. VAADA will make a formal submission to the Sentencing Advisory Council.

### Drug Action Week®

We encourage event organisers to list their activities on the Drug Action Week® National Calendar of Events. The national calendar is a searchable database of all the Drug Action Week® activities that have been registered with ADCA.

To register your event at the Drug Action Week® website go to:

[www.drugactionweek.org.au/addevent.html](http://www.drugactionweek.org.au/addevent.html)

### Agency Visits by politicians

As part of Drug Action Week® 2005, VAADA is coordinating visits by politicians to drug and alcohol agencies. This is a great opportunity for agencies to showcase their work.

To register to participate please contact Sarah at VAADA on 9416 0899 or email to:

[vaada@infoxchange.net.au](mailto:vaada@infoxchange.net.au)

### Count the cuts

On behalf of the Joint Peaks Network, VCOSS have started collating results from the third stage of a longitudinal survey (the period of July 2004 to December 2004), that examines the impact indexation is having on Community Service Organisations (CSOs).

In the two previous stages of the survey concerns were raised about the impact of indexation on service provision within the community sector. In particular it was found that:

- The number of clients CSOs are able to support is falling, while waiting lists are growing;
- Many CSOs have been forced to defer or abandon programs and most are becoming more reliant on volunteers;
- CSOs are operating with less financial reserves and many are reporting budget deficits; and
- Employment costs are increasing beyond funding allocated for these costs.

The survey is designed to collect data on the impacts of indexation in three main areas:

- Service delivery;
- Financial health; and
- Costs and compliance issues

The latest Survey Report from January – June 2004 titled 'The Impact of Inadequate Funding on Community Sector Organisations' is available at <http://www.vcooss.org.au/>

## YOUR SAY

### **"Living in a Drug Culture. Program empowers young Vietnamese women"**

**Deb Homburg and Suong Le - The Buoyancy Foundation**

Finding our own voice "In my own words" is what The Young Vietnamese Woman and Drugs program airs on The Voice Box every Tuesday 6.30pm on 3CR (855-AM-Victoria)

Creating bilingual opportunities for self expression and communication on the radio has been one of the recent contributions of young Vietnamese women to eighty four other young Vietnamese women in the Commonwealth funded drugs program which is auspiced by The Buoyancy Foundation of Victoria.

Since beginning in 1999 young Vietnamese women who designed their own drug program, created and launched a website <http://voicebox.buoyancy.org.au> and a video *The Divine Lotus*. Copies of the video and radio shows are available from Buoyancy.

Traditionally young Vietnamese women are trained to serve and respect the needs of others and not question the wisdom of their elders nor consider that young women have a choice in how, when and what they communicate.

Drug counselling is a foreign concept in cultures influenced by Confucianism where any revelation to people outside the family is best not made, and if made, must not ruin the reputation of the family and if done at all, is done in the interest of the others or the group rather than for herself.

The Buoyancy Foundation has been providing drug counselling since 1967 and seeks to create and offer opportunities to participate in a culture of self expression. We also are currently distributing the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition and the 20,001<sup>st</sup> copy of our free booklet Nothing Wrong Self Care for those who have been abused or who abuse substances.

To run a Young Vietnamese woman and drug program Buoyancy needed to engage between 55 and 75 young women each year who would not look at us in the eyes (out of respect) nor speak (for that may be ill mannered). If the young women weren't at home serving the family they had to be in school or employment.

In partnership with the Australian Vietnamese Women's Welfare Association and the Vietnamese Community in Australia (Victorian Chapter) Buoyancy employed a group of young women to design and present a survey of their peers on what a young Vietnamese women and drugs program would be and do.

From the young women we learnt that the shadows and lights in their lives – abuse, trauma, drug use, fear/racism, sex and intimacy, money and romance- could be communicated (not through counselling) only through public media – magazines, films, radio, plays, pictures, music. This is a culturally acceptable and exciting domain for young Vietnamese women's self expression.

Buoyancy also found that what the young women would most love to do as a recreational outcome of a drug program was to go camping. It is measure of how far we have come that the first camp of the program attracted eight young men and only two women! Since then over fifty young women have been camping, white water canoeing and abseiling

Buoyancy and a core group of five Young Vietnamese Women and Drugs Program workers have taken over six years to show the Vietnamese community that we really did want to work with the young women and to relate to the women as "leaders in their own lives and in their communities".

Through their media work the young women are making choices about their relationship with a pervasive drug culture and all the other issues young people, women and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds face. They include the rest of their community in their radio programs and events.

Young Vietnamese women are creating possibilities around language. Learning English fluently and forgetting Vietnamese, leaves them alienated from their mothers, culture and identity; Speaking Vietnamese and trying to force themselves through the English language barriers without the confidence to initiate or maintain a conversation with a non-Vietnamese speaker leaves them unable to "fit in"

Suong Le says "Through the technicalities of radio, video, internet, presentations at conferences, writing reports and making events young Vietnamese women are making conscious choices in how and what we communicate, whether that is in English or Vietnamese, whether we take up our right to speak or not, where to find our confidence and sources of inspiration and whether we speak it as softly or as loudly as we want".

## Calendar of Events

Commencing June 1	<p><b><i>Family Therapy Ideas for Working with Clients Facing Drug and Alcohol Problems - Odyssey House Victoria and The Bouverie Centre</i></b></p> <p>A practical intensive four day training program over 4 weeks to be held at the Bouverie Centre. Proposed dates: Wednesdays June 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> &amp; 22<sup>nd</sup>. 9.15am - 4.30pm. Cost: \$290 (<i>Please note these costs are for 2004, a slight change may occur in 2005</i>). To register complete application form located on the Bouverie Centre Web Site. <a href="http://www.latrobe.edu.au/bouverie/">http://www.latrobe.edu.au/bouverie/</a></p>
June 8	<p><b><i>Post traumatic Stress Disorder: Definitions and Solutions – an outline of treatment using CBT.. TRANX/PADA</i></b> To be held between 9.30am-4.00pm at Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre. Costs for workshops are: \$88 inc GST for a half day workshops; full day workshops \$192.50 inc GST. Workshops will include morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. TRANX/PADA members will receive a 10% discount as will agencies enrolling more than three staff members. For further information call TRANX on 9886 0955</p>
June 10	<p><b><i>Understanding Chemical Dependency in the Deaf Community - Turning Point Talking Point Seminar Series.</i></b> Presented by Walter Kadiki. Drug and Alcohol Information &amp; Project Coordinator, Victoria – Victorian deaf Society. Held at 142 Gertrude Street Fitzroy. Bookings essential – call Turning Point on 8413 8413 to register.</p>
June 20 - 24	<p><b>Drug Action Week 2005</b></p> <p>Drug Action Week® is an initiative of the Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia (ADCA). We encourage you to get involved in Drug Action Week® 2005 by holding your own event or by participating in events planned in your area. Each year DAW® has different theme days to highlight the diversity and complexity of alcohol and other drug issues. Theme days for 2005 are: Monday 20 June, Young People; Tuesday 21 June, Treatment; Wednesday 22 June, Prevention; Thursday 23 June, Indigenous Australians; <b>and</b> Friday 24 June, Consumers and Carers.</p>
June 21	<p><b>‘Older, but not forgotten?’</b> The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association will be hosting the inaugural Older People and Drugs Forum ‘Older, but not forgotten?’ The forum will be held on Tuesday 21 June 2005 as a part of Drug Action Week® (an initiative of ADCA) at the William Angliss Conference Centre.</p>
June 21	<p><b><i>Parenting &amp; Risk Assessment – Women’s Alcohol &amp; Drug Service</i></b></p> <p>Presented at the Royal Women’s Hospital, between 9am – 1pm in the Supper Room, Basement. For all bookings and enquiries contact: Tony – Ph 03 9344 3631 or Email: <a href="mailto:womens.ads@wh.org.au">womens.ads@wh.org.au</a></p>
June 22	<p><b><i>Therapeutic skills for 1 to 1 counselling: case planning and structured treatment with an expanded tool kit. TRANX/PADA.</i></b> To be held between 9.30am-4.00pm at Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre. Costs for workshops are: \$88 inc GST for a half day workshops; full day workshops \$192.50 inc GST. Workshops will include morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. TRANX/PADA members will receive a 10% discount as will agencies enrolling more than three staff members. For further information call TRANX on 9886 0955</p>
June 24	<p><b><i>Parenting and Substance Use - Moreland Hall Lunchtime Seminar Series</i></b></p> <p>A Presentation by Anne Shanley (Director Charrette Pty Ltd) and Catriona Good (Playgroup Coordinator UC Moreland Hall) that will explore parenting issues, strategies to enhance child safety and strategies to address parenting concerns. The seminar will be held from 12.30-1.30pm at Moreland Hall, with refreshments provided. For information or to register to attend please phone 9386 2876</p>