



# Together 4 Youth

## WHO IS TOGETHER4YOUTH?

Together4Youth is a large-scale collaboration of “for purpose” organisations who share the collective vision for improving the lives of young people in schools across Australia. The members of Together4Youth have united to amplify the voice of young people and effectively support them through their educational journey and into thriving futures.

Together4Youth commenced in mid-2020 when these organisations elected to come together through a series of discussions and workshops to discuss how a collaboration might achieve more impact together for young people, their schools, and funders.

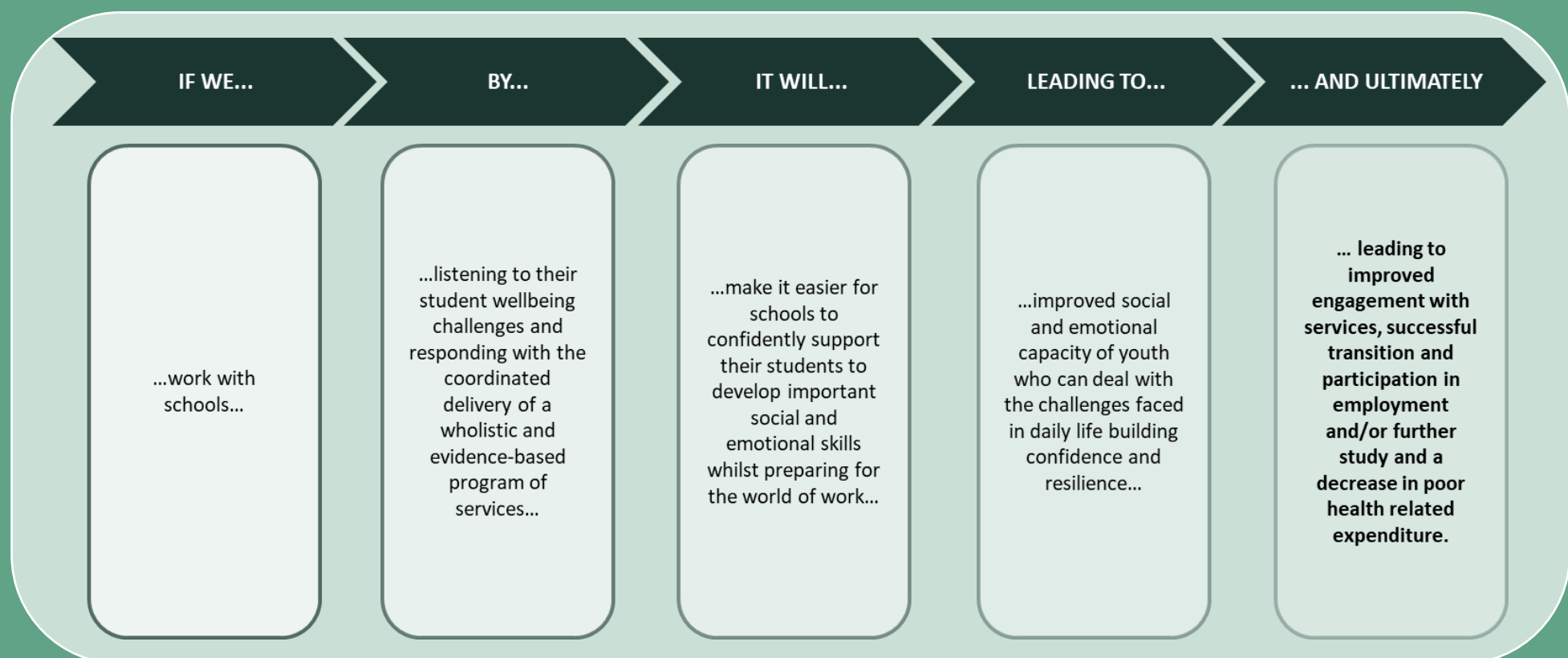
In July 2021 Together4Youth employed a General Manager to lead and manage the members, along with overseeing the initial research and development work required to commence a pilot scheme to trial the collaboration model in secondary schools and prove the credibility of this new approach to delivering social/emotional and transition to work schemes in schools.

The collective is supported by the Australian Youth Mentoring Network and the University of New South Wales - Centre for Social Impact.

With the Centre for Social Impact, Together4Youth has developed a Theory of Change which was supported through a worldwide literature review on collaboration within the secondary school setting. The review found that:

**“the T4Y model has significant potential to improve students’ social, emotional, behavioural, and academic functioning as well as create notable improvements in their school engagement, future aspirations, social relationships, and graduation rates.”** CSI-2021

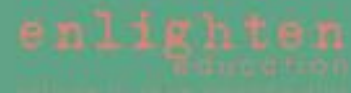
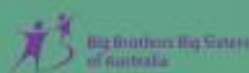
This theory of change has been further refined to produce a Golden Thread which articulates the purpose and intent of the work undertaken by the collective, as shown below.



## WHY DO WE EXIST?

The National Mental Health Survey revealed the annual prevalence of mental ill health in 16 to 24-year-olds had surged from 26 per cent in 2007 to 39 per cent in 2020-21 — an unprecedented increase of 50 per cent in 15 years. Half of all health conditions experienced during this developmental period are mental health-related, and the most common cause of death in young people is suicide. This means that mental illness has become the number one chronic illness throughout life, ahead of arthritis, asthma and diabetes.

Murdoch Children's Research Institute states that with about 50% of mental health disorders beginning before the age of 14 years, prevention and early intervention are paramount if we want to reduce lifetime prevalence of mental health disorders and allow children to live their best possible lives. Headspace have reported that 74% of young people reported their mental health was worse since COVID-19 with 50% felt less confident to achieve their goals.



## PILOT SCHOOLS

Together4Youth has an underpinning belief that a united approach to in-school service delivery will deliver a higher quality of service to the school sector and have a greater collective impact on their students. In 2022, we launched a unique opportunity for schools to work with one coordinating provider of health and wellbeing services as distinct from the traditional model where schools have to identify, select and coordinate between services themselves.

Together4Youth recognises that schools know their students and what their students need and through close liaison with the Together4Youth General Manager a bespoke model of service can be provided which supports and tracks student wellbeing from secondary school entry through to exit from the education sector.

We launched this approach in five pilot schools – 2 NSW, 1 ACT, 1 VIC and 1 SA, with an average ICSEA (Index of Community Socio-Economic Advantage) of 979, ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) population of 8% or greater and an average LBOTE (Language Background Other than English) of 20% – ensuring that the pilot schools are servicing students facing disadvantage as we believe this is the area where impact can be greatest. To the end of Semester 1 2022, 68 programs have been delivered in schools reaching 3,046 students.

### What Changes for Schools?

- increased confidence that they are providing the necessary support for students across all developmental stages
- assistance navigating wellbeing support services to suit their unique student cohorts
- understanding how external services can complement existing initiatives delivered by the school itself
- single menu of quality assured programs to choose from working with one coordinating service provider with a tailored approach to school requirements

### What Increases for Young People?

- social and emotional skills
- mental health and wellbeing
- resilience and ability to face challenges
- ability to seek help from trusted adults
- engagement with education leading to academic confidence
- increased school completion rates
- hope for the future through improved skills and growth mindset
- Skills and plans for meaningful employment

The pilot school program has been so successful that word of mouth has led to the introduction of two further NSW schools joining the trial in the second semester of 2022, with interest from a further two NSW schools to join the Together4Youth service delivery approach in 2023 alongside interest from the NSW Department of Education Riverina Region.



“I thought today would be like all the other workshops we have done over the years... but this was so much better! I enjoyed every part today –but I really loved when we were able to write about our friends and the people we are grateful for. Today was so good and showed me that I am perfect the way I am.” *Abbey*



“It is always ok to ask for help/reach out to someone even if its just to have someone to listen.” *Anon*

Empowering young people to thrive.

Bespoke wellbeing solutions delivered collaboratively in schools from social and emotional learning to transition to the world of work.



## COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY ACROSS THE SECTOR

Together4Youth members believe in the power of collaboration and meet on a regular basis to discuss ways to improve service delivery.

Specialised areas of each membership come together to discuss issues of importance and throughout the first six months of 2022, 37 collaboration meetings have been held discussing topics ranging from measurement and evaluation through to empowering and increasing youth voice in the advocacy space.

Four masterclass sessions were also held to share learnings and expertise across the member organisations, as well as our inaugural T4Y Summit being held.



## FUTURE GROWTH

The Together4Youth business plan targets 15 schools in 2023 building to delivery in 100 schools in the 2025 school year. On average, each school in the pilot phase has cost just under \$30,000.

However, this expansion will also require the addition of technology to triage and manage schools, collaboration between members, ongoing investment in the health of the collaboration, and enhanced capabilities, such as website, marketing, and investment in establishing an independent legal structure.

Additional funding allows the core expenditure to be met ensuring that the infrastructure required to scale up and its impact on youth is the key focus, whilst also allowing strategic advocacy to government and other funders to ensure long term sustainability of the model. Within the next phase we will move to a partial payment model allowing us to recoup some of the costs from the school sector ensuring sustainability.

The collaboration across our funding partners has also been a remarkable outcome from the Together4Youth collaboration and we are working hard to prove the impact of this initiative to ensure this continued support.



“Today I learnt more about consent, more about relationships, and the different myths about being a teenage boy. I really enjoyed learning lots of new things today because it wasn't boring like the other programs.” *Sam*



“I thought the workshop was excellent. I did not know what to expect going in but there were a lot of things that I found interesting.” *Ben*

