

2nd National DRANZSEN (Disaster Resilience Australia New Zealand School Education Network) Forum

7 September 2017

REPORT

Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the 2nd National DRANZSEN Forum, held as part of the Professional Development Program at AFAC17 in Sydney on Thursday 7 September 2017.

The annual National Forums provide a unique opportunity for state and territory DRANZSEN stakeholders – educators, researchers, emergency management and community agencies and others – to meet and interact, to commence or perhaps continue conversations about disaster resilience education (DRE) and to identify future directions and actions.

Forum context

The Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) promotes the development of disaster resilience education as a vital component in children and young people's education. The National Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2011 commends the inclusion of this type of knowledge and skill development in school education programs. The Disaster Resilient Australia-New Zealand Schools Education Network (DRANZSEN) is an AIDR national initiative, encouraging and strengthening the ability of teachers and other educators to deliver consistent disaster resilience education to young people.

Prior to the forum, the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) endorsed AIDR as an accredited provider of professional development for teachers, allowing any participating NSW registered teachers to claim credit for their involvement that day.

The forum was attended by 52 participants who represented 37 organisations from most Australian states and territories, as well as New Zealand. Organisations are listed in Appendix A. Throughout the past 18 months, concerted effort has been made to encourage broad participation in the DRANZSEN initiative. Currently, there are over 300 individuals from 150 organisations involved in this initiative. Overall, the May 2017 Forums were attended by over 120 participants from 72 organisations.

Future state/territory and national forums will explore the possibilities offered by video conferencing platforms so that those who are unable to attend in person can still be involved.

Forum program

The Forum program featured presentations on resilience related topics from a range of speakers from across Australia, some of whom had previously presented at state and territory forums in May 2017. Presenters and topics are listed in Appendix B.

The sessions included a recording made by Prof Kevin Ronan in which he introduced several DRE themes that were explored in greater detail by both presenters and participants throughout the day. For example, building best practice in DRE; benefits of DRE to families and broader communities; children's dual needs of protection and participation; reducing children's fears; children as active agents; useful frameworks; research supporting schools in their DRE work; evaluation and monitoring of DRE programs; and international influences.

Brief summaries of the presentations are as follows:

- **Kate McFarlane, Save the Children – *Comprehensive School Safety Framework – how schools, government and emergency services education teams can use it in the Australian context* and Emily Dunstan, Save the Children – *Ready, Steady, Safe App Project***

The *Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSS)*, globally adopted, was introduced as an evidence based, roadmap for schools which enables planning for children's safety and security through an all-hazards, whole of school approach. The CSS helps schools to understand their duty of care, why things go wrong, helps to ask the appropriate questions and to make good plans that are sustainable and allow partnering. The Tasmania Fire Service bases their school engagement work on the CSS.

The *Ready, Steady, Safe App* is a pilot project being tested with 10 to 12-year-olds in NSW and Victoria. It aims to empower children to prepare for disasters and encourage behavior changes → children as catalysts for family change. Curriculum materials have also been developed for teachers. Evaluation will occur in Term 4.

- **Jennie Schoof, Yarra Ranges, Knox City and Maroondah Councils and Dr Briony Towers, RMIT University – *Taking the time to get it right: an all-agencies approach to a disaster education project***

Jennie: The *Let's Get Ready Project* is a co-designed project which will allow young people to have an equal voice with adults. There has been extensive collaboration with partners including Dave the Children, Ambulance Victoria, emergency services, Victoria Police, etc., thus ownership sits with everyone, including young people. It is based on immersive learning – exploring learnings and working with these. The project will enable young people to be leaders – to influence their families and communities. The project is based on a game comprised of 3D models, a 3m x 3m mat, and scenario cards which present a range of situations. The game will be offered to schools and agencies in 2018; young people will receive certificates and become ambassadors for DRE; training to run sessions will be offered to all partners.

Briony: The philosophy underpinning the monitoring and evaluation of this project is that of Paolo Freire – children are not generally included in DRE program design, they do have capacities and capabilities but are restrained by their real-life conditions. DRE delivery is a very complex system. Evaluation/research needs to add to the field of knowledge. The *Let's Get Ready Project* is, effectively a work-in-progress; the best research methodology is Participatory Action Research (PAR), the core principles of which are: research is *with* people, not *on* people; it's a cyclic process of action→research→action→research; it's a journey.

- **Michelle Roberts, Department of Education and Training Victoria – *Resilient children and schools***

Recovery starts with the end – the destination. This approach draws on the work of Stevan Hobfoll and the 5 essential elements of post-disaster care i.e. 1. Promoting a sense of safety; 2. Calming; 3. Sense of self and community efficacy; 4. Social connectedness; and 5. Hope. So, the before, during and after of a disaster event constitute a continuum of DRE. Resilience is a doing word. 'What is resilience?' It's about exercising and building backbones; shared experiences/communities (glue); stress inoculation (dose); taking action as a protective factor; anchors for kids – a sense of control, they can shape their lives, they matter as human beings. Resilience is not about closure.

DRE strengthens teachers' and students' skills; helps preparedness and recovery; imparts knowledge, skills, confidence, problem solving; SAP4 is developing a model of practice – Ambulance Victoria are trialling a CC-DRR framework. Keep Roger Hart's ladder in mind. The only limitations on children are the ones we place on them. Who are the first responders? Educators. To empower them: be respectful, give them tools, all-hazards, child respectful practices. The Emergency Plus app is child-friendly.

- **Matt Henry, Country Fire Authority Victoria – *The School Curriculum Natural Hazards Resilience Package***

DRE is no different from learning to swim – do it often, over and over again. Children and young people aren't passive in the face of disasters – they can still take preventive action, if they are enable to. A great example of young people being empowered and actively involved was the Student Volunteer Army in 2010 formed after the Canterbury earthquake and continued in Christchurch after the earthquake in 2011. Similar action took place in Brisbane in 2010-11 and in Texas after Hurricane Harvey.

The biggest barrier to schools delivering DRE with resources provided to them by emergency services is the volume of resources and lack of PD for teachers. There is a real need for agencies to work together to develop a common 'practice framework' to provide PD for teachers and resources aligned to the Australian Curriculum.

The *School Curriculum Natural Hazards Resilience Package (SCNHRP)*, funded through the Natural Disasters Resilience Grant Scheme as a joint CFA/SES resilience pilot project, aims to teach students the fundamentals of disaster resilience and encourage their participation in the development of safer communities. It was developed in collaboration with teachers, students and the broader school community to produce innovative and engaging resilience programs. The *SCNHRP* investigates opportunities for further development and evaluation of resilience focussed programs that are student participatory and aligned with the current curriculum.

- **Jenene Rosser, Independent Schools Queensland – *Disaster Resilience Education and the Australian Curriculum***

Disaster resilience education can easily be seen by very busy and overburdened schools and teachers as “one more thing” to add to the growing curriculum list. It's vital to include the following four themes in any work where resources such as lesson plans are being developed for the classroom: 1. Work with your key education stakeholders; 2. Include assessment linked to the achievement standards in any teaching resources being developed; 3. Use disasters as a context for developing resilience; 4. Consider the pedagogy of resources. Plan with the “end in mind” and use *disasters* as a context to teach resilience.

Be aware that not all states have the same approach to the Australian Curriculum (AC). As the Inquiry approach is a significant element of the AC, it needs to be considered by developers of education resources. Another effective pedagogical tool to engage students and encourage deep understanding of concepts is to involve the use of emotions within teaching.

- **Simon Natoli, Catholic Education Tasmania – *Emergency lockdown preparedness and response***

The *Lockdown Preparedness and Response* was initially developed by St Dominic's, St Mary's and St Virgil's Catholic Colleges, Tasmania, the Tasmania Catholic Education Office and the Tasmania Police. The strategy is not just for schools: it is adjustable to any situation and requires the knowledge of only three things, and to practice the response. It is possible to have partial or full lockdown, depending on the level of the threat.

Know 3 Things: 1. Know the start signal; 2. Go with people into nearest room. If outside and going inside is not an option, tell people to leave; 3. List – access it from a room consistent with location, or other means, e.g. intranet. Have a response kit with swipes, keys, building plans, contact lists. It's important to practice the lockdown at least twice a year and to empower everyone to be able to call lockdown.

A panel discussion involving Briony Towers, RMIT, Tony Jarrett, NSW Rural Fire Service, Jennie Schoof, Yarra Ranges Council, Michelle Roberts, Victoria Department of Education and Training and Liz Tomazic, AIDR on the topic *Towards a more resilient Australia – why disaster resilience education is important for children and young people* concluded the program.

Conclusion

The 2nd National Forum drew together a number of participants from across Australia and from a diverse range of organisations. Presentations allowed an exploration of a number of relevant themes, together with challenges to thought and established 'ways of doing'. Those attending the forum were able to meet their counterparts from other states/territories and either establish new relationships or strengthen existing ones. Informal discussions on the day indicated that this type of forum meets a very real need of practitioners to meet and plan together, to find ways of collaborating and building on the expertise of 'best practice' in other areas. Planning for any future DRANZSEN forums aims to advance the work already begun at state/territory and national levels to date and to continue harnessing the enthusiasm and expertise of those already committed to progressing DRE in Australian schools.

Participant Organisations

AFAC
Association of Independent Schools Qld
Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience
Australian Red Cross
Brisbane City SES Unit
Bungendore Rural Fire Brigade
Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC
Cairns Regional Council (QLD)
Catholic Education Commission NSW
Catholic Education Office Tasmania
Central Queensland University
Country Fire Authority (CFA) Victoria
Department of Education NSW
Dep't of Education & Childhood Development (DECD) SA
Department of Education and Training Queensland
Department of Education and Training Victoria
Department of Education Tasmania
Family Psychology
Life Saving Victoria
Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management NZ
Mountains Community Resource Network (MCRN)
NSW Health
NSW Rural Fire Service
NSW SES
Queensland Fire & Emergency Services (QFES)
RMIT University
SA Country Fire Service (SA CFS)
SA State Emergency Service (SES)
SA Veterinary Emergency Management
Save the Children
Tasmania Catholic Education Office
Tasmania Fire Service
Tasmania State Emergency Service (SES)
Toongabbie Christian School (NSW)
University of Wollongong
Wenona School (NSW)
Yarra Ranges, Knox City and Maroondah Councils

APPENDIX B

Presenters

Emily Dunstan, Save the Children – *Ready, Steady, Safe App Project*

Matt Henry, Country Fire Authority Victoria – *The School Curriculum Natural Hazards Resilience Package*

Kate McFarlane, Save the Children – *Comprehensive School Safety Framework – how schools, government and emergency services education teams can use it in the Australian context*

Simon Natoli, Catholic Education Tasmania – *Emergency lockdown preparedness and response*

Michelle Roberts, Department of Education and Training Victoria – *Resilient children and schools*

Prof Kevin Ronan, Central Queensland University - *Core competencies of resilient children*

Jenene Rosser, Independent Schools Queensland – *Disaster Resilience Education and the Australian Curriculum*

Jennie Schoof, Yarra Ranges, Knox City and Maroondah Councils and Dr Briony Towers, RMIT University – *Taking the time to get it right: an all-agencies approach to a disaster education project*