



## Youth Live4Life Year 9 Crew Induction

On Wednesday 22 June, approximately 50 students from seven local schools attended the Youth Live4Life Crew Induction.

The Live4Life Crew is a key component of the Live4Life program that was introduced in Bass Coast and South Gippsland Shire in 2022.

This program is a whole community approach and directed by mental health ambassadors (Crew) to decrease the rates of suicide in rural and regional communities. Shockingly, 40 per cent of all deaths in those aged 13 to 18 years in Australia are as a result of suicide. These rates are reportedly 40 per cent higher in rural communities, hence why programs such as this are so vital.

The Crew's purpose is to assist in the delivery of events and drive key Live4Life messages at their school and in their community. The participants become mental health advocates and provides the young people who participate with an opportunity to be leaders in their local area on this important subject.

At the start of the event, the students were addressed by Director of Economy and Community at South Gippsland Shire Council, Renae Littlejohn and Councillor Brett Tessari from Bass Coast Shire Council. Both reflected on their own experiences of raising children and the importance of the support that they received from their classmates and friends.

During the induction, students were given key teen mental health messages, assisted in theme development for 2022 and were provided with an opportunity to discuss the launch events that they will be involved in.

For more information on the program, please visit: [www.live4life.org.au](http://www.live4life.org.au)

### **Quote attributable to South Gippsland Shire Council Mayor, Mohya Davies:**

*"Our community has been through a period of great instability and unpredictability which will have had ongoing impacts on our community. It is more important than ever that we invest in our children, particularly teenagers.*

*"This is a remarkable program that will enable these young people to develop life-long skills that will help them support each other into the future. I have six adult children and I know how important their friends and schoolmates were in their teenage years."*

### **Quote attributable to South Gippsland Shire Council Director Economy and Community, Renae Littlejohn:**

*"I have been there for my kids their entire lives, and tried to support them as much as I could as a mum, but I know that during their teenage years in particular, it was their friends that helped them most. As a Council, we are so excited to be supporting a program like this that gives these students the tools to better assist their friends and schoolmates when they are struggling. Thank you all for putting your hands up to be part of this program."*

**Quote attributable to Bass Coast Shire Council Mayor, Cr Michael Whelan:**

*"Congratulations to the new Live4Life Crew, for being a part of this important local program. At Bass Coast, we are always looking for ways to support young people to live happy and healthy lives, so we are really proud to be taking part in the Live4Life program. This program has already proved to be a valuable support for young people in different areas of Victoria and we know it's bound to have a positive impact in our region as well."*

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